

Wilson Historical Society

WILSON, NEW YORK 14172

NEWSLETTER

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

JANUARY 1981 Vol.10 No.1
(Coleman Press)

BOY SCOUT TROOP #41: Many organizations in Wilson's past have risen and fallen like shooting stars. One such group was Boy Scout Troop #41 of East Wilson. It was started in 1949 and had the unusual distinction of being organized by a "Group of Citizens"--most troops are generally sponsored by churches or fire companies. The troop, however, did receive permission to meet each week in the East Wilson Methodist Church, and the Troop Charter was conferred at an investiture service held at the church in January, 1950. The Charter was presented by John Montgomery, "Chief" of the Lewiston Trail Council, to Mr. Burt Jennings, who served as the new troop's Institutional Representative. Other members of the citizen's committee consisted of William Beutel, Chrm., Lynford Claypool, Sec'y-Treas., Oscar Munch, Chrm., Review Board, Carl Hazen, Transportation, Don Croop, Scoutmaster, and La Mont Ridley, Ass't. Scout Master. The investiture service was conducted by LaVerne Hague and Leland Vincent, leaders of Newfane Boy Scout Troop #22. Other adults who served later in positions of leadership included Edward Bull, Earl Heinz, Vincent Derda, and Boyd Wilson.

Troop 41 was a camping troop and the boys learned their scouting skills in all types of weather. Mothers joined forces to sew "two-man" tents for their sons which, when completed, were waterproofed by the boys. In addition to many hikes in the local area, "overnights" were frequently held at Moot's Woods, "roundups" attended at West Barre, and "weekends" spent at the Medina Cabin. The troop also spent a week each year at summer camp in Allegheny State Park, and attended a Council sponsored "Winteree" there in February, 1954. During the opening years of Camp Ditmer at Newark Lake, troop 41 participated in week-end cleanups, planted evergreen seedlings, and trimmed dead branches from large evergreen trees. The scouts earned their way to camp by conducting regular pick-ups of paper and scrap metal.

The boys won many ribbons for their scouting skills but perhaps their finest hour was when they competed against all other troops at Camp Lewiston Trail, Allegheny State Park, and came in first in the "Gold Rush". In this competition the boys had to follow a compass reading to various "stations" in the woods where a scouting skill such as fire building or reading Morse Code had to be completed successfully before venturing to the next location.

Although Troop 41 spent many weekends in the woods, the boys always kept the Scout Oath in mind, "to do my duty to God and Country", and attended church whenever possible. Following a week-end camping trip at Medina, the following item appeared in a local paper, "Congratulations to Troop 41 of East Wilson. While on a hike to the Medina cabin, the whole troop went to church Sunday morning as a group, part to St. Mary's R. C. Church and part to the Baptist Church. It impressed everyone so much it was still being talked about a week later. Scouting gained more prestige by one hour in church by a handful of boys than all the newspaper articles, radio programs, or ballyhoo by hundreds of people."

We have lost track of several of our former scouts but the following are well known in the communities they serve: David Hazen, Realtor, Thilk-Hazen Agency; Paul Karsten, Town of Wilson Highway Superintendent; Donald Munch, Retired Special Investigator for the New York State Police; William Claypoole, former Marine and Business Partner in a firm at West Palm Beach, Florida; Jack Crowe, former U.S. Marine; Gordon Cramer, Ticket Agent for Braniff Airlines, Fla; Donald Beutel, Beutel's Greenhouses, East Wilson; Howard Croop, retired M/3gt., U. S. Airforce, South Dakota; Robert Hahn, Millwright, Harrison Radiator Div. GMC; Jack Heinz, Harrison Radiator; Gary Heinz, U. S. Airforce, decorated with Bronze Star in Vietnam; Hollis Hardison, Electrical Engineer and Bld. Inspector, Sanborn; and David and Roger Wilson, Wilson Bros. Farms, East Wilson. Other former scouts included Larry Ingram, George and Harold Rinehart, Joe Derda, "Corky" Derda (deceased), Joe Lippincott and Dayton Hardison.

Troop 41, in the tradition of the three musketeers, was "all for one and one for all", and the cry, "Troop 41 on the run" was the rallying call for all scouts. Boys in other troops soon learned not to pick a fight with the husky lads of troop 41 because it meant they'd have to take on the whole troop. That rallying cry no longer echoes through the woods in East Wilson. The troop was disbanded when there were no longer enough boys growing up of scouting age.

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JANUARY HOSTESSES: Margaret Wilson, Chrm., reports that the following members have consented to serve as hostesses at the museum Sunday afternoons from two to four:

Jan. 4th, Larry and Julie Bulmer; Jan. 11th, Kenneth and Vivian Briggs; Jan. 18th, Bill and Mary Budde; and Jan. 25th, Charles and Mary Gamble. Key for museum available at Nettie Stimsons; Instructions for hostesses on reception table; Any questions? Call Lois Jennings,

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BON MOT: January is the month when we start paying on December bills, and on November election results. (James McGavran)

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HAPPY HOLIDAYS: The museum has been "spruced up" for the Holiday Season with an especially nice exhibit arranged by the museum committee. Special emphasis has been placed on a "Childrens' Old Fashioned Christmas" with a variety of antique toys, dolls, and games, supplied by Nettie Stimson and Dorothy Knight, tastefully displayed by a Christmas tree. Upon entering the museum grounds, one's attention is immediately drawn to a large evergreen wreath hanging on the front window--made and donated by Joe Higgins. A large, beautifully decorated evergreen tree in the Patterson Room stands out with over 200 tiny white mini-lights. The tree, donated by Carol and Bill Smith, was decorated under the watchful eye of Flossie Lortz, after being set in place by Ron Zauner, Tom Sharpe, and Burt Jennings. Others who helped decorate included Maryanne Sharp, Millie Croop, Judy Zauner, Bessie Cole, Lois Jennings, Dorothy and Susan Thilk, Joe Higgins, Anna Mae Nevins, Mike Evans, and Jonathon and Bob Zauner.

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TID-BIT: After last month's article on Old Time Movies, Thelma Patterson called to reveal that Winona Ward Hamblin also played piano at the "Gem" during Wilson's silent movie days.

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NEW MEMBERS: We welcome Mr. Kenneth Wishau of Rochester, also John and Jeanne Kress of Wilson. also, Mrs. Clifford (Norma) Wilson, Lake Street, Wilson.

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RESOURCE SURVEY: The Wilson Museum has been included in a state-wide survey being conducted by the N.Y. Historical Resources Center in Olin Library, Cornell University, with the ultimate goal of producing County Guides to records, maps, manuscripts, and archive collections in New York State. Mr. Bob Englert, fieldworker, visited the museum recently and spent several hours listing books, documents, and other records available. He was pleased the way our acquisitions are classified and stated his work was made easier because of it. In view of his favorable comments, we think Lois Jennings, Carole Schnoor, and Celeste Crawford deserve a well-earned "pat-on-the-back".

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DECEMBER VISITORS: Twenty one pupils from the 1st and 2nd grades of St. Peter's Lutheran Church School, North Ridge, visited the museum in December. The well-behaved group of youngsters were accompanied by their teacher, Miss Patti Eckart, also Brenda Hurtgam, Margaret Stark, and Luz Smith. The children appeared fascinated by the large array of antique toys, and enjoyed a lite snack of Christmas cookies and loganberry juice provided by hostesses, Lois Jennings and Millie Croop.

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ACQUISITIONS: Howard Hunter has donated a large framed picture of members of Wilson Lodge 881 IOOF, taker in the old Middleton Hall.

- Mabel Wilson: Whisk broom and holder advertising L.W. Smith's Dry Goods store in Wilson.
Rex and Winnie Stacy: 1847 Songbook, "Benham's Selections", owned by the late Gertrude Plumb.
Harold Mudge: Egg Candles.
Henry F. and Harold Donner: Donner Genealogy.
Helen Borngraeber: Centennial issue, Buffalo Evening News; also picture of Christian Pfeffer, Stanley's grandfather, shown with team of horses on his Townline Rd. farm.
David Homjack, West Seneca: Chevrolet and Cadillac Bulb kits in original tin boxes.
Harriet Landy Nolan: Large collection of photographs, papers, and booklets on Indian culture. (Complete listing on transmission record in file)
Elizabeth and Yvonne Duxbury Smithson, Ransomville: Picture of Wilson High School Class of 1912, with Principal McIlroy at back. Also, pictures of IOOF Installation in 1900; The Ontario Band; Henry Giles Carpenter Shop' church programs, and clipping from "Wilson Star".
Bessie Clark Vana, Youngstown: Wilson High School, Class of 1913, with names of students listed on the back.
Mary Nashwinter: Sept. 4, 1925 issue of "Wilson Star" found when remodeling house.
Anna Mae Nevins: Five pieces of Soutache Braid on card, also G. E. Vacuum Cleaner for use in the museum.
Gwen Heidenfeldt: Wilson High School Booklet, Class of 1922.
Herbert Kahler, Newfane: Toyal Doulton (English) dish.
R. J. Dirling, Lockport: Railroad engineer's cap owned by his uncle. Clips on hat from the Sant Fe, Erie, C & O, and Union Pacific Railroads.
Howard Ford: Old package of unopened Beech-nut Chewing Tobacco.
Ken and Dorothy Tracy: Dress Form.
Mary C. Lewis Schultz, Lockport: Lewis family Bible, (Genealogy enclosed); also collection of old papers, programs, catalogs, etc. (Complete listing on transmission record).
Leo Volk, Newfane: Myers Barrel Sprayer (1900); Iron scraper cast in Lockport.

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JANUARY PROGRAM: Two of our society's experts in the field of antiques, Norman and Martha MacAskill, will delve into the subject, "Tea Cups of the Past" at the regular monthly meeting of the society, January 19, 1981.

Refreshments will be served by Maxine Jones, Chrm., Dorothy Lort, and Barbara Mosher.

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JANUARY CALENDAR: Jan. 14th; Trustee Meeting, 8:00 PM, Dr. Argue's office. Short Planning Comm. meeting following trustee meeting.

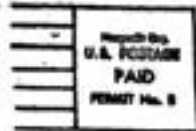
- Jan. 15th; Regular monthly meeting, 7:30 PM at Museum.
Jan. 16th; Gnostic Guild will hold special meeting at museum.
Jan. 26th; Museum Comm. will meet at 10:00 AM at museum. Please bring bag lunch.

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HAPPY NEW YEAR: As we enter the 10th year of bringing this Newsletter to you, we can only marvel at what you, as members, have accomplished to make the Wilson Historical Society what it is today. May future generations build on the foundation you have laid.

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REFLECTION: What you have inherited from your fathers, earn over again for yourselves, or it will not be yours. -Goethe



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WILSON, NEW YORK 14172

NEWSLETTER

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

FEBRUARY 1981 Vol.10 No.2

(Coleman Press)

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WILSON, NEW YORK 14172

WILSON VILLAGE--THEN AND NOW:

Wilson had a population of about 715 persons when it was incorporated May 11, 1858 by an act of the N. Y. State legislature, and there were 416 acres within its borders. The north-west portion of the village was laid out in lots by Reuben and Luther Wilson in 1828, and the southeast sections were laid out by Squire Andrew Brown, Simeon Sheldon, and John Onderdonk. The village received its initial thrust from Luther Wilson who became prominently identified with many of its early improvements.

In 1858 there were 3 drygoods stores, 3 groceries, and several mechanic shops. There were also several large businesses such as Barnum, Wilson & Co., manufacturers of the popular "Wilson Plow"; the J. E. McCarty Lumber Yard and Planing Mill; the F. E. Moore Sash and Door Co.; and the H. Sanford Coal Yard.

The 1st Presbyterian Church was erected in 1843 on land donated by Luther Wilson at the corner of Lake and Mechanic Streets. The 1st Baptist Church, a cobblestone edifice, was built at the corner of Pettit and Chestnut sts. on land also donated by Luther Wilson in 1843. The Methodist-Episcopal Society met in a frame church built on land donated by Squire Andrew Brown, site of the present Exley United Methodist Church. It is interesting to note that the families of Mrs. Jean Argue and Mrs. Betty Bulmer are direct descendants of Squire Brown.

The Wilson Collegiate Institute stood where the present Town Hall stands. It was a flourishing school and the impressive cobblestone structure was erected with funds provided by many public-spirited men such as Luther Wilson and Simeon Sheldon, who donated the land.

Ontario Lodge No. 376, F.&A.M. was organized and chartered July 8, 1855. When the village was incorporated, the Lodge's 110 members met on the site of the present Masonic building.

The only public accommodations were at Richard Chesier's "Ontario Hotel", a substantial cobblestone building built by Luther Wilson at the corner of Lake and Young Streets.

Wilson has kept pace with the times and rates highly today as an attractive residential community with many new and old beautiful homes. About 40 businesses serve the local residents, and Pfeiffers Foods, a subsidiary of Hunt-Wesson, makes excellent salad dressings and is by far the largest employer in the village.

Educational opportunities are unlimited at Thomas Marks Elementary and Wilson Central High Schools, and the Wilson Free Public Library is an excellent source for reference material. The Niagara County Community College and Niagara University are also within easy range. There are also many service and cultural organizations such as the Masons, Eastern Star, Oddfellows and Rebeccas, Lion's Club, Delphic Circle, Gnostic Guild, Mothers Club, Hospital Auxiliary, P.T.A., American Legion, Legion Auxiliary, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, 4H Club, Boosters Club, and of course, the Wilson Historical Society, and Wilson Conservation Club.

Wilson is fortunate to have a generally moderate year-round climate so residents seldom have to face the tragedy of destructive tornadoes, earthquakes, or floods. Situated on the fertile Ontario Plain, there is easy access to some of the best fruit and vegetables grown anywhere. Of some historic note is the fact that the Fitch families are celebrating their 150th year of growing apples in this area. It all started on their Fitch Rd. pioneer family farm back in 1830.

Several fine marinas and yacht clubs, along with extensive stocking of local waters, has placed Wilson in the center of the best boating and fishing areas of the county. The Wilson and South Wilson Vol. Fire Companies' combined efforts provide the whole township with excellent fire protection while Wilson's modern equipped ambulance and trained medics are second to none. Several new churches have been organized to fill the spiritual needs of the growing community including St. John's Episcopal Church, St. Paul's Lutheran Church, and Our Lady of the Rosary R. C. Church who worship in the former Presbyterian Church. The 1st Baptist and Methodist Churches have been active in the village for approximately 150 years.

We have only touched the surface--the list could go on and on, but the way it appears to us, Wilson (like Buffalo) has reason to be "Talking Proud".

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HAROLD E. MUDGE MEMORIAL:

The Memorial Committee has purchased a new colonial-type receptionist desk as a memorial to the late Harold E. Mudge. The desk replaces the card table formerly used by hostesses to register guests at the museum.

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BON MOT:

The economy depends about as much on economists as the weather does on forecasters.

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ACQUISITIONS GROWING:

The N.Y.S. registration for the 1959 Cadillac Convertible purchased from Katherine Oldham of Lockport has been received. In addition, the society owns a 1904 "Covert"; 1907 "Metz"; 1928 "Reo Wolverine Cabriolet"; and 1966 "Plymouth Valiant" donated by Marion Sheelar of Wilson. It was announced at the October meeting that Dr. Argue is also donating a 1957 Mark II "Lincoln Continental" which will bring to six, the cars owned and stored by the society.

Mrs. Esther Casselman of Sanborn has donated a child's doll table, two chairs, and a rocker. They were made in the early 1900's and in very good condition.

Floyd Van Buren of Lockport: Family Bible with sheet of family members and dates.

Don Croop: Cassette tape used to record interview with the late Walter S. Johnson.

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WHEN ELECTRICITY CAME TO WILSON:

Beatrice Salisbury informs us that the Conant-Bryant Power Co. brought electricity to Wilson in 1910. The certificate of incorporation was dated April 6, 1910, with capital stock of \$25,000 and 50 years duration to manufacture and sell electricity for production of light and heat in the village of Wilson.

The land for the new power house was deeded from Florence and Jake Miller to Russell Bryant, April 21, 1910, and on July 30, 1910, there was a quick-claim deed from Russell Bryant to the Conant-Bryant Power Co. Nine years later on September 18, 1919, the Conant-Bryant Power Co. deeded the property to Harry P. Harris. The original building is still standing on the west side of Harbor St. north of the trailer park and is known as the home of "Valair", Don Sinclair's Welding Shop.

Of further historical interest we refer to Jake Miller, an electrical engineer from Pittsburgh, Pa, who built a summer home on "Sunset Island" in 1889. He and his wife, Florence, spent their vacations there but when Jake retired in 1905 they moved to Wilson permanently. He proceeded to acquire considerable land holdings, and embarked on a development program for the island which included an electrical system for island residents long before electricity was provided to the village.

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FEBRUARY PROGRAM:

We anticipate an interesting program on February 16th when Arthur Schnoor will cover the subject of the "Boating Industry in Wilson". Commercial boating was "big business" during the mid 1800's but slowly declined when the R.W. & O. came through Wilson in 1876.

Marietta Goodman said the refreshment committee will consist of Mary Weiler, Chrm., Sharon Monroe, and Christine Goodman.

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MORE PUPILS VISIT MUSEUM:

Second graders from Thomas Marks Elementary School, accompanied by their teacher, Mrs. Sue Cruickshank, visited the museum on January 16th. The Holiday exhibit, thanks to our faithful museum committee, seemed to have a special appeal for this age group. Lois Jennings and Miss Flossie Lortz greeted the pupils, and after showing them around, served the youngsters with home-made cookies and hot chocolate.

We understand that smiles lit up the faces of many of the "small fry" who came to the museum during the Holidays. Nettie Stimson had filled a large glass canister with candy canes which were given out to young guests. That was real "sweet", Nettie.

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SUNDAY AFTERNOON HOSTESSES:

Feb. 1st, Bob and Marlene Dinse; Feb. 8th, Rod and Sue Toenniessen; Feb. 15th, Rev. Rae and Hildred Brothers; and Feb. 22nd, Bill and Bonnie Clark. Key is available at Clark and Nettie Stimson's home; instructions in Receptionist Desk; Museum should be open from 2-4PM.

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MUSEUM ROOF TO BE REPAIRED:

Jack Roberts, of Roberts Roofing, will replace missing shingles and ridge rolls when weather permits. He stated that we are fortunate to have the kind of roof we have as it will last a lifetime if properly maintained. This should be wonderful news for all concerned.

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GREAT AMERICAN:

When you flip on a light, talk on the phone, play a record, or go to the movies, did you know that Thomas Alva Edison played an important part in all of them? What's even more remarkable is that he only had 3 months of formal schooling. Edison, one of America's greatest inventors, was born in Milan, Ohio, Feb. 11th, 1847. He worked as a railway newsboy and telegrapher in several cities while studying whenever possible to educate himself. When he died, Oct. 18, 1931, he had taken out patents on 1,033 various items. Without Edison, our lives might be very much different today.

The exhibit for March-April will be centered around the theme, "Wintertime, Wintertime", however, a special area will be set aside to honor the birthday of this great American.

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NEW MEMBERS:

We are happy to welcome three recent new members: Nancy Neivert of Burt; Barbara Wilson of Medina, and Mrs. Elizabeth Duxbury of Ransomville.

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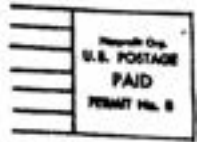
"BILLIE SHERMAN" LIVES ON:

Don Polec of Channel 7 "Eyewitness News" did a telecast last May about Wilson's Confederate Civil War horse, "Billie Sherman". Don has a special flare for televising short human interest stories about unusual subjects or events in Western N.Y. When "Eye Witness News" decided to rebroadcast his most interesting story of last year, our members were surprised and pleased to see and hear the "Billie Sherman" story told again.

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TRUSTEES AND PLANNING BOARD members will meet at Doc Argues office, Feb. 11th at 8:00 PM.

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WILSON, NEW YORK 14172

NEWSLETTER

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

MARCH 1981 Vol.10 No.3
(Coleman Press)

WASHINGTON ADVENTURE:

Up to the mid 50's, seniors at Wilson Central School looked forward to the annual Class trip to Washington, D.C. The Class of '27 was no exception, and graduates that year were Flora Johnson (Albright), Pres; Ronald Gifford, Vice-Pres; Florence Benedict (Latzner,Hazen) Secy; and Allen Jacques, Treas; also, Garnet Bradley, Russell Fitch, Clifford Loomis, Mildred Mudge, Willard Nevins, Blanche Wilson, and Wesley Wilson.

The Class, accompanied by their advisor, Miss Mabel Wilson, went to Washington as part of the Van Zile party which included 378 other students and chaperones. The group began their trip on a special trolley from Lockport to Tonawanda where they boarded a Lehigh Valley train to Washington. They stayed at the Hotel Harrington, and after seeing the Capitol, took the steamboat "Macalester" to Mount Vernon. A picture of the Van Zile party was taken on the lawn there, and a copy has been donated to the museum by Blanche Wilson. The Class saw most of the sights including Christ Church, the Masonic Memorial, Arlington Cemetery, Tomb of the Unknown Soldiers, St. Patrick's Cathedral, and the Washington Auditorium where they caught a glimpse of the President and Mrs. Calvin Coolidge. Also during their four day stay they visited the White House, Washington Monument, Corcoran Art Gallery, Treasury Building, and Bureau of Printing and Engraving.

The seniors also took a side trip to Annapolis where they saw the Naval Academy and Old Maryland Statehouse built in 1772. Next they boarded a train for Philadelphia to see the Liberty Bell and Independence Hall, then "side-tracked" historic sites long enough to shop in "Wanamakers", one of the largest department stores in America. In the evening, a dance was held at their hotel, the "Benjamin Franklin", and the next morning planned to go to Camden, N.J., to board a train for Atlantic City. A slight mishap occurred, however.

The Wilson seniors, confused over the time of departure, were eating breakfast in an automat when the busses pulled out with the Van Zile party. Realizing what happened, they took a taxi to the Pennsylvania Station where a kindly station agent called Camden and had the train held while they hopped a ferryboat for that city. Upon arrival they had to race to catch the train, and slow runners had to be pulled along by fast runners in order to get there on time. However, living up to their Class Motto, "Through difficulties to Success", they caught the train and, exhausted, headed for Atlantic City. There they spent much of their time shopping along the boardwalk before taking the train back to Philadelphia. None of the Wilson party had berths on the long trainride home so slept on seats until they reached Tonawanda where a trolley was waiting to take them back to Lockport.

About fifty years later, three of the graduates and their advisor, Miss Mabel Wilson, Willard Nevins, Blanche Wilson, and the late Mildred Mudge, joined the Wilson Historical Society. (Note: Credits to Don Loker, Historian, Miss Mabel Wilson, and Miss Blanche Wilson.

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MUSEUM GREETERS FOR MARCH:

Mrs. Margaret Wilson is getting everybody into the act as greeters at the museum on Sunday afternoons. It is nice to see some of our newer members volunteering to help out. The following will serve next month: March 1st, Bob and Marie Hoffman; March 8th, James and Shelby Cowles; March 15th, Rog and Marge Goodman; March 22nd, Harold and Barbara Mosher, and March 29th, James and Debbie Cobb.

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DELPHIC CIRCLE HELPS LIBRARY:

The Delphic Circle has made a donation to the Wilson Free Library to start a fund to purchase a Micro-Film Scanner. If any member of the society would care to contribute to this worthy cause, send your contribution to the Library and mark it "Scanner Fund".

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TICKETS ON QUILT AVAILABLE:

Betty Stimson has announced that tickets for the quilt raffle, through courtesy of Tom Fare, are now ready. She urges everyone to try and get some from her and sell as many as possible. Once the quilt is on display, this should not be hard as it is the most beautiful one made to date by Florence Schultz and her expert quilting crew.

There will also be three additional awards: 2nd prize, Hand-made miniature cabinet; 3rd prize, Hand-made Scarecrow Doll; and 4th prize, Wilson Historical Society Cookbook.

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SIGN IN WILSON SCHOOL LIBRARY:

"Lead, follow, or get out of the way."

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RECENT ACQUISITIONS:

Mrs. Earl McCormick of Oceanside, Cal., has donated an 1896 Baptismal Dress, American Legion Hat, and 48 star American Flag owned by the late Earl McCormick. Also, a black Satin Vest and white Knitted Vest (1740-50) worn by William B. McCormick, Earl's g. grandfather.
Mr. Ray Dirling of Lockport: Meirchaum Pipe in Presentation Case that once belonged to W. L. Martin of Wilson; also, Muster Roll of Co. B, 8th Regiment, 1863 & 1864.
Helen Sayer of Burt: Framed picture, Wilson High Class of '22, taken on steps of Capitol.
Nettie Stimson: World War I Army Coat in good condition.
Anna Mae Nevins: One pair of long black Silk Gloves, ca. 1900.
John and Marion Goodrich: Snapshot of 4H Float taken ca. 1955 at Fielday parade.
Robert Steinman: A metal Car-toy. Tiny Replica, Cars of Yesteryear.
Ronald Cumsty of Newfane: Wilson booklets of the 22nd Annual Field Day; 24th Annual Field Day; 30th Annual Field Day; and 35th Annual Field Day.
Bessie Cole: Souvenirs of the Wilson Centennial. "Centennial Belles" Pin; "Brothers of the Brush" Pin; and a "Wooden Nickel".
Mrs. Margaret Wilson: Beautiful Brass Footwarmer, 90 to 100 years old.
Betty Stimson: Doll Dresser.

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MARCH PROGRAM:

Our own inimitable Frances Goldthorpe, and other selected musicians, will present a program at the March meeting related to, "Music in Wilson homes, churches, and gatherings of the 1800's." Refreshments will be served by Winnie Fischer, Chrm., Ruth Phillips, and Dorothea Mark.

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MUSEUM EXHIBITS:

February and March are usually dreary months--but not at the Wilson Museum. A "Winter-time-Wintertime" exhibit is complemented by two special displays including Charles Boyer's exclusive collection of old valentines dating back to the 1860's; also, a number of fine old radios, phonographs, wireless kets, and rare telephones commemorating the achievements of Thomas A. Edison. The exhibit may be seen until March 23rd.
Eleanor Myers will head-up the new April-May display which will feature "Spring Finery". All members who can loan old hats, parasols, or other refinements that enhanced "My Lady's" wardrobe in the distant past, are asked to please bring their items to the museum on the 23rd at 1:00 o'clock. You may call Eleanor for further information.

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"COUNTRY FAIR" IN PLANNING STAGE:

Sue Toenniessen, General Chrm. of the annual "Country Fair", has announced that the first planning meeting will be held Monday evening at the museum, April 6th at 7:30 PM. Bring your membership booklets, list of supplies you will need, and your ideas. This may well be the most important meeting to organize the Fair so pleasetry to attend.
Activities will be chaired by the following: Antique Cars, Dr. Argue and Bob Rose; Advertising, Millie Croop; Audio & Electrical, Johnny Myers; Balloons, Ron and Judy Zauner; Coffee, Donuts & Beverage, Sara Berry and Millie Monsbery; Candy, Lucy Monroe; Cashiers, Betty Stimson; Chili, Jan Sporleder; Dealer Contracts, Nettie Stimson; Dealer Assignments, "Chuck" Campbell; Fishpond, Dianne Albright; Flea Market, Edna Rose; Food Barn, Lois Barnum; Food Tables and Cleanup, Betty Stimson; Funnel Cakes, Carol Smith; Genealogy, Celeste Crawford; Hot Dogs, Art Schnoor; Guest & Membership Register, Chris Kelman; Movies, Darrell Smith; Museum Display, Lois Jennings; Parking, Joe Geiser; Pie Contest, Marion Campbell; Plants, Jean Swanson & Edna Robinson; Popcorn & Lemonade, Emma Lou Reppentine; Posters & Announcements, Don Croop; Publicity, Dorothy Linnabery; Quilt, Florence Schultz; School Days Exhibit, Dora Wakeman & Dorothy Thilk; Supplies, Gwen Heidenfeldt; Ways and Means Table, Nettie Stimson.

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FROM THE PAST:

Wilson's former Postmaster, Harold Albright, once played for dances on "Sunset Island" with a local musical group. Members of the five-piece orchestra were Clare Coe, Sax; Stanley Giles, Trumpet; Albert "Putty" Johnson, Drums; Harold Albright, Tenor Banjo; and Jennie Meril, Piano. Jennie lived in Lockport and was Barbara Mosher's aunt.

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GRACE GOES TO WASHINGTON:

Most of us were able to watch Pres. Reagan's inauguration on TV, but one of our members had the thrill of participating in person. Grace Singer had a good view of the parade on the line of march, and later attended an inaugural ball held in the Space Center. We can share in the excitement she must have felt in seeing the President and First Lady in person. Before returning to Wilson, she spent a few days with Helen Idle at Gaithersburg, Md., and Grace reports that her sister-in-law is in good health, attends art classes, and spends much of her time painting.

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NEW MEMBERS:

We welcome Robert and Charles Robinson, grandsons of Edna Robinson, the latest new Junior members in the society.

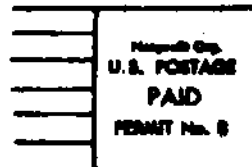
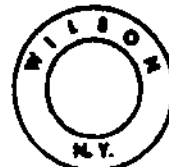
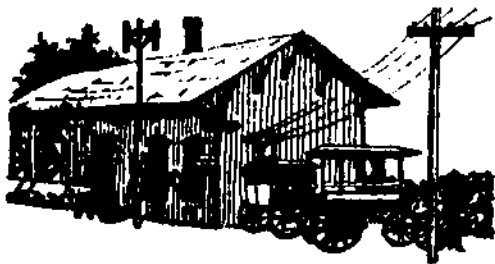
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CHECK THESE DATES ON YOUR CALENDAR:

- March 11th: Trustee Meeting, 8:00 PM at Dr. Argues Office on Lake Street.
- March 16th: Regular monthly meeting, Monday evening, 7:30 PM at museum.
- March 23rd: Museum Comm. meeting to change exhibit, Monday, 1:00 PM.
- April 6th: Planning Meeting, "Country Fair", Monday, 7:30 PM at museum.

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LAST WORD: Never tell people how to do things. Tell them what to do and they will surprise you with their ingenuity.



Wilson Historical Society

WILSON, NEW YORK 14172

NEWSLETTER

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

APRIL 1981 Vol.10 No.4
(Coleman Press)

FORTY YEARS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE:

Dr. John F. Argue, Dr. Walter Altbach, and Dr. Mabel Carmer Hill, will be honored at a reception in the Newfane High School, Sunday, April 26th, from 1:00 to 5:00 PM. Each doctor has contributed 40 or more years of service in his profession, and all are highly regarded in their respective communities.

Dr. Argue completed his medical training at the University of Buffalo in 1935, and began his practise in Wilson in 1937. During World War II he was a Flight Surgeon in the Medical Corps of the U. S. Airforce, and while a member of the 483rd Bomber Group in Europe, received a Presidential Citation. He was honorably discharged in 1945 with the rank of Captain.

Doc is a past president of the Niagara County Medical Society (1970-71); a Diplomate of the American Board of Family Practise (D-ABFP); the N.Y. State Medical Society; A.M.A. American Academy of Family Physicians; Gross Medical Society; Inter-Community Memorial Hospital Staff at Newfane; and Chief of Staff from 1960-61 and 1979-81. He also served on the Mount View Hospital Staff and was Chief of Staff from 1969 through 1971, also Wilson Health Officer from 1948 to 1953 and School Physician from 1937 on.

He was awarded the "President's Citation" in 1978 while attending the annual convention of the N.Y. State Medical Society in New York City, and 300 delegates gave him a standing ovation when the presentation was made.

Dr. Argue, one of the founding members of the Wilson Historical Society, has served as its President since 1972, and under his steady hand has seen the organization expand from forty to over 450 members. He is also a member of Exley United Methodist Church and Ontario Lodge F. & A. M. of Wilson.

He is an avid sports car enthusiast and owns a number of antique cars. He has presented five of them to the society as a basis for an antique car museum in Wilson. In 1974 he passed a test at Mossport, Ontario, to become a motor car racing driver, and other hobbies include photography and historical research.

He married Jean Kaiser, daughter of Charles A. Kaiser, D.O., and Clara Husten Kaiser, D.O., of Lockport. They have three children, Susan A. Schearer, John C. Argue, and Anne A. Sobilik.

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IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR AGAIN:

Annual membership dues in the society expire April 30, 1981, but in spite of all you've heard about rising costs and inflation, dues will not be raised. As long as the annual "Country Fair" continues to be a financial success, prospects are good for "holding the line". This policy makes it essential, however, that all members remain active and renew their memberships promptly. Couples, \$5; Singles, \$3; Juniors \$1 (under 18); and if you have been toying with the idea of becoming a "Life Member", our treasurer will be pleased to accept your check for \$100. dollars. A membership form is enclosed for your convenience.

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MUSEUM EXHIBIT FOR APRIL-MAY:

Spring Finery will be exhibited at the museum during April and May, and feature wearing apparel worn by the lady of yesteryear, including hats, shawls, gloves, bags, etc. There is still time to enter your favorite "heirloom" by contacting Eleanor Myers or Lois Jennings.

There will also be a one day special railroad exhibit at the museum on Sunday, April 26th, from 1:00 to 5:00 PM. The display and program will be put on by the Buffalo Chapter of the National Railroad Historical Society, and Jeffrey Gerstung, Vice-Pres., said slides and movies will be shown including the N.Y. Central sound movie, "Signals".

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MUSICAL MEMORIES:

A musical group that helped beat the "Depression Blues" in the early 1930's was the "Indigoers", and their theme song was a popular hit of the day, "Mood Indigo". Marjorie Crossman Hurlburt was their rehearsal supervisor, and the band was composed of Ron Hamblin, piano; Larry Pease, sax; Richard Loomis, sax; Harry Hamblin, trumpet; Pete Burmaster, bass; and Willis Rockwood, drums. They played for dances on "Sunset Island" from 1930-34.

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HOSTS AND HOSTESSES FOR APRIL:

Don't let your spirits be dampened by April showers. Come to the museum any Sunday from 2 to 4 PM and meet these friendly greeters: April 5th, Clifford and Lucille Upton; April 12th, Beryl Tovell and Florence Schultz; April 19th, Margaret Wilson and Elanche Wilson; and April 26th, Richard and Sue Schultz.

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NEW MEMBERS:

We welcome five new Wilson residents into the society, Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Pease, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Barker, and Miss Carol Woods.

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ted an "Invitation to a Harvest Party" held at the Ontario House
nt to Thomas Singer, grandfather of the late Harold Singer.
r have given an "Annual Catalogue of Officers and Students" of
ted 1888-89.

equiem for a Railroad", Hojack Line; Reproduction of 1900
Wilson Stars dated 4/3/36; 6/12/'36; and 8/14/'36.

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NEW PUBLICA.

The "Story" island, the society's 9th publication, will be off the press in a few weeks. It compiled from information obtained from Bessie Crawford, Joe Higgins, Dorothy Thilk, Marjorie Whitt, Margaret Wilson, Marietta Goodman, Thelma Patterson, Dora Wakeman, Harold Albright, Walter Wilson, and Fay Campbell. A sketch of an 1908 map and ten rare photographs will also be featured in the booklet.

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FAIR CHAIRMEN TO MEET;

All Fair Chairmen are asked to meet at the Wilson Museum, Monday, April 6th, at 7:30 PM. There are some important plans to be discussed so please try to attend.

Lou Aloisio and Paul Karsten, representing Wilson's "Little League", made a proposal before the Board of Trustees to allow the Little League to sponsor a Chicken Barbecue at the "Country Fair". Dinners would be served in the new building with the society providing coffee and deserts. The proposal was referred to the Fair Comm. for final disposition.

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LOOKING AHEAD:

Anyone who remembers what the depot and grounds looked like in 1972 can appreciate the improvements that have been made. The building has become a fine meeting place for the society as well as other groups, new tree plantings have been made, also a new antique car building, parking lot, and other improvements.

Dr. George Badger, who donated the four acre plot north of the building, has notified the trustees of his intent to plant evergreen trees along the boundary line. Whit Barnum has agreed to stake it out and also, thanks to Whit, "Hojack Park" has been seeded and over a dozen ornamental trees planted.

Fair Day, May 25th, is the target date for leveling off the grounds, completing the new rest rooms, and installing new wiring in the facilities.

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APRIL PROGRAM:

Mr. William Storrs of Lockport will be guest speaker in April, and his subject will deal with architectural styles in Lockport and Wilson.

Marietta Goodman has announced that refreshments will be served after the meeting by Chris Kelman, Chrm., Millie Lonsbery, and Clara Marcks.

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NEW CURATOR:

Jan Losi of Cambria has been appointed Curator of the Niag. Co. Hist. Soc. museum in Lockport. He comes well equipped for the job and holds a M.A. in History/Museum Studies, a B.A. in History, and an A.A. in Liberal Arts. In past years he has worked with the Kansas State Hist. Soc., Rochester Museum & Science Center, Delaware Div. of Historical and Cultural Affairs, and Buffalo & Erie Co. Historical Society. Mr. Losi attended our March meeting and gave a brief outline of proposed programs at Lockport which will include presentations by other local historical societies.

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MUSIC OF THE PAST:

If you didn't attend Frances Goldthorp's musical presentation, you missed one of the livelier programs of the year. Members were given a musical treat into the past with songs from the 1800's. David Smith started by playing on a dulcimer, and Rev. Mark Nordskog followed with selections on the guitar. The audience joined in when tunes were familiar.

Francis Tate tuned the museum pianos recently---another example of how members of our society give of their time and talents for the benefit of everyone.

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HISTORICAL NOTE:

Samuel H. Pettit was born in Wilson in 1844, and graduated later from the Wilson Collegiate Institute. He then attended the Bryant & Stratton Business College in Rochester, and married Mary Elizabeth Case, Sept. 13, 1864. He served 5 terms as Supervisor of the Town of Wilson, also 2 terms as Niagara County Clerk.

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SPECIAL DATES FOR YOUR CALENDAR:

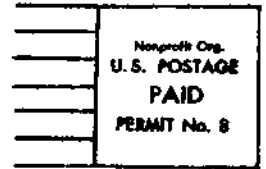
- April 6th: Meeting of all Fair Chairmen, 7:30 PM at museum.
- April 14th: Meeting of Delphic Circle, 8:00 PM at museum.
- April 15th: Trustee meeting, 8:00 PM at museum.
- April 20th: Regular monthly meeting, 7:30 PM at museum.
- April 26th: Doctors' Reception at Newfane High School, 1:00 to 5:00 PM.
- " " Special railroad exhibit and program, 1:00 to 5:00 PM at museum.

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BON MOT:

There aren't any hopeless situations; there are only people who have grown hopeless about them. (Clare Boothe Luce)

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Wilson Historical Society

WILSON, NEW YORK 14172

NEWSLETTER

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

MAY VOL 10 NO. 5

THE ONE-ROOM SCHOOLHOUSE:

The rural school, once the backbone of our educational system, has all but disappeared from most states in the Union. When centralization was first proposed, many people were reluctant to give up their little family schools over which the local district had full control. It was felt that the one-room school had many advantages and, with dedicated teachers, gave their children a first class education.

Others, however, disagreed and when centralization was offered, saw a chance to place their children in large modern schools where, in addition to having graded class rooms, the pupils could receive the benefit of special instruction inband, voice, art, industrial arts, home economics, physical education and all related sports. Right or wrong, the advocates of centralization won out and by 1955, all rural schools were absorbed into the Wilson Central system.

Most of the one-room schools were sold with tax payers in each district receiving a proportionate share of the money received. Many were remodeled into homes but one exception was the Randall Rd. schoolhouse north of New Rd., which was not sold because the deed could not be cleared. It is used to this day as a Community Center where meetings of various groups like 4-H are held.

A number of active members of the Wilson Hist. Soc. once taught in area districts including Hazel Salisbury, Beatrice Salisbury, Laura Eick, Helen Stevens, Dorothy Lort, Dora Wakeman, Eloise Culverwell, Lydia Southard, Ernestine Walpole, Bessie Crawford, Alice Carter, and Blanche Wilson. (Excerpts from 'historic minute' presented by Lois Barnum.)

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RECENT ACQUISITIONS:

Floyd Clark has donated several wooden markers used to set out fishing nets, also a fish market sign and two 1936 fishing certificates.

Harold Fitzsimmons of Cambria: Assortment of hand-made Christmas tree ornaments and old time recipes for summer drinks and vinegars.

Fred Tripensee: Assorted photographs, Calling card of the Thomas Marks Nursery, and a Garland Stove Advertising card.

Dorothy Linnabery: Newspaper clippings about Wilson Museum, also pictures.

Norman Pettit of Lockport: Saturday Evening Post "Roll Call of 2530 Automobiles."

Nettie Stimson: Old Time Songs published for Burt Bros. of Lockport.

Miss Carol Woods: Newspaper clippings about museum.

George Pierce of Tonawanda: Photostatic copy "Gen. Abner Doubleday's Farewell Address."

Jennie Bigalow: Knife & Case used in Civil War, a gift to Fred Bigalow.

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IN MEMORIAM: (Rest in Peace)

Mrs. Edna Haner, wife of the late Charles E. Haner, passed away March 11th at Niagara Falls Medical Center. She worked in the George Middleton Drugstore when 10-12 years old became a pharmacist. She is survived by two brothers, Paul Middleton of Wilson, and Carl Middleton of Niagara Falls; also a sister, Ethel Foote of Florida.

Miss Elizabeth Hammond, Life Member, died recently at Winnipeg, Canada. She was the niece of the late Richard Patterson, long term station agent at Wilson for whom the Patterson Room was named. She is survived by Miss Mildred Hammond with whom she resided.

Mrs. Marguerite Stockwell Langdon, genealogist, passed away April 10th. She is survived by her husband, Kenneth M. Langdon; three children, Nick Langdon of N.C., Capt. Melinda Langdon of Machias, and Frank Langdon of Lockport. She had two grandchildren, Greg and Patty Langdon; four sisters, Mrs. Marion Winger of Wilson, Mrs. Mildred Schoultz of Wilson, Mrs. Martha Harvey of Olcott, and Mrs. Beatrice Hicks of California; also one brother, Kenneth Stockwell of California. She was laid to rest in Greenwood Cemetery, Wilson.

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NEW LIFE MEMBERS:

We welcome Thomas and Jacqueline Singer of Bethesda, Md., as the 35th and 36th Life Members of the Wilson Hist. Society. Tom graduated from Wilson High in 1950 and the Horton School, University of Pennsylvania, in 1954. He met his wife, Jacqueline Moulin, while stationed in Casablanca as a Captain in the U.S. Airforce. They have five children, Marc Andre, 23, who will graduate from Hamilton College soon; Vivianne, 21; Claire, 19; Michelle, 16; and Gail, 13. Tom holds the position of 1st Vice-Pres. of the Kaiser-Aluminum Corporation.

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BON MOT:

You shouldn't question your wife's judgement---look who she married.

WANTED! FOR "COUNTRY FAIR": "FLEAS", PLANTS, PIES & SALADS, also PIES, PIES, PIES & PIES

"COUNTRY FAIR" IS MAY 25th:

Sue Toennissen, Gen. Chrm., notes that all chairmen are getting their acts together so it is beginning to look good for another successful day. Dealer contracts have been coming in fast and Nettie Stimson, Chrm., thinks we may have to use "Hojack Park" to accomodate them.

The Wilson Little League will sponsor a chicken barbecue from 1:00 to 5:00 PM, and the society will dispense coffee and pie. Mothers of Little Leaguers have agreed to bake pies for the dinner in appreciation of having use of the Automotive Building for the barbecue.

We also hope to provide our usual fine selection of variety foods including "Art's Hot Dogs", "Jan's Chili", and "Carol's Funnell Cakes". It is also planned to have a plentiful supply of salads, lemonade and popcorn, fruit juice, coffee and donuts, and home-made candies.

We urge everyone to push their quilt tickets and get the stubs in to Betty Stimson by the 24th of May.

More and more people are finding out that Wilson is a good place to be on Memorial Day. Bigger crowds means a bigger effort, so a successful Fair depends on everyone's participation and generosity. Can we count on you?

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THE MAIL BAG:

We wish to thank all who have written and made such nice comments about the "Newsletter". Sometimes interesting bits of information are included which we try to pass on to everyone.

Mrs. Lillian Ulrich gave her father, Merton Conrad, a membership for his 80th birthday. He was born in Wilson and attended school here, and though the family moved to Buffalo in 1919, he still recognizes familiar names in the "Newsletter". As a child, Mrs. Ulrich visited relatives, (Mudges, Stedmans, and Lillies), and this past summer she brought her father to see Lois Barnum's family--also the museum. It was his first trip to Wilson in 12 years, and he enjoyed it.

Mrs. Lucile Garnett Moyer requested some picture postcards of the Depot. Her interest stems from the fact she once worked with Mr. Patterson as a telegrapher in the 1920's. Mrs. Moyer is a charter member of the Town of Schroepel Hist. Soc. located between Syracuse and Oswego.

Beatrice Hicks was installed in April as Regent of LaPuerta de Ora Chapter, D.A.R., in San Francisco, Cal. She recently compiled and published a Lineage Research Inventory which was awarded 1st place for Outstanding Achievement in the State of California.

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HOST & HOSTESSES FOR MAY:

The museum will be open 5 Sundays in May and greeters will be: May 3rd, Art & Eva Zortman; May 10th, James & Tess Conrad; May 17th, Earle & Gerry Swann; May 24th, Ron & Judy Zauner; and May 31st, George & Sue Cruickshank.

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BLUE SPRUCE PLANTED:

Dr. George Badger has planted over 40 blue spruce evergreen trees along the north line of 4-acre "Hojack Park". The two-foot trees outline the property beautifully and are planted 10' within the boundary and spaced 12' apart. A marker on the property will recognize the donors, Dr. and Mrs. George Badger of Lockport, and a dedication ceremony is planned on the evening of the Hobo Supper and annual meeting, June 15th.

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NEW ANNUAL MEMBERS:

We welcome 24 new members this month: Mr. Merton Conrad, Florida; Mrs. Lorraine Pasko, Niagara Falls; David & Anne Moyer, Lockport; Mr. and Mrs. Dale Foster, N. Tonawanda; Marjorie Banks, New Hampshire; Ken & Esther (formerly Esther Landy) Leppich, Washington; Mrs. Helen Fitzsimmons, Lockport; Robert & Betty Case, Elmira; John L. Cable, Florida; and John & Ruth Zauner, Rochester. Jennifer Rose "takes the cake as our youngest member. She hails from Virginia and is the infant daughter of Bill & Judy Rose.

Joining from Wilson are Willis & Beatrice Rockwood; Fay and Florence Campbell; Kevin and Kristine Reppentine; and Susan and Sandra Stimson.

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MEN NEEDED:

There is a real need for able-bodied men to help out at the museum Saturday mornings from 8:00 to 12:00 AM. Work will start the Saturday after Easter, April 25th, and will continue on May 2nd, May 9th, May 16th, and May 23rd. There is much to be done to get the grounds and buildings ready for the "Country Fair"---so please try to turn out at least once or twice during this very critical period. Any questions--contact Art Schnoor.

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MAY PROGRAM:

Mrs. Dora Wakeman will be our guest speaker at the May 18th meeting and will tell the story of the "Hojack" railroad as it related to Wilson. Dora is a charter member and has served as a trustee and member of the Library and Publications Committees. She has also been helping Dorothy Think prepare the interesting "Historic Minute" portion of our monthly programs.

Refreshments will be served after the meeting by Maryanne Sharpe, Chrm., Sara Berry and Berne Messersmith.

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DATE REMINDERS FOR YOUR CALEDAR:

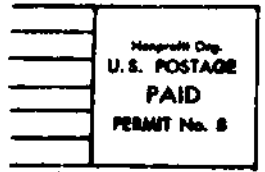
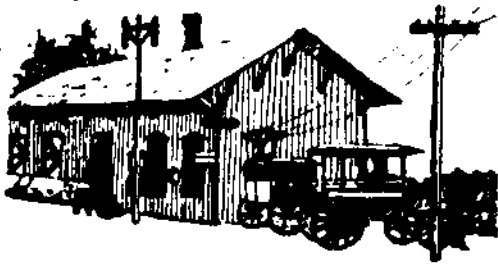
- May 13th: Trustee Meeting, 8:00 PM at museum.
- May 18th: Regular monthly meeting, 7:30 PM at museum.
- May 25th: Annual "Country Fair", 10:00 to 5:00 PM, museum grounds.

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LAST WORD: Showing up is 80% of life. (Woody Allen)

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IMPORTANT MEETING
OF
"COUNTRY FAIR"
Committee Chairmen
May 4th at Museum
7:30 PM



Wilson Historical Society

WILSON, NEW YORK 14172

NEWSLETTER

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

JUNE 1981 Vol. 10 No. 6

THE 1981 COUNTRY FAIR:

May 25th will soon be here--the day of the annual "Country Fair". What better place to spend the day, meet old acquaintances, and enjoy your lunch and supper. Starting at 10:00 AM there will be a plentiful supply of hot dogs, chili, funnel cakes, salads and pie, with lots of lemonade, coffee, and loganberry juice to 'wash it down'. The Wilson Little League chicken Bar-B-Q will start at 1:00 PM so no one should go hungry this year. Winnie Fischer will head up the new committee to dispense coffee and pie for the barbecue.

Keeping in mind that the Fair falls on Memorial Day--the day on which our Nation's War Veterans are honored--the American Legion Post No. 836 of Wilson will conduct a short Memorial Service by the flagpole with Commander John Demmin officiating. Service will be 12 Noon.

Nettie Stimson, along with "Chuck" Campbell and his trusty crew, will be out bright and early performing the difficult task of placing dealers in spots of their choosing. Joe Geiser can be expected to guide his men in another smooth parking operation, and we must again thank Pfeiffer's Foods, Ontario Orchards, and the Farm & Garden Center for use of their parking lots.

Games for children will be west of the old barn and supervised by Faye and Jim Pisello. Movies of past fairs were cancelled to allow the Little League use of the Automotive Building. In addition to the regular museum exhibit, there will be an educational display in the Patterson Room under the supervision of Dorothy Thilk and Dora Wakeman. Be sure to stop in and register--who knows, you might run into one of your former schoolteachers.

Each year the quilt for the raffle is prettier than the last one. We say this because it is a fact. Florence Schultz, Beryl Tovell, and others have become so proficient we suggest it would be hard to find quilts of similar quality in Niagara County. If you have neglected to purchase your donation tickets you will have until 5:00 PM on Fair Day.

Our membership should be aware that nearly 80 Wilson Businessmen have made cash donations to help advertise the Fair in the Niagara Gazette, Union Sun & Journal, Tri-County News, Retailer, and Pennysaver. Their yearly support of the society is appreciated.

The Fair has been a success because of the efforts of many people. To all who clean and wash windows, fix up building and grounds, bake and furnish, plan and purchase supplies, direct traffic, park cars, work in various concessions, prepare or watch exhibits, dispense foods, place dealers, entertain, act as cashiers--or just make everyone happy by being present--we say, on behalf of the society, "Thank you, one and all."

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PHENOMENAL GROWTH:

As of May, 1981, the society has grown to a total of 562 members which includes 45 junior members. This breaks down to 286 members with Wilson mailing addresses; 169 with a Niagara County address outside of Wilson; 26 with N.Y. State addresses outside of Niagara County; and 80 with out-of-state addresses. 359 copies of the June "Newsletter" were mailed out.

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HOSTS & HOSTESSES FOR JUNE:

Mrs. Margaret Wilson has announced that the following members will serve as 'greeters': June 7th, Berne and Nancy Kent; June 14th, Becky Stevens and Jean Hayes; June 21st, Florence Gath and Gwen Heidenfeldt; and June 28th, John and Jane Demmin.

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WILSON NIGHT AT LOCKPORT:

Arthur Schnoor will be guest speaker at the "Wilson Night" program to be sponsored by the Niag. Co. Hist. Soc. at Lockport, May 28th, at 8:00 PM. Art will speak on 'Ships and Shipping in and out of Wilson Harbor in the Past', with other members of our group joining to assist as greeters and preparing a Wilson display. We hope many Wilson members will be present.

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STUDENT TO BE HONORED:

Miss Patricia Mitalski of Wilson Central School, will receive a cash award on Class Night from the Wilson Hist. Soc. in recognition of her having achieved the highest mark in History Regents. She will also receive a one year membership in the society.

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INTERNATIONAL NIGHT:

The annual International Night, a gathering of Hist. Soc. members from both sides of the river, will be held at the new Niagara School Dist. No. 2 Museum, Town of Niagara, Lockport Rd. Meeting time, 7:00 PM, June 11, 1981. If you plan to attend, notify Dorothy Thilk.

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BON MOT: He that plants trees loves others besides himself. (English Proverb)

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ACQUISITIONS:

The Museum Comm. has acquired a new book, "The Tasteful Interlude", American Interiors through the camera's eye, 1860-1917. It will be in library for use by the membership.

Jennie Bigalow: Wool flowers mounted in glass-covered frame. Given to her by a great aunt of her father's, Maria Haner Johnson.

Elwin Upton: Bible that belonged to B.J. Smith-1865, also 1898 Songbook, and 1894 Song Book, "Garnered Gems."

Mildred Hammond, Winnipeg, Can.: Two Doilies given by Miss Kruske to girls in Grade 5, Class of 1917.

Dr. John Argue: "Welcome Lindy" and "Grey Auto Super Charged Gas" Pins.

Dorrance DeMaison: Framed paintings of Reuben Wilson Cabin, 1877 R.W. & O. Station, and 1897 NYC Depots at Wilson.

Jean Halstead Hayes: Bicentennial issue of DAR magazine and historical clippings.

Clarence Monroe: John W. Cowper card given employees after Pearl Harbor when men were sent to Pine Camp (Camp Drum) to build Army Barracks.

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PEASE FAMILY FARM:

On June 14th at 2:00 PM, the Wilson Hist. Soc. will dedicate a marker at the family farm of Lawrence D. Pease, Wilson-Burt Rd. Mr. Pease is descended from one of the earliest pioneers to settle in Niagara County, Josiah and Nancy Parsons Pease.

Natives of Parsonsfield, Maine, Josiah & Nancy moved to Olcott in 1807 where they lived through the War of 1812. One son, Enoch, was captured by the British and later released, while another son, Nathaniel, was the boy who rolled the flour barrels out of Van Horn's Mill before it was destroyed.

Enoch married Eliza Ann Douglas and they moved their family to Wilson in May, 1836. Their son, A. Douglas Pease, attended the Wilson Collegiate Institute and later married Abigail Sayer, daughter of Jonathan Sayer, one of Wilson's first physicians. A. Douglas acquired 535 acres of land and had 125 acres in fruit. He served as Supervisor for the Town of Wilson in 1882 and 1883, and also was a member of the Board of Education for nine years.

Howard Enoch Pease, son of A. Douglas, married Ethel May Fitch and they had three children, Helen, Lawrence and Howard, Jr., deceased. Howard, Sr., attended a business college in Toronto and incorporated many practical ideas in his methods of farm management. He, like his father, was a member of the School Board for many years, and also served as Justice of the Peace and member of the Wilson Town Board.

Lawrence Douglas Pease (Larry), in addition to running one of Wilson's finest fruit farms has, like his father and grandfather before him, been active in Community affairs for many years. On March 14, 1980, he was honored at a retirement dinner in the South Wilson Fire Hall after completing 36 years of uninterrupted service on the Wilson Town Board.

Larry and his wife, the former Charlotte O'Connor, reside on the 125 acre farm that was once part of the 535 acres that extended to Lake Ontario. They have 3 children, Jane, Rodney, and James, and should one of their sons follow in Larry's footsteps, the Pease farm will carry the family name through four generations. Light refreshments will follow the Dedication.

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OFFICERS NOMINATED:

Wirt Wakeman, Chrm. of the Nominating Comm., has presented the following list of officers and trustees to be voted on at the annual meeting on June 20th. PRESIDENT, Dr. John F. Argue 1st VICE-PRES., Arthur Schnoor; 2nd VICE-PRES., Norman MacAskill; TREASURER, Millie Croop; REC. SECRETARY, Judy Zauner; COR. SECRETARY, Flossie Lortz. TRUSTEES TO JUNE, 1984: Whitney Barnum, Edward Hastings, and Burt Jennings.

COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN FOR 1981-82 appointed by Pres. Argue will be: ACQUISITIONS, Lois Jennings; ANTIQUE CARS, Bob Rose; BY-LAWS, Karl Wright; CABOOSE, Bob Rose; COUNTRY FAIR, Sue Toenniessen; GENEALOGICAL, Celeste Crawford; GROUNDS, Elwin Upton; HISTORICAL SITES, Jan Sporleder; TOURS, Eleanor Myers; HOUSEKEEPING, Betty Stimson; LIBRARY, Dorothy Lort; MEMBERSHIP, Chris Kelman; MEMORIAL, Millie Croop; MUSEUM, Lois Jennings; NOM INATIONS, Edgar Culverwell; PLANNING, Arthur Schnoor; PROGRAM, Dorothy Linnabery; PUBLICATIONS, Don Croop; PUBLICITY, Dorothy Linnabery; QUILT, Florence Schultz; REFRESHMENTS, Marietta Goodman; SUNDAY HOSTESSES, Margaret Wilson; STUDY GROUP, George Linnabery; and WAYS AND MEANS, Bill and Peg Fritton.

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HEY! LOOK US OVER:

Rest rooms are being erected, cement walks laid, stone spread, grounds leveled off and seeded, windmill started, signs and markers put in place; depot roof repaired, and, thanks to John Myers and Burt Jennings, one of the display cabinets has been electrified. The rest room project has been pushed by Ed Hastings and Art Schnoor with a big assist from "Chuck" Messersmith who laid out the plumbing work. "Bud" Monroe's experience as a steelman for Cowper was helpful in getting the re-inforcement rods in place prior to pouring walks & rest room floors.

Very much in evidence the past few weeks were Elwin Upton, Chrm. of grounds, Fred Berry, Wally Beutel, Bill Budde, Fenton Cole, George Linnabery, Ed Lort, Bob Rose, Ron Zauner, and Ralph Dinse. One gent was heard to remark, "We can all be proud the way the museum grounds will look for this year's Fair." "Sprucing up" and doing construction sometimes involves use of private equipment, and the job couldn't have been done without men like Bob Rohring, who has donated use of his tractors; Ed Hastings who uses his mortar-mixing equipment for cement block work; Art Schnoor who donates so much use of his truck, roto tiller, and other tools; or Wally Beutel who uses his welding equipment when needed.

So, if some of you ladies would like to get into the act, you may by showing up on Sat. morning or Sunday afternoon, May 23rd and 24th, when Betty Stimson wishes to shine up the museum and get things "set-up" in preparation for the Fair.

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LIGHT IS THE TASK when many share the toil. (Homer)

GRAND LADY OF THE ISLAND:

This item is a tribute to Mrs. Crawford who supplied much of the information from which the society's latest publication, "The Story of Sunset Island", was compiled.

Bessie DeNeau Crawford was born in Wilson, Oct. 4, 1888, the oldest child of Joseph E. and Ellen Van Buren DeNeau. She is a 10th generation New Yorker and traces her mother's family to Cornelis Maesson Van Buren who came from Holland in 1631. Her g.grandfather, Charles, grew up with his 1st cousin, Martin Van Buren, who later became Governor of New York and President of the United States. A 9th generation ancestor on her father's side, Chevalier, was an officer in the French & Indian War, and was granted lands on the St. Lawrence River, a portion of which now include the City of Montreal.

Bessie was 9 months old when Lake Island Park was opened in Wilson, and she was taken there in a carriage by her parents and awarded a silver cup for being the prettiest child entered in a baby contest. She attended the old cobblestone school near her home on Pettit St., and when it was later torn down, pupils were scattered around in several places. High School was held in the old Town Hall, 7th and 8th grades were taught in the vacant Creamery Building, and lower grades met in the former Free Methodist Church on Washington Street. The 7th and 8th grades were later transferred from the Creamery Building to the town hall.

Bessie graduated from Wilson High in 1906 and there were ten students in her Class. Until recently, 5 were still living--2 in Florida and 3 in Wilson, and all were members of the Wilson Hist. Society. Bessie entered Teachers Training Class after graduation and taught in area rural schools for several years. She was 12 years old when she joined the Methodist Church and became a member of the Epworth League. Other activities included the Reading Club, Leader of a troop of Campfire Girls, and Chautauqua. She was also organist at the 1st Baptist Church.

Her grandfather was a Civil War Veteran so her mother and grandmother, along with Dorothy Thilk's mother and grandmother, became charter members of the Womens Relief Corps. Later, Bessie and other girls her age joined the Sons of Veterans Auxiliary.

In 1915 she married Luther Reuben Crawford whose great aunt was Luther Wilson's 2nd wife. He disliked the name, however, so always signed himself as Lou R., the name by which every one knew him. The Crawfords made their home on "Sunset Island" when J. Jacob Miller invited them to spend the summer there after their honeymoon. They had one daughter, Cleo Anne, who graduated from Wilson High and Alfred University. She became a designer for Stangal Potteries and later married Angelo Salerno. Their home is in California.

Bessie was 10 years old when the Spanish-American War broke out and recalls, "How proud we were of them in 1898". In World War I several Wilson Seniors volunteered including her brother, Roy DeNeau. The following years were of deep concern--not only for the boys overseas, but because of the virulent type flu that caused sickness and death in many families.

Lou and Bessie were enthusiastic gardeners and cultivated a large tract of land where they grew everything that could survive in this climate. It was a showplace that everyone came from miles to see. In 1965, they celebrated their Golden Wedding, but the following year, Lou died while they were vacationing in Florida. Since his passing, Bessie has traveled to Europe three times by cruise ships. She is now a young 93 and spends her winters in Florida, but always returns to her "Sunset Island" home for the summer.

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JUNE PROGRAM:

The "Hojack Park" marker will be dedicated at the June 15th meeting at 6:15PM. The 4 acre park was donated by Dr. George and Rosemary Badger of Lockport. A "Hobo" supper will follow the ceremony at 6:30 PM, and the annual meeting will be held after dinner. All Committee Chrm. will be asked to give a brief report of the past year's activities after which election of officers and trustees will be held.

Chairmen for the "Hobo" supper are Jan Sporleder, Bea Rockwood, Barbara Mosher, and Dorothy Linnabery. The "Hobo" type menu will consist of lots of beef stew with vegetables, breads and muffins, relishes and pie--the kind of food the "Hojack Hobo" would have either cooked or received from area residents. Cost will be \$3 per person or free if certain foods are cooked or donated. YOU MUST HAVE RESERVATIONS TO ATTEND. If you didn't sign up at the May meeting, you may call either Jan Sporleder (751-9924) or Bea Rockwood (751-9846). Deadline for reservations is June 12th.

The committee will be looking for local members to provide green onions, radishes, relishes, pies (2 per baker), muffins or breads (2 doz. or equivalent), and vegetables for stew such as potatoes, dry onions, carrots, parsnips---also, a large iron kettle from which to serve the stew. This is to be a fun meeting. Wear your "hobo" clothes--no fancy china--bring tin cups, plates--even tin cans will be in style. Pick out a "hobo" name--wear it on you.

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IMPORTANT DATES FOR YOUR CALENDAR:

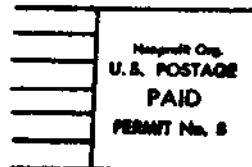
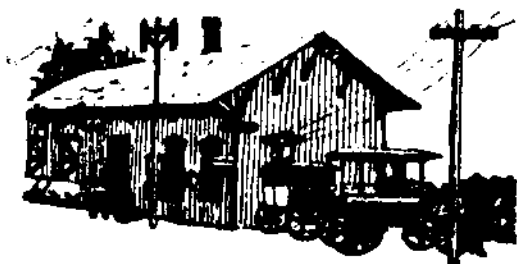
- May 22: Museum Committee meeting at Museum, 10:00 AM.
- May 23: Sat. morning clean up--both men and women-- 8:00 to 12:00
- May 24: Sunday afternoon--set-up and get everything in shape for Fair.
- May 25: Memorial Day Monday, Annual COUNTRY FAIR, 10:00 to 5:00 PM.
- May 28: Thursday evening, Wilson Night at Niag. Co. Hist. Society Museum. 8:00 PM.
- June 3: Invited to attend Royalton Hist. Soc. meeting at Gasport Elementary School. 7:30PM.
- June 10: Trustee Meeting at Wilson Museum. 8:00 PM.
- June 11: International Night, Niagara School Museum, Lockport Rd. 7:00 PM
- June 14: Pease Farm Marker Dedication, Sunday, 2:00 PM, Larry Pease home. Refreshments.
- June 15: "Hojack Park" Marker Dedication, 6:15 PM; "Hobo" Supper, 6:30 PM; Annual Meeting and vote for officers after dinner. Don't forget to wear your "Hobo" clothes.

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RETIREEES LAMENT:

If life were just, we would be born old and achieve youth about the time we'd saved enough to enjoy it. (Jim Fiebig)

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Wilson Historical Society

WILSON, NEW YORK 14172

NEWSLETTER

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor
JULY-AUGUST 1981 Vol 10 No. 7
(Coleman Press)

WILSON STATION:

In the early 1900's, the south line of the village of Wilson was nearly a mile from where the "Hojack" railroad crosses route 425, and the area around the old depot was known as "Wilson Station". The Fredonia Preserving Company dominated the portion south west of the tracks along with the J. E. Pettit Coal & Grain Business, and a Standard Oil supply tank stood along the road between Pettit's and the depot. Directly across the road was the Taggart and Stevens General Merchandizing Store.

The N. Y. Central Depot (present museum) was on its present site north west of the railroad tracks, and the Taggart and Stevens Fruit House was on the switching spur beside it. There were several businesses on the north east side of the tracks including Singer and Johnson's Fruit House, the Pfeister Pickle Company, and the Wilson Lumber Company owned by Roland Singer, A. N. Dwight, and A. C. Bigalow. The J. C. Wright Evaporator was just north of the fruit house, and the Singer Coal Yard was just east of it.

Seven homes were located on the west side of the road between the tracks and the village line, and were owned by Mrs. G. Moot, H.E. Washburn, C.H. Taggart, I. Hamblin, L.N. Bradley, F. Dox, and E.E. Dox. Nine homes on the opposite side of the road belonged to E. Barnum, R. Singer, J.E. Pettit, Mrs. L. Johnson, W. Burton, R. Singer, L. LeVan, W. Johnson, & J.G. Duxbury.

The Duxbury farm, known as "Maple Terrace", contained over 100 acres devoted to dairying and fruit culture, and featured a fine herd of Holstein and Jersey cows.

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FAIR EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS:

Congratulations are in order for Sue Toenniessen and all chairmen who worked so hard to make this year's Fair an outstanding success. Parking and Dealer placement were handled well, food was dispensed quickly and efficiently, and all other areas of the Fair's operation seemed to reflect the fact that everyone knew what had to be done and did it well. Although 1100 chicken barbecue dinners were served by the Little League, the society was still hard pressed to provide enough food for the unusually large crowd.

The Food Barn, under Lois Barnum, netted \$460.72 and included Jan's Chili which was paid for at the same cashier. Other concessions netted the following amounts: Zauner's Balloons, \$67.85; Upton's Beverages, \$259.23; Lucy Monroe's Candy, \$383.16; Faye Pisello's Games, \$15.45; Winnie Fischer's Pie & Coffee, \$141.35; Millie Lonsbery's Coffee & Donuts, \$156.25; Nettie Stimson's Dealers, \$740.60; Dianne Albright's Fishpond, \$36.99; Edna Rose's Flea Market, \$274.10; Carol Smith's Funnel Cakes, \$130.33; Art Schnoor's Hot Dogs, \$560.79; Emma Lou Reppentine's Lemonade & Popcorn, \$113.16; Chris Kelman's Membership, \$85.00; Edna Robinson and Jean Swanson's Plants, \$213.40; Florence Schultz Quilt, \$2,426.18; and Nettie Stimson's Ways & Means, \$146.10. There was also \$36.00 received from the ice cream truck, and \$67.00 in cash contributions from various members. \$430.00 donated by Wilson Businessmen was used to advertise the Fair in local newspapers.

Equally important to the Fair's success were those who planned, purchased supplies, cleaned museum, prepared the grounds, served as hostesses, watched the museum, put up exhibits, entertained, or cleaned up afterwards. Chairmen in these areas included Bob Rose, Doc Argue, John Myers, Celeste Crawford, Lois Jennings, Millie Croop, Joe Geiser, "Chuck" Campbell, Dora Wake-man, Dorothy Thilk, Gwen Heidenfeldt, Dorothy Linnabery, Berne Kent, Art Schnoor, Ed Hastings, Elwin Upton, and Betty Stimson. Names are not available for all who furnished and helped but we wish to thank all who did, and emphasize that the Fair could not have functioned without you.

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MUSEUM HOSTS & HOSTESSES:

Greeters at the museum on Sunday afternoons through July and August will be as follows: July 5th, Bernice McLaughlin and Helen Borngraeber; July 12th, Stuart and Ernie Walpole; July 19th, Ralph and Helen Dinse; July 26th, Rex and Winnie Stacy. August 2nd, Elwin and Garnet Upton; Aug. 9th, John and Jean Kress; Aug. 16th, Grace Singer and Ida Wilson; Aug. 23rd, Harold and Esther Albright; and Aug. 30th, Laura Clark and Margaret Wilson.

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QUILT AWARDED:

Bill Miller of Sanborn was the winner of the beautiful Dahlia Quilt, and Beryl Tovell drew the winning ticket which was sold by Bill Smith of Pekin. Second prize went to Sandy Mettler, Ransomville, who received the miniature hand-made cabinet. Third prize, the Scarecrow Doll, went to Gordon Lort of Gasport, and Mrs. H. Nelson, Lockport, received the 4th prize, a Wilson Historical Society Recipe Book.

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BON MOT: The soldiers fight, and the Kings are heroes.

(Jewish Proverb)

IN MEMORIAM:

Mary E. Caldwell passed away at Inter-Community Hospital after a long illness. She is survived by her husband, George H. Caldwell and three daughters, Mrs. Charles (Viola) Qualiano, Mrs. Joseph (Sharon) Stranges, and Mrs. William (Colleen) Harvey. Mrs. Caldwell was a member of Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Church, the Wilson Fire Co. Auxiliary, the Wilson Business and Professional Womens Club, and the Wilson Hist. Society. She also operated, in Wilson, the first and only licensed home for girls in Niagara County. The society extends it condolences to her family, her sisters, brothers, and seven grandchildren.

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AUTOMOTIVE BUILDING:

Bob Rose has been doing a commendable job getting the antique cars aligned in the new building, and announces that it will be open to the public for a trial period during July and August. Now that things are getting organized, an effort will be made to transfer the automotive artifacts from museum storage. Bob has set up a schedule when men will be present Sunday afternoons during regular visiting hours as follows: July 5th, Don Croop; July 12th, Larry Bulmer; July 19th, "Chuck" Campbell; July 26th, Ed Culverwell; August 2nd, Ken and Dorothy Tracey; August 9th, George Linnabery; August 16th, Wally Goodman; August 23rd, Burt Jennings, and August 30th, Bob Rose.

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CAN YOU HELP US?

Jan Sporleder needs more electric roasters for making Chili. Do you have one laying around you no longer use and could donate to the society? Jan's Chili is a "winner" at the Fair and we probably sell more if we had the equipment--call Jan if you can help. (751-9924)

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A FEW FAIR OBSERVATIONS:

Was amazed to enter grounds at 8:00AM and see most Dealers set-up and things running smoothly--they had to be 'cause there were smiles on the faces of "Chuck" Campbell, Ralph Dinse, and Ed Lort.....Joe Higgins opened Fair officially at 10:00AM with a cheerful greeting to the crowd from our caboose audio system.....Berne Kent tickling the ivories with some real old fashioned toe-tappin' melodies.....Our good public relations expert, Anna Mae Nevins, at her old post by the depot smoothing out occasional "ruffled feathers"..... Early birds heading for the Hot Dogs, Funnel Cakes, and Chili.....Doc and Bob Rose's antique car exhibit attracting a crowd.....People stream onto fair grounds and Art Schnoor and Ralph Dinse start to look a little harassed as lines form for hot dogs.....Man eating chili complained servings too big---those are the kind of complaints we like.....American Legion puts on impressive service at Noon---couldn't help but think, if it wasn't for them we might not be enjoying the freedom and hospitality of our Country Fair..... A few rain drops about 1:00PM didn't dampen anyone's spirits, and folks lined up for Little League barbecue didn't seem to mind.....Millie Lonsbery trying to get the funnel cake line away from in front of her coffee & donut stand--better luck next year, Millie.....Watch smiling faces of little tykes as they happily try their luck at the fishpond.....Interested persons looking over exhibits and displays in museum and school exhibit in Patterson Room...How quickly and neatly grounds were cleaned up under direction of Ed Hastings and Ron Toenniessen.....The many dealers who cheerfully remarked, "We'll be back again"

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LIAR'S BENCH:

Margaret Wilson recalled a story about a large tree that stood on the island above the electric lift at Miller's Boathouse. She said there was a bench around it where friends got together to talk and exchange stories. "Jake" Miller also used to sit there and tell some of his tall tales, and the popular meeting place soon became known as the "Liar's Bench".

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HOBO RALLY:

Hoboes from the area congregated at Wilson's "Hojack" Park, June 15th, to honor one of their esteemed couples, Dr. George and Rosemary Badger of Lockport. Rosemary, a former Wilson High Teacher, was fashionably attired for the ceremony in one of the latest "hobo creations". Doc Argue welcomed the Lock City guests, and Jan Sporleder officially dedicated the historic "Hojack" Park marker to the Badgers who gave the 1/4 acre plot for historical society use. Dr. Badger also planted 42 blue spruce evergreen trees along the north line of the property.

Special recognition was given to "Weary Willy" (Don Croop), "Freight Car Franny" (Edna Robinson), and "Box Car Annie", (Millie Croop), who were generally acclaimed "best dressed" for the occasion.

Over 100 "Hoboes" and their Ladies assembled in the depot for a grand feast featuring Bea Rockwood's "Hobo Stew", greens, pie, coffee, and loganberry juice. During the meal, the musical group, "The Rodeo Band", played some of "Boxcar Willy's" latest hits.

Dick Reed, Niagara County Historian, presented a certificate, (approved by the County Legislature), to Dorothy Thilk, Town Historian, for her valuable assistance in local history. Doc Argue also presented Life Memberships to Whitney Barnum, Town Supervisor, and Bob Rohring, Farm and Garden Supplies, for their valuable assistance to the society over the past years.

Wirt Wakeman, Chrm., presented a slate of officers, and the secretary was authorized to cast one vote for the following: Dr. John F. Argue, Pres; Arthur Schnoor, 1st Vice-Pres; Norman MacAskill, 2nd Vice-Pres; Secretary, Judy Zauner; Treasurer, Millie Croop; and Cor. Secretary, Flossie Lortz. Trustees to June, 1984 will be Whitney Barnum, Edward Hastings, and Burt Jennings.

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PEASE FARM COMMEMORATED:

Over sixty persons visited the Pease farm Sunday afternoon, June 14th, to dedicate a historic marker to the Pease family who have resided on the same land in the town of Wilson for over 150 years. Three generations of the family have been prominent in community affairs and served on the School, Village, and Town Boards. After the ceremony, Charlotte Pease invited everyone in to see her historic home and enjoy a serving of delicious fruit shortcake.

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ACQUISITIONS:

- Dr. and Mrs. Wayne Fricke of Lockport have donated a large framed picture of employees of the Covert Motor Vehicle Company taken at Lockport, July 15, 1913.
- Mary Allgeier, Florida: New Jersey Journal dated 1813. (Turned in by Gerry Swann.)
- Grace Singer: 1886 photo of Wilson High students, also photos of Wilson Flour Mill, Bush-Chapman Bldg., Masonic Bldg., and brochure of projected Tuscarora Park Club.
- Prudy Barrows: Pictures and Postcards of Wilson; also pictures of Niagara Falls and Fort Niagara.
- Mary Okoniewski: Songbook, "The Old Songs we Love" (1885) for piano forte and organ.
- Edwin King, Ransomville: 100 yr. old grater, footwarmer, and insulator cap.
- Ted Lonsbery: Framed picture of District No. 5 Schoolhouse.
- David Goffin: Cannon Ball dug up in back yard of his home at 567 Lake Street.
- Adeline Robinson, Ransomville: Early blue and white striped lady's Bodice.
- John and Jane Demmin: Semi-Vitreous Porcelain Bowl.
- Lewis Schrader: Framed 1945 Village of Wilson Ordinances.
- Anabel Freatman, Lockport: Niagara Falls "Jubilee of Progress, 1967", "Power of Progress-1961", and "One Hundredth 54 th Anniversary"--all published by Niagara Falls Gazette.
- Nettie Stimson: Two Postcards of Wilson School.
- Harold Donner, Ithaca, N.Y. Wilson Postcard and Newspaper clipping (1939) about Reuben Wilson home, also 1907 Diary.
- Robert Horton: Pair of Military Puttees and four American Legion caps.
- Marjorie Whitt, Ransomville: Book of Songs, 7 sheet music, curling iron, and numerous collection of photographs taken on "Sunset Island".
- Ida Erion: Two framed pictures of Maple Rebecca Staff; Old cooking pot marked Germany, and used in open fireplace; also ceramic pot cover.
- Mabel Wilson: 1927 Commencement Program at Wilson; Also, in conjunction with Blanche Wilson, Photo of Class of '27 taken at Mt. Vernon with list of class members.
- Don Croop: Cassette storage case for taped interviews; Wilson Centennial Zippo Lighter in box; Town of Evans Sesquicentennial Commemorative Medal; and plastic souvenir funnel, compliments of the former Karsten Store, Beebe and Chestnut Rds.

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APPROPRIATE MEMORIAL: Maryanne Sharpe and son, Tom, have donated a Shademaster Locust Tree as a living memorial to the late Thomas L. Sharpe. It has been planted in "Hojack" Park and will be identified with a small plaque. Mr. Sharpe donated many hours of labor as an active participant in the early renovation period of the museum.

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NEW MEMBERS:

Everyone is urged to welcome the latest new members in the society: John Cleveley, Mr. & Mrs. Jon Swick, Walter and Nancy Berryman, Arthur and Alice Davenport, David and Barb Mielke, and Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Andrews--all from Wilson. Also, out-of-town friends, Mrs. Virginia Mahoney of Youngstown, Mrs. Shirley Hollister of Lewiston, A. Reed Cone of Pavilion, Ruth Pasko Mahar of Niagara Falls, and Dr. Evelyn Frank of Evanston, Illinois. There are also three new Junior Members from Wilson, Christopher and Jeffery Bulmer, and Danny Young, also, William Lewandowski of Ransomville.

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ANNUAL PICNIC:

The annual picnic with the "over eighty set" as our guests, will be held Sunday, August 16th at 12:00 Noon on the Museum grounds. Mrs. Gwen Heidenfeldt will be chairman and urges all to pitch in and give her a hand. Meat and drink will be furnished but please bring your own table service and a generous tureen to compensate for our guests.

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SOCIETY "FLEA MARKET":

A special "Flea Market" will be held on the museum grounds, Sunday, July 26th from 11:00 to 5:00 PM. Only members of the Wilson Society may "set-up" and a small fee to cover advertising will be collected. For further information, call Betty Stimson.

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LAST NEWSLETTER:

According to our society's By-Laws, the "Newsletter" may not be mailed to any member who is three months behind in their dues. It also states that no member may hold office if their dues are not paid. There are a few members who have not renewed--since the fee is nominal, we feel it must be an oversight rather than intentional. We hope you agree and stay with us.

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JULY TOUR:

Eleanor Myers, our new Tour Chairman, is formulating plans for a tour in July. We will be mailing out a special "flyer" with all the details around the end of June. It will only go to our local members--watch for it.

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CALENDAR DATES FOR JULY AND AUGUST:

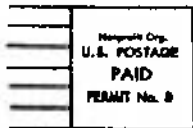
- SPECIAL: June 29: Museum Comm. 1:00PM at museum.
- July 15th: Trustee meeting at the museum, Wednesday evening, 8:00PM.
- July 26th: "Flea Market" at Museum, 11:00-5:00PM, Only Society Members may "set-up".
- July Tour: Watch for "flyer" for details.
- August 12th: Trustee Meeting at Thilk's Cottage, 6:30 PM
- August 16th: Annual Picnic, museum grounds, 12Noon.

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HAVE A NICE SUMMER:

The next "Newsletter" is scheduled to come out in September. In the words of Ovid, "Take Rest; a field that has rested gives a bountiful crop."

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Wilson Historical Society

WILSON, NEW YORK 14172

NEWSLETTER

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

SEPTEMBER 1981 Vol.10 No.8
(Coleman Press)

STAGECOACH: The stagecoach, a principle prop for many western movies, evokes a picture of racing horses, galloping cowboys, and blood-thirsty Indians. Long before those romantic days of the "wild west", however, the stagecoach served the public as its first means of overland travel.

The first stageline was started between Boston and New York in 1732, but it took up to a week to make the journey. Roads were mud holes in wet weather and rutted and rough in dry, but use of the stagecoach increased as roads improved. By 1825, the turnpike or tollroad began to come into use and these better roads, usually built by private capital, helped to increase the flow of traffic.

The historic Ridge was a main artery to the Niagara Frontier, and many taverns lined the route where weary travelers could stop for refreshments or spend the night. Following the Civil War, the east and west were joined together by the railroads which slowly replaced the stagecoach as a means of long distance travel. However, many small communities continued to rely on them up to the turn of the century.

During the late 1800's there were regular stagecoach runs between Wilson and Lockport, and one of the drivers was Fred Faery, a former mule driver on the Erie Canal. While working on the Canal, Fred met and married Emily Rowe of Reynolds Basin and later they moved to Wilson. There he took an exam and put in a successful bid to drive the mailcoach between Wilson and Lockport. Fred not only delivered the mail, but also did errands for individuals and store owners. Great wheels of cheese, crackers, pickles, etc. were bought and delivered for 10¢ an errand. The fare from Wilson to Lockport was 50¢, and one of Fred's regular passengers was a blind girl who taught music in Lockport. Mr. Faery, on cold days, would wrap hot bricks in a blanket and place them around her as he drove her to the city.

The Faerys had a daughter, Emily, who attended school in Wilson with Charles A. Wilson. They later married and established their home in Wilson. Charles became a commercial fisherman during those bountiful years when great sturgeons were hauled in and sold to townspeople and buyers from other places. Charles was the son of Timothy Wilson, a prominent figure in the early history of "Sunset Island" and Tuscarora Park.

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"THUMBNAIL SKETCH: John Laurence Cable, son of Laurence N. Cable and Edith M. Wilson, was born in Lancaster, N.Y., but spent all his free time in Wilson from day of birth. He attended the Kensington High School and the University of Buffalo, and taught in Wilson Central School from 1956 to 1967. He presently resides in Miami Lakes, Florida, where he is a Professor of Mathematics at Miami-Dade Community College. Mr. Cable is also an author for Allyn & Bacon Publishers, and owner of the Hallmark store, Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

John's roots reach back to Wilson through his maternal grandparents, Charles A. Wilson and Emily L. Faery. His great grandparents were Timothy Wilson and Elizabeth Todd; also Frederick Faery and Emily Rowe.

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JUNE GRADUATES: Too late for last Newsletter so we extend belated congratulations to Michael Evans, Hannah Goodnight, Tammy Monroe, and Lisa Stimson.

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IDEAS NEEDED: The Museum Committee spends many hours assembling and dismantling bi-monthly exhibits, but their hardest job is originating new themes. Lois Jennings, Chrm, says that you can help. If you have an idea for new displays, please contact her. You won't be required to help unless you'd like to. The theme for September and October will be "Fisherman's Paradise", followed by "Winter Holidays" during November, December, and January.

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CORRESPONDENCE: Marilyn D. Conti of N. Tonawanda, daughter of Roy DeNeau, requested two copies of "Story of Sunset Island". She said the booklet brought back many happy memories of her summers and winters spent on the Island at "Magnet House".

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HOSTS & HOSTESSES: Museum hostesses on Sundays during September are: Sept. 6th, John and Marion Goodrich; Sept. 13th, Lydia Southard and Helen French; Sept. 20th, Margaret Moyer and Gerry Swann; and Sept. 27th, Helen Sherrie and Carole Schnoor.

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CALENDAR DATES: Sept. 16th; Trustee & Comm. Chrm. Meeting, 8:00 PM, Wilson Museum.
Sept. 21st: Regular Meeting, 7:30 PM, Patterson Room.

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT: Use what talents you possess: the woods would be very silent if no birds sang there except those that sang best.

IN MEMORIAM: Alice Bull Carter, 90, died August 18th after a long illness at Inter-Community Hospital. She was born at East Wilson in 1890, the daughter of Edger and Ruby Gaylord Bull, and married the late Daniel Carter in 1921. Mrs. Carter attended Dist. #7 Rural School, Wilson High, and Buffalo State Teacher's College, and taught many years in Wilson. She was a member of Exley United Methodist Church, Eastern Star, and Wilson Historical Society. She leaves 3 children, Mrs. Roger (Janet) Jerge of Lockport, Mrs. John (Margery) Williams of Wilson, and Mrs. Donald (Maxine) Tolmsa, Va., also 10 grandchildren and 7 great grandchildren.

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NEW CHAIRMEN: Dorothy Lort, Librarian, reports that her committee is selected and will start meeting in September. Bill and Peg Fritton, Chrm., Ways & Means, are also getting a committee together and will consider new ideas and ways to help the society.

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NEW MEMBERS: Extend a warm welcome to these 9 new members: Mrs. Richard (Verna) Adams, Tonawanda; Mrs. Eleanor Brydges, Niagara Falls; Mr. and Mrs. William Brydges, Ballston Spa; Mrs. Gladys Weber, Lockport; Mr. and Mrs. Wesley Wilson, Clarence; and David and Mathew Karsten, South Wilson.

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SEPTEMBER MEETING: Guest speaker will be Harold Albright, who will tell some interesting tales about the old "Albright Opera House", once a center of attraction in Wilson. Refreshments will be served by Grace Singer, Chrm., Helen French, and Helen Sayer.

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LIFE MEMBER: Gertrude Clark Schnoor has been given a Life Membership by her husband, Art, making her 39th in this Class. Gertrude grew up on her parent's Stone Rd. farm, Town of Lockport, and attended the Crocker Dist. Country School and Warrens Corners Methodist Church. She used to visit Wilson to see her sister, Norma, who married the late "Bookie" Wilson. "Bookie" operated a grocery store where, it is reported, a "real nice kid" worked by the name of Art Schnoor. It was inevitable that boy and girl would meet, and the rest is history. Today, Gert is a faithful member of Exley United Methodist Church, and active in the Inter-Community Hospital, Wilson Historical Society, and Senior Citizen Bowling League.

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ANNUAL PICNIC: The "Over 80 Set" were guests of honor at the annual pot luck dinner. Gwen Heidenfeldt, Chrm., was assisted by Jean Hayes, Laurence Halstead, and Elwin and Garnet Upton. Junior members made bouquets which were presented by Carole Woods to Fred Schultz, 93, oldest person present; Glenn Hillman, 92, runner up; and Laura Eick, newest member of the over eighty group. Harold Albright took everyone back down Memory Lane with an interesting talk about the days of the old Albright Opera House.

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GREAT JOB: Spots on the Patterson Room rug baffled the efforts of several concerned ladies who tried various concoctions in an attempt to remove them. Finally, Nettie Stimson used a rug-cleaning machine and restored it to its former beauty. The time and effort expended by Nettie and the other ladies is truly appreciated.

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FEDERATION PLANNED: Representatives of Niagara County Historical Societies met in Lockport, Aug. 7th, to discuss formation of a County Federation. The meeting was chaired by Richard McCarthy of Lockport and Judd Heck of Newfane, and after some discussion the group voted to form a Federation with each society having one voting representative. On Aug. 12th, the Wilson trustees met at Thilk's cottage and approved a motion to join the new Federation. Norm MacAskill, 2nd Vice-Pres., was appointed to represent the Wilson society.

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ACQUISITIONS: Mrs. Donald (Lydia) Southard has made a valuable contribution to the museum collection, of a 1910 Edison Phonograph. Sixty five records are included and some of the earlier ones are $\frac{3}{4}$ " thick. The phonograph, in perfect working order, belonged to her parents, Victor and Edith Hamblin Berlin. Lydia also donated a pair of old eyeglasses.

Edward Kent, son of Berne and Nancy Kent, has donated a 1962 4-door Victor Model Vauxall automobile. The gray colored car is in good running condition with only 23,000 miles on it.

Dorothy Thilk: Pill Bottle from former Middleton Drugstore, also Girl Scout pin, NCCC Commemorative pin, AHRC pin, and Red Cross Donor pin.

John Goodrich: Two-man Crosscut Saw used on Ashley Ward Fruit Farm (Later Goodrich Farm); also $\frac{1}{2}$ bu. Tray & Tub used to pack peaches, pears, prunes, and apples prior to 1960.

Millie Croop: Stone-Martin Choker.

Joe Higgins: 1920 Man's Hat by Mallory.

Milton Clark: 1921 & 1930 Hunting and Fishing Licenses issued to Max Cruse.

Helen Borngraeber: 5 Pair Shoes; 1950-60 Velvet Evening Coat; and 192h Girl Scout Uniform.

George Linnabery: 3 Pictures of Pease Home taken at Marker Dedication Ceremony.

Robert Steinman: Miniature Autos including Model T; Model A; and 1910 Ford.

Marion Chalmers, Tonawanda: Silk Top Baptismal Dress (1906); also 1938 Baptismal Dress.

Key Shramek, Youngstown: Socony Gasoline Gauge for 1909 Ford.

Melvin Drake, Appleton: Velie Automobile Manual.

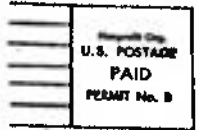
Herb Kahler, Newsane: Blacksmith Shop Drill; Toy Truck; Rivet Punch; and Wagon Jack.

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OLD FORT NIAGARA: Brian L. Dunnigan, Exec. Director of the Old Fort Niagara Assoc., has been giving the public a more positive and exciting image of the Fort. Membership has increased, and a growing number of volunteers are helping in the fields of archaeology, interpretation, and research. In August alone, visitors were treated to special programs like "Fifes and Drums at Niagara", "War of 1812 program with Militia from Toronto", "War of 1812 Artillery Demonstration by soldiers from Fort George", "Concerts by Tippecanoe Ancient Fife & Drum Corps", and "Spinning Demonstrations by Lewiston Spinners".

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BON MOT: Tradition is the joyful memory of a people.



Wilson Historical Society

WILSON, NEW YORK 14172

NEWSLETTER

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

OCTOBER 1981 Vol.10 No.9

(Coleman Press)

MR. & MRS. DONALD CROOP
4550 CHESTNUT ROAD
WILSON, NEW YORK 14172

THE ALBRIGHT OPERA HOUSE: In 1883, "Wesley Chapel" was moved north to make way for the new Exley Methodist Church. It was placed on part of the lot where Kerwin's Service Station now stands, and was separated from the Luther Wilson home by a driveway and yard wide enough to display farm machinery, buggies, and wagons. William Albright bought the chapel in 1893 for a farm implement business, and a little later decided to remodel the building and add a second story.

The church window was left intact and an outside stairway was built along the north side to a landing where people could enter the new "Albright Opera House". A ticket window was built just inside the doorway, and after purchasing tickets, customers were shown to their seats by an usher. An inside stairway led to a balcony along the west end of the hall, and if a play or performance was good, was usually filled with people. Large kerosine lamps were hung from the ceiling, but were replaced when electricity came to Wilson. The stage, located at the east end of the theater, had steps at either side to permit access to the wings. The south wing had a large advertisement on it for "Cuddeback and Cooper", local undertakers, while the north wing sported an advertisement for "Rising and Son", dealers in pianos and furniture. The piano and bench on the north wing platform was probably one of theirs. (Rising and Son was located at the corner of Young and McChesney where Ruth Phillips garage now stands.) The stage was also equipped with several curtain drops portraying scenery such as "spring and fall", "living room setting", and others. One drop pictured the Main Street of Holley, N.Y., and Harold Albright, who furnished the historical data for this article, believed his father had it painted for \$5.00 by a hard-up "floater". Footlights were installed when electricity became available, and the new lights added much glamor to the actors and actresses on stage.

All kinds of performances were held in the "Opera House" for about 25 years, and many plays or dances were put on by home talent. The Delphic Circle sponsored many productions and their leading actress was usually Dessie Tugwell, mother of Rexford Guy Tugwell. Most local plays were directed by the late Mrs. Alma Farrell who did an excellent job. Short skits or dances were performed between acts, and one of the outstanding was a tap dance team composed of Johnnie and Tommie Costello. They were sons of a local barber and lived at Washington & Young.

Main attractions at the "Opera" were traveling shows booked through a theatrical agency. Harold remembered one in particular, "Uncle Tom's Cabin", because the two Great Danes used to rescue "Little Eva", came up missing. As show time approached it was feared the play might have to be postponed, but as luck would have it, the dogs were found in the nick of time near the Wilson Boathouse.

He also thought the medicine shows were great, and he used to watch the quacks make their "medicine" at Borngraeber's well. The well was real handy as only a driveway and the small G.A.R. Hall separated the Borngraeber home from the Opera House. He recalled how they added a few herbs to lots of water to produce a concoction which they called "Katonka", the health giver. The potion was sold during intermissions for \$1.00 a bottle, and each purchaser received 500 votes per bottle. At the end of the show's run, the person with the most votes received a "valuable" prize.

Hypnotist acts were also popular and Harold liked one in particular where a person would rise from a table and hang suspended in air as the hypnotist passed a hoop around the full length of the body. Everyone thought it was a great performance and clapped and cheered. Harold thought so too, even after he discovered fine wires hanging from the ceiling and slots cut in the hoop so it could pass by the wires smoothly.

Eventually, traveling shows became harder to engage, and Mr. Albright was forced to close the "Opera". The Albright kids didn't mind, however, since folding and stacking 200 chairs or sweeping and cleaning make-up rooms each day were jobs they didn't mind losing.

Arthur Loomis and Clyde Putnam bought the Albright Implement Business and operated it for 2 or 3 more years. They sold it to Frank Howell of Newfane who opened up a Ford Agency and garage. Frank rented the 2nd floor to Little and Perry for a printing shop, and they published a weekly newspaper called the "Frontier News". It was no match for the "Wilson Star".

In the early 1930's, fire destroyed the former chapel building writing finis to another page in Wilson's unique history. We are able to share in some of that history because of people like Harold Albright, who take time to document the past for future generations.

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MUSEUM GREETERS: Margaret Wilson, Chrm., has announced that hosts and hostesses for October will be: Oct. 4th, Ed and Millie Lonsbery; Oct. 11th, Bob and Edith Lewis; Oct. 18th, Harry Rohring and Chris Kelman; and Oct. 25th, Art and Gert Schnoor.

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BON MOT: Life is like a round of golf; as soon as we get out of one hole we head for another.

IN MEMORIAM:

Dorothy Riseley Thilk, 75, passed away Sept. 1st at Inter-Community Hospital, Newfane. She was a native of Wilson and graduated from Wilson High School and Buffalo State Normal. She taught in the Hamburg public schools prior to her marriage to Norman Thilk in 1937. Mrs. Thilk was a member of Exley United Methodist Church, the Niagara Falls Chapter, D.A.R., the Delphic Circle, Inter-Community Hospital Auxiliary, Cambria and Niagara Co. Hist. Societies, and the Senior Citizen Bowling League. She helped found the Wilson Hist. Society at her home, April 18, 1972, and served as "Tours" and "Historical Sites" Chairman, and was also a member of the "Museum" and "Publications" committees. She was also a Charter and Life Member.

She was Town of Wilson Historian, and in June received a special citation (authorized by the Niagara County legislature) from I. Richard Reed, Niagara County Historian, acknowledging her valuable contribution to local history. Dorothy also helped organize the "Puppeteers", a weekly sewing group that make and donate hundreds of puppets to hospitalized children.

Mrs. Thilk is survived by her husband, Norman, and two children, Peter and Susan Thilk. She was interred at North Ridge Cemetery, and a Memorial Service was held at Exley United Methodist Church with Rev. Ray Brothers officiating.

Dorothy's life of devoted community service could well have been guided by a precept of John Wesley: "Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can."

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SUCCESSFUL PROJECT:

Society booklets, cookbooks, and ceramics, sold well at the Schnoor's Corners Neighborhood Flea Market on Labor Day. The Ways & Means table was tended by Bill and Peg Fritton, Carole Schnoor, Beattie Rockwood, Alice Davenport, and Shelly Andrews. Looking ahead, plans will be made to hold the annual Bake Sale on Election Day, Tues. Nov. 3rd. Keep the date in mind--more in the next Newsletter. The Ways & Means committee has room for more members--if you would like to join, call either Bill or Peg at 751-9744. Current members are Nettie Stinson, Chris Goodman, Lois Barnum, Carole Schnoor, Shelley Andrews, and John Kress.

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ACQUISITIONS:

Fred Schultz, father of Dorothy and Elwood Schultz, has given the society two pig gambles, leather harness vise, and a scribe.

Rex Stacy: One-horse cultivator and whipple tree.

Hazel LaVan, Ransomville: Supervisor's Journal for 1889-1890.

Lydia Southard: Leather bound book, "Plain Facts for Old and Young"(1886); also "Complete History of the United States of America" (1878).

John Follick, employee of Pfeiffers: Rare token from the old Fredonia Preserving Co. of Wilson. It was given to him by his father.

Mrs. Wilford Bennett: Four ladies hats in hat boxes.

Lois Jennings: Handmade gadget for ice fishing, also package of Kid curlers.

Harold Donner, Ithaca: Two books, "The Light of Other Days", and "Rexford Tugwell".

Vivianne Krueger Siviert, Ransomville: Albert Kruger's World War I Campaign Hat, Helmet, Messkit, and Battle Medals. Also, picture of General Pershing and Camp Upton, Long Island.

Herbert Kahler, Newfane: One hundred fifty year old Hand Crafted Barn Door Hinges.

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HARVEST TIME:

The Newfane Historical Society "Harvest Festival" will be Sunday, October 4th, at Hrvol House Museum, Creek Rd., Newfane, from Noon to 5:00PM. Y'all come now, please!

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PIONEER DAY SET:

The Cambria Historical Society will sponsor their annual "Pioneer Days" at the Cambria Fire Hall, Sunday, Oct. 18th, from Noon to 7:00PM. Quilting, Craft, and Memory will be featured with "Food Galore" and a "Country Store". "Remember the date, don't be late, let's help our neighbors celebrate."

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THE HOJACK DILEMMA:

In the spring of 1876, Wilson residents joyfully celebrated the coming of the railroad, and according to written accounts, it was a "Gala Day" when the first train crossed the townline road. All Wilson "let loose"--public schools took a recess, stores closed, and all business was suspended. Everybody turned out--ministers, laymen, rich and poor, big and little--in wagons, horse back, "posse back", and afoot. The hundreds who visited the spot seemed loath to go home again, and waited about patiently in snow and slush for the train to arrive. The day marked the beginning of an era of prosperity for Wilson agriculture and business establishments.

Today, the "Hojack" faces an uncertain future. A decision must soon be made whether to rebuild the railroad or allow it to die a natural death. If the latter occurs, the society's action to preserve the old 1912 depot may have had more historical significance than once imagined. Who knows, the Wilson Museum may be one of the last structures around to remind people of those nostalgic days when "Steam was King".

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THE WILSON CHEESE FACTORY:

Enoch Sanborn and his wife, Addie Dodge, left Sanborn in the spring of 1875 and located on Lot 14, Daniels Rd., Wilson. He built a two story frame structure known as the "Wilson Cheese Factory", and the 24x56 foot building had 2 steam vats and one gang press. Enoch began making cheese, June 7, 1875, and produced 40,000 lbs. the first season. By 1878, he was turning out 75,000 lbs. of cheese a year. They also stocked a good supply of groceries.

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BELIEVE IT OR NOT:

Things turn out best for the people who make the best of the way things turn out.

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(Art Linkletter)

SAGA OF THE EASTMANS:

John Eastman was born on May 11, 1739, at Kingston, New Hampshire. In 1775, he volunteered his service in the Revolution and saw action in the battle of Bunker Hill. In 1777, he was with Stark's Hampshire Militia who were sent to New York to help stop Burgoyne's march south after the fall of Ticonderoga. At Fort Anne, in a skirmish with the British, Eastman was shot and killed, however, his name did not die with him. Though only 38 yrs. old, he and his wife, Judith, had brought five children into the world. One of them was named John, after his father, and was born March 22, 1772, at Hopkinton, N.H.--a small village 9 miles east of Concord.

Young John went to Canada after the war, and a few years before emigrating to Wilson, resided at Coburg, Canada West. In 1809, he obtained an article for 100 acres of land on lot No. 82 in the town of Wilson. In 1810, he and his family joined the Reuben Wilson family, and with Gilbert Purdy as boatman, made their way in two open batteaux to a point one mile and a half east of "Twelve Mile Creek". There the boats were used as temporary shelter until Reuben Wilson and John Eastman, with Purdy's help, were able to erect two log houses.

A son, Henry, was born to the Eastmans in Wilson, July 5, 1815, but about 1818, John moved his family to Hartland after trading farms with James Cole. They later moved to Chautauqua County where John Eastman died in 1837.

John Eastman of Rochester, N.Y., a great great grandson of Wilson's pioneer settler, recently traced his ancestry and was surprised to learn he had family connections to Wilson. Both he and his son, Mark, are now members of the Wilson Historical Society.

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LIBRARY COMMITTEE:

Dorothy Lort, Library Chrm., has a real "livewire" committee working with her, and has announced that Dora Wakeman, Lucille Upton, and Marion Campbell will be helping. As more and more people come to the museum for information, it is essential that our books and records are available for easy reference. We think this committee will see that they are.

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OCTOBER CALENDAR:

- Oct. 2nd: Friday, Niagara Falls Chapter, DAR, at museum. Pot luck supper.
- Oct. 4th: Newfane Hist. Soc. "Harvest Festival", Museum grounds, Newfane, Noon to 5:00PM.
- Oct. 7th: Hospital Auxiliary Card Party. Wilson Museum, 7:30 PM
- Oct. 14th: Trustee Meeting, 8:00 PM at Museum.
- Oct. 18th: Cambria Hist. Society "Pioneer Days", Cambria Fire Hall, Noon to 7:00PM.
- Oct. 19th: Regular meeting, Wilson Hist. Society. 7:30 PM, Patterson Room.
- Oct. 26th: Museum Committee Meeting, 10:00AM, at museum.

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OCTOBER PROGRAM:

Dorothy Linnabery, Chrm. of the Program Committee, has outlined a year's program in advance which is included on a separate page with this Newsletter. She suggests you pin it up or keep it for future reference, but we also suggest you check the monthly Newsletter or daily newspapers for possible changes in the schedule.

If your interest lies in buttons, we think the October program will be of interest to you. Our guest speaker on October 19th will be Mildred Culbert, and after listening to her, we think you'll agree that "buttons can tell a story".

Marietta Goodman, Chrm. of the Refreshment part of the program, has announced that Dorothy Tracey will serve as chairman for the meeting, assisted by Flossie Lortz and Marie Getman.

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ALL THE NEWS THAT'S FIT TO PRINT:

This is the way the Masthead of the "Wilson Star" looked back in 1936 when "Chuck" Campbell and Harold Albright were bringing their readers "all the news that's fit to print." In an August edition of the "Star", Editor Campbell ran an interesting story about the coming of the first sound movies in Wilson. We quote:

"Beginning Tuesday night, September 1st, at 7:30 PM, Wilson will have its own sound motion pictures in the Gem Theater. New Victor equipment is being installed and local residents are promised the finest quality modern picture reproduction. The feature for the first week will be "Hot Off The Press", a rapid-fire action melodrama portraying an honest newspaper owner waging war on the unethical practises of a rival paper and a group of political grafters.....Short subjects include a "Flip the Frog" cartoon, an adventure travelogue, "Sliding off the Andes", and a musical novelty, "Do you Re-

member." Think of it, in a mere half century, movies have gone from silent to unspeakable.

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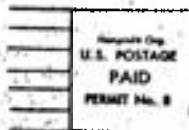
PLANNING COMMITTEE:

Art Schnoor, Chrm., has announced that a new locking system for museum security has been secured and will be installed soon. Work has started to enclose the south dock for storage, and will extend west of depot to make temporary shelter for farm machinery and equipment. Plans are also being discussed to enlarge antique car building which has already reached its capacity. Rest rooms have been completed, thanks to Art Schnoor, George Linnabery, Johnny Myers, and John Goodrich, and despite persistent rainy weather, the base section of the windmill has been erected. Workers are needed on Saturday mornings--please come if you can.

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LAST WORD:

A certain amount of opposition is a great help to a man. Kites rise against, not with the wind.
(John Neal)



Wilson Historical Society

WILSON, NEW YORK 14172

NEWSLETTER

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

NOVEMBER 1981 Vol. 10 No. 10

(Coleman Press)

THE SWANN BAKERY:

Many people use the parking lot between the Wilson Volunteer Fire Co. and the Marine Midland Bank; but few may remember when a bowling alley, bakery, and two homes occupied the space extending from the bank to the Bingo Hall. The bowling alley was next to the bank, the Swann Bakery was next door, and west of the bakery was Emma Wilson's small home. The present Fire Company Engine House sets where Helen Knowle's pretentious white house stood.

Mary Swann Allgeier, formerly of Wilson, lives in Florida now, but she has fond memories of her old home town. Her father, Frank Swann, ran the bakery on Young Street, and her grandfather, James Swann, used to operate one at the corner of Haner and Woods streets; and made deliveries with a horse and buggy.

In 1922-23, Frank and Viness Swann purchased the former bowling alley beside the bank, and opened up a new bakery next to their old one; which was taken over by Jim Aseltine for a butcher shop. Earl Swann, Frank's nephew, helped install the new bake ovens; and parts of the alleys were used on benches for kneading bread because the wood was so hard and smooth.

There were a total of ten trucks used for delivering baked goods to homes within a radius of sixty miles or more. Some of the drivers were Earl Swann, and his father, Harry Swann, also Frank's son, Elmer Swann, George Eaton and Ralph Piggins. Fred Stickney was the Baker, and his son also drove a truck. The names of four drivers are unavailable at this time.

Deliveries were made as far east as Lyndonville, west to Youngstown and Lewiston, north to Lower Lake Rd., and south to Lockport. Deliveries were also made to grocery stores in Wilson.

Bakery operations started at 11:00PM and truck drivers picked up their trucks at 5:00AM; then sliced and wrapped bread before setting out on their routes. It was usually 6:00 to 9:00PM before they all returned to Wilson. Bread was sold for ten cents a loaf, and day-old bread was sold for five cents.

Mary Swann Allgeier also worked in the bakery, and helped fill jelly donuts or pack rolls for deliveries. Gerry Swann recalled that when her boys were small, they used to go to the bakery around 5:00PM on Sundays in order to get fresh donuts that "Uncle Frank" was filling with jelly.

The Swann Bakery was sold to Clayton Tucker ca. 1940 and continued to operate as a bake shop until around 1960.

Modern bakeries produce great amounts of bread, but few could compare with the quality of Swann's. We inject this opinion because we used to buy Swann's bread, and even had a "S" card to place in our window.

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NONAGENARIAN FETED:

A reception was held for Jennie Bigalow at the Exley United Methodist Church, Sunday, September 27th, to honor her on her 95th birthday. Jennie has a courageous spirit that defies the years, and she recently remarked (in a taped interview), "The only thing the matter with me is my arm...I guess God has taken mighty good care of me." We join with all her friends in the sincere hope that He will continue to take good care of her, and look forward to the day Jennie celebrates her 100th birthday.

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THUMBNAIL SKETCH:

Fred H. Smith was born in Mecklenburg Schwerin, Germany, in 1848, and emigrated to America when he was 12 years old. He was a farmer and fruit grower in Wilson, and also held the positions of Highway Superintendent, Assessor, and Republican County Committeeman. Prior to his death, he served as a Court Officer in Lockport.

Fred's son, the late Lewis J. Smith, was a well known Wilson builder and contractor for many years. He married Grace M. Smith, daughter of Josiah Smith and Abbie Wollaber, and they had two children, Eloise, and Florence (who died one day after birth).

Eloise, now Mrs. Edgar Culverwell, attended Wilson High, Brockport State Normal, and received her B.S. in education at Buffalo State Teacher's College. She is a descendent of the Peter, Smith, Wollaber, and Gifford families, and other familiar names in her genealogy include the Flaglers, Wards, Hillman, Barnum, Freer, Lewis, and Wilsons.

She taught in the Wilson schools for ten years, and also worked as a medical secretary for Dr. Argue eleven years. She and Edgar are active in Exley United Methodist Church, the Wilson Hist. Society, the Newfane and Ransomville Golden Age Clubs, and bowl with the senior citizens at Townline Bowl.

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BIRTHDAY BLUES:

You know you are getting older when your birthday cake collapses from the weight of the candles.

RECENT ACQUISITIONS: Ruth Phillips has presented the society with the first license plate for rural letter carriers; a Colonial style floor lamp made of wood from the Phillips Farm; a Pigeon-hole Cabinet used for sorting mail; also Coils and Old Piston Rings for Model T cars.

Mary Elizabeth Allgeier, Waverly, N.Y.: Two Wilson High Programs, "Banquet for Basketball Team" (1930), and Operetta, "Captain of the Guard"; also Niagara Frontier News (7/13/33); and 6 copies of "Wilson Star" 4/9/37; 5/21/37; 6/4/37; 9/23/38; 1/17/41; and 9/22/39.

Helen Borngraeber: Two hats; Ironstone Pot Covers; Plate of Niagara Falls; Plate of "On Historic Route 20-N.Y.State"; Match Box advertising M.H. Schrader Co., Wilson; "Jacksons" Candy Box; 3 Blue Mason Jar covers; 3 Curling Irons and Electric Appliance for their heating; One collapsible Curling Iron; Early Coat Hanger; Sad Iron; and Stove Lid Tool.

Gwen Heidenfeldt: Scrapbook of Dionne Quintuplets; and U.S. News(9/23/35.)

Kenneth Urtel, Newfane: Confirmation and Wedding Certificates.

Georgeina Dickens Biarel, Niagara Falls: 1827 Letter from Nathaniel Barber, Danbury, Cn.

Dorothy Lort: One Mother of Pearl Napkin Ring (Pan American Souvenir); also Taffeta Shirt Waist.

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SUNDAY GREETERS: Mrs. Margaret Wilson, Chrm., has arranged for the following persons to be hosts and hostesses Sun. afternoons from 2 to 4PM: Nov. 1st, Fred & Sara Berry; Nov. 8th, Dora & Wirt Wakeman; Nov. 15th, Maryanne Sharpe & Tom Sharpe 3rd; Nov. 22nd, Winifred Fischer & Helen Stevens; and Nov. 29th, Harold & Clara Marcks.

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NOVEMBER PROGRAM: If "Chuck" Campbell's last program was an indication, everyone can look forward to an informative evening Nov. 18th when he delves into the subject of "Bells, Buoys, Whistles, and Lighthouses." He may also present a surprise movie. Following the program, refreshments will be served by Marion Campbell, Chrm.; Laura Eick, and Mabel Burrows.

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FEDERATION NEWS: The Niag. Co. Federation of Hist. Societies met at Lockport, Oct. 6th, and adopted a set of By-Laws. A Nominating Comm. was also selected consisting of Helen Bush, Chrm., Gene Camnaan, Rosemary Miller, and Vernetta Genter.

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MUSEUM PROGRESS: Robert's Roofing has repaired the depot "lifetime roof", and installed two rotating air vents which should eliminate heat buildup in summer.....a beautiful glass display case has been acquired, and a 5'8"x10" wide plate glass shelf has been donated for it by courtesy of Harold and Marc Mosher.....also, John and Richard Myers have hooked up the electric lights in the central entranceway.

Several projects are underway: Painting ceilings and partitions in new rest rooms; Display cases in antique car building are being repaired and painted; Start has been made to trim weeds around evergreen trees and buildings; Windmill is ready for top section to be put in place; Handyman is needed to bolt new fins and weathervane on; Stove could be installed in caboose so repairs and painting could be done inside this winter; Caboose and Museum may need painting next year; and carpenters are welcome now to build new storage area on dock.

It has been proposed that interested persons might adopt one of these projects and see it through to completion. Work could then be done at everyone's convenience-not just Saturdays.

Helpers this fall have been Art Schnoor, George Linnabery, Bill Budde, Elwin Upton, "Bud" Monroe, Wally Beutel, John Goodrich, Bill Fritton, Harold Mosher, Burt Jennings, Don Farley, Bob Rose, and Elton Kropp. We apologize if we left anyone off.

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NEW MEMBERS: It is always a pleasure to welcome new members, and the most recent additions to the roll are, Mrs. Genevieve Schlyer, Garden Grove, Cal.; Mr. Frank Radigan, Lockport; and Lloyd and Sandy Wilson.

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PHOTOGRAPHER: Edna Robinson was appointed official photographer for the society at the Board of Trustee meeting Oct. 14th. Edna has been "snapping" pictures at many society functions for quite some time and has done a splendid job. She will now be able to mount pictures of current events in museum albums before turning them over to the Library Comm.

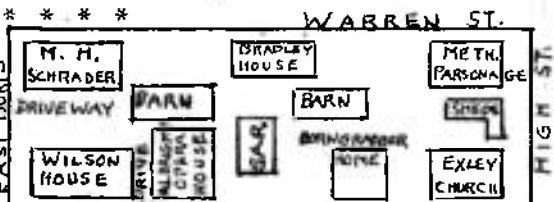
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MUSEUM COMMITTEE: Lois Jennings, Chrm., accepted an invitation to place an exhibit on Wilson history in the Pioneer Day celebration held in the Cambria Fire Hall. Assisting her were Dr. John and Jean Argue, Burt Jennings, Helen French, Marietta Goodman, Edna Robinson, Esther & Harold Albright, Mildred & Ted Lonsbery, and Millie Croop.

Lois needs help with the "Winter Holiday" exhibit planned for the museum in November, December, and January. Any mementos pertaining to Thanksgiving, Christmas, or New Years will be gratefully accepted. Old toys and dolls will also be welcome.

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FROM THE PAST: The village block bordered by Lake St., East Burt Rd., Warren St., and High St., had a much different look in the late 1800's. This sketch is not drawn to scale, but it shows where the old buildings once stood.

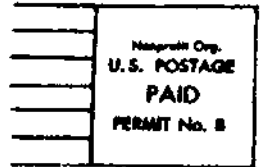
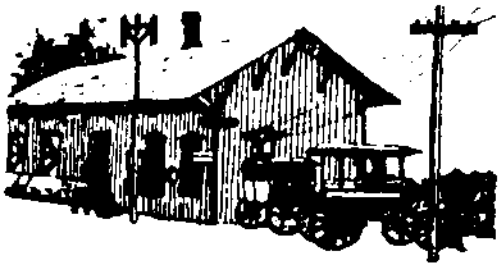


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MEETING DATES: Trustee Meeting, Wed. evening, November 11th. 8:00PM at Museum.
Regular Meeting, Mon. evening, November 16th. 7:30PM at Museum.
Thanksgiving, November 26th. A day to give thanks.

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FINAL THOUGHT: One should never allow a difference of opinion in politics, religion, or philosophy, to interfere with friendship.



Wilson Historical Society

WILSON, NEW YORK 14172

NEWSLETTER

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

DECEMBER 1981 Vol.10 No. 11

(Coleman Press)

WILSON, N.Y. 14172

RECOLLECTIONS OF A FORMER WILSON BUSINESSMAN:

If you had been a farmer about 75 years ago, and lived along the "Hojack" somewhere between Burt and Wilson, you might have been a little surprised to see a man peddling a bike each day along the railroad tracks. Upon taking a closer look, you'd have seen that the bike was running on the rails and that the rider was Mike Radigan, owner of the Wilson Lumber Company. Mike soon became a familiar sight as he rode back and forth to work.

It was ca. 1906 that Mike and his 12 year old son, Frank, took a trolley from Lockport to Burt and then walked from there to Wilson to see Alanson Bigalow, who was then one of the owners of the Wilson lumber company. When they arrived, Lance hitched up his horse and buggy and drove to the lumber yard so the Radigans could look the place over.

The company had been started some years earlier by five men, namely Dwight, Bigalow, Singer, Mudge, and Tugwell. Alanson was the first to sell his interest in it. The buildings were in good condition but there was only a carpenter shop; and the lumber shed contained little lumber except for a few shingles and cedar posts.

After Mike Radigan purchased the lumber yard, he got the idea of making up a bike to use on the railroad tracks so he could get to Wilson more easily after taking the trolley to Burt. It was built so the bicycle tires rode on one rail and three iron rods connected the frame to a small guide wheel which rolled along the other rail.

Now Mike had been an Alderman in the first Ward at Lockport for a couple terms, and through his political connections, became acquainted with Martin Sheehan, Superintendent of the Lockport Division of the International Railway Company. Mr. Sheehan gave him permission to put the bike in the freight store room at Burt, thus giving Mike a place to keep his bike at night. He was warned, however, that if he saw one of the fast "flyers" that operated on the "Hojack" at that time, he should get off the tracks before he was seen or he might be reported to the Division Headquarters in Rochester. It was about 70 years ago that Mike finally hung the frame in the garage behind his house. It was still there when we visited Frank in November. Frank, now 88 years old, showed the historic old frame to Norm Thilk and this writer, and said that he thought it should rightfully be placed in the Wilson museum. We agreed, and thanks to Norm and Francis Tate, it should be when this Newsletter comes out.

We also heard another story about Mike that happened after he purchased a 1914 Buick Touring Sedan for \$1200 dollars. He started driving back and forth from Lockport to Wilson and Frank recalled, "How proud we all were of that car." It seems that besides the car, Mike loved dogs and was always accompanied by his old police dog, "Jiggs". When he drove down the Townline Road he would always let "Jiggs" out at "Butch" Bigalow's farm for exercise, and the dog would race along the car to Wilson. This became a daily habit and "Jiggs" often fared well as folks along the way, who had become familiar with what was happening, would toss juicy morsels of food to him.

Frank Radigan took charge of the lumber yard in 1934, just nine years before his father died. He was always friendly and accomodating and it was a pleasure to do business with him. He sold the lumber company in 1965, and now resides at Lockport in the old home on Grand Street where his mother and father spent their honeymoon in 1890.

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INDEPENDENT PARISH:

In a historic step forward, the Episcopal Diocese of Western New York has voted to grant St. John's Church of Wilson authority to incorporate as an independent parish--something its congregation has dreamed of ever since the church was started 52 years ago. Known then as St. John's Mission, the congregation met in its present quarters, the former Roman Catholic Church, which was built in 1920 on Lake Street. The Mission's first executive council consisted of Rev. Dr. Henry F. Swicker, Chrm., Thomas Marks, Sr., Warden and Treasurer, Frederick H. Galbraith, Secretary, and Ashley H. Gale, Ernest Horton, and Seward A. Moot, Sr., Directors.

This fall, St. John's was represented at the annual convention of the Diocese by Rev. Patricia Bird, George Waters, Alfred Attfield, and Lois Carter. When incorporation is completed, the parish will be formally welcomed into the Episcopal Diocese at the next annual convention scheduled for November, 1982.

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A REMINDER:

The Postoffice Department does not forward third class mail so if anyone moves or changes their mailing address, be sure to let us know so that it can be corrected on the addressograph plates. This will insure your receiving the monthly Newsletter.

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BON MOT:

We need to set our course by the stars, not by the lights of every passing ship.

ACQUISITIONS:

Mr. and Mrs. Joseph St. Louis: Miscellaneous booklets on Poultry, Farm Equipment, Ford Tractor, Dairy Stable, Caterpillar Tractor, Fruits, Washer-Dryer Seed Facts, Cultivator, Hay Loader, Mowers, Bee Diseases, Steel Arch Bridge, Our Little Tots, Young Days, and 1883 Song Book, "Christmas Tales". Farm booklets published by Cornell Extension Service.

Grace Singer: Post card marked "Ruins of Opera Block. Shows Miller and Brown store next to it. Not to be confused with the Albright Opera House on Lake Street.

Dr. John Argue: Picture album containing photos of the 1914 Dodge automobile.

Karl Wright: 11.0 D Power Coil Hand Magnifier, also New Bausch & Lomb Magnifier for use in the museum. 1918 calendar of the Union-Pacific R.R. for use in the caboose museum.

Ernestine Walpole: Official Souvenir program, Grand Lodge of New York State, August '25.

Rex Stacy: Blueprint map of Village of Wilson, 1889, drawn by E.V.W. Dox, surveyor.

Mrs. Wilford Bennett: Collection of Christmas tree ornaments.

Clifford Loomis: New 1912 Webster Dictionary, illustrated; also N.Y. Parent-Teacher paper, Vol. XI, Feb. 1932. Newspaper announcement of High School examination schedule.

Millie Croop: "Progress: Transfer Initials. An assortment of 366 hot iron applications for the letter "P" produced by "Peri-Luctor" 932 Broadway, New York City.

Norman Thilk: Large Bulletin Board, Large Artificial Christmas Tree, and Guest Book.

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REASONABLE CHRISTMAS GIFTS:

The cook book, "Recipes from the Wilson Historical Society" make fine Christmas gifts, and there is still a good supply available. In addition, there are eight other society booklets related to the history of Wilson. The revised edition of Ray's "Diary of a Deadman" and several copies of the late Bronson Taylor's "When Being a Boy was Fun" are also available. Mr. Taylor graduated from Wilson High School in 1906.

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NUTCRACKER:

Tchaikovsky's Christmas Ballet, the "Nutcracker" will be shown Dec. 12th and 13th in the meeting room of the Niag. Co. Hist. Society, 215 Niagara St., Lockport, at 1:30PM. Free admission but reservations are requested. You may send a self addressed stamped envelope for tickets or call 434-7433.

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STORY BEHIND A HOUSE:

An interesting little old house known as the Kruse home on Beebe Road was once the subject for a painting by Ella Mae Peters, a former resident of Wilson now living in Florida. Prior to retirement, Ella Mae was secretary to Dr. John Argue and recording secretary for the Wilson Hist. Society. Her hobby was painting and she was especially interested in old barns, bridges, and houses. Her Kruse home painting, which hangs in the museum, shows the house as having been built of stone, brick, and wood with an outside stone root cellar attached.

The house was built on lot #50 by Stephen Pharo, a horticulturist, and it was old when C. Frederick Kruse purchased it in 1884. Mr. Kruse was a bricklayer by trade, and he built a brick kiln north of the house where he made bricks for many of the old houses and buildings in Wilson. Among them were the Larry Pease farmhouse on Wilson-Burt Road. During construction, Kruse moved his kiln to the Pease farm where it remained three years until the house was built. As late as 1972, some of the bricks made by Karl Kruse could still be found by the old kiln on Beebe Road. (Since the kiln produced the bricks for many of Wilson's homes, it might be considered some time as a possible site for a historical marker.)

Carl F. Kruse married a girl he had met while living in Germany. She followed him to America and then to Wilson where they were married. They had three children, Ella, Max, and Carl J. Kruse. The old house is still standing but we understand the kiln is gone.

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

We recently received a letter from a former town historian, Mrs. Fayelista Barrows, and a few excerpts from it might be of interest to our members. She wrote, "I first became interested in researching the history of our town when I became a teacher of a pre-fourth grade...there was no established curriculum for social studies so we decided to go the route of local history. I found it all quite fascinating...Earl Armstrong was a wonderful help and he should be given recognition by the historical society. I am enclosing his old record book which I believe was one he wrote while still a student...Earl gave me two old chairs, one a child's rocker and the other a youth chair. I had these refinished, repaired, and the seats caned. He wanted me to use and enjoy them for as long as I liked, but eventually to donate them to the historical society to be kept in his memory. At present, the youth chair has a prominent place in my dining room with an antique doll sitting in it. The rocker is at Jerry's...Earl spent many hours talking with me about the old days in our community and made it all come alive...you will be receiving materials that I have as soon as I find something to package them in."

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NOVEMBER 3RD ELECTION:

Five members of the Wilson Historical Society were candidates for office in the recent election which saw Harold Mosher, former village Mayor, succeeding Whitney Barnum as Supervisor for the town of Wilson. Paul Karsten easily won re-election as Superintendent of the highway department while Arlene Karsten, tax collector, and Marilyn Allgeier, town clerk, were both returned to office unopposed.

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THE SUNSET YEARS:

Another sign of age is when you feel like the morning after the night before--and you haven't been anyplace.

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THE COURAGEOUS TUSCARORAS:

The Tuscarora Indians originally lived in North Carolina but, forced from their lands by the white man, migrated to south-central New York where they lived with the Oneidas and became recognized as the 6th Nation of the Iroquois Confederacy. During the Revolution, some of the Oneidas and Tuscaroras joined the British forces, but fled westward before Sullivan's Expedition. Some of the Indians sought refuge at Fort Niagara while others returned to Central New York. The remainder took up residence on the mountain ridge east of Lewiston.

The Tuscaroras were the first established settlers of Niagara County who still retain their place among its people. Shortly after settling on a mile square tract of land given to them by the Senecas, they received an additional two square mile grant from the Holland Land Co. In 1808 they purchased about four or five thousand more acres from the Holland Co. with funds received from their holdings in North Carolina.

The first white emigrants to the Niagara Frontier found the Tuscaroras to be friendly and good neighbors, and until recent years, most of the Indians engaged in farming. In 1813, after the fall of Fort Niagara, the British and their Mohawk allies plundered and burned the settlements at Youngstown and Lewiston. As the pioneers fled eastward, their escape was made possible because of the courageous stand shown by the Tuscarora Braves along the Lewiston Trail. The British pursuit, though slowed, pressed on beyond Dickersonville to Howell's Creek where the Settlers and Tuscaroras finally managed to turn the British force back.

The Tuscaroras have participated in every war in our Nation's history, and veterans from each conflict are buried in Mt. Hope Cemetery on Upper Mountain Road. One in particular, Lt. Nicholas Cusick, served as the bodyguard for General Lafayette in the Central New York Campaign of the Revolutionary War.

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GARDENER'S ALERT:

Mrs. Hazel Salisbury gave a very interesting talk on gardening and old fashioned seeds at the January meeting, and for those of you who would like to follow up on the subject it is suggested you refer to the February, 1984, edition of "Horticulture" magazine. According to Webster's Dictionary, Horticulture is the science and art of growing fruits, vegetables, flowers, and ornamental plants.

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GUN CABINET, ANYONE?:

The museum committee has given some thought to acquiring a gun cabinet for the museum. If you know anyone who has one they'd donate or sell, please contact Lois Jennings, Museum Chrm.

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MUSEUM NOTES:

Lois Jennings and Millie Croop have spent several afternoons in an on-going effort to organize dresses, hats, and other related items in the Schnoor Room storage area. Some steel shelves were acquired and it fell upon their "occasionally useful" spouses to put them together--not without some problems. (Burt and Don have conceded they'd be better off "working by the hour" than by "piecework.")

Many valuable old dresses and other related items have been acquired by the society, and we are fortunate to have someone as conscientious as Lois to see that they are properly cared for. Our members can be proud of the way the gals are doing the job.

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NEW MEMBERS:

We welcome the following new members into the society: Edward and Carol Fazio and daughter, Lisa, Reseda, California; Donald and Wanda Burrows, Burt, N.Y.; Rev. Joseph and Robin Wadsworth III, Wilson, N.Y.; and Leopold and Doris Klees, Wilson, N.Y.

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LOOKING AHEAD:

- March 14th, Wednes. 7:30PM: Trustee Meeting at Museum.
- March 19th, Monday, 7:30PM: Regular monthly program meeting at museum.
- April 4th, Wednesday, 7:30PM "Country Fair" Committee Chairmen meet at museum.
- May 28th, Monday, 10:00AM to 5:00PM: Annual "Country Fair" on museum grounds.
- June 2nd, Saturday afternoon: Wireless Association meeting at museum.

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THUMBNAIL SKETCH:

Mary Lou Hurlburt, daughter of Russel and Marjorie Crossman Hurlburt, was born June 28, 1929 at Lockport, N.Y. She graduated from Wilson Central School in 1946, and completed her education at the Knox School, Syracuse University, in 1951. She was confirmed at St. John's Episcopal Church in Wilson. Mary now resides at Rye, N.Y. and is the wife of Robert Young. She has two children by a former marriage, Amy Carroll Patterson and Sara Hurlburt Patterson.

Mary's father, Russell Hurlburt, with brother, Walter, founded the Hurlburt Bros. Canning Company in Wilson which operated there from 1931 to ca. 1965. Her mother, Marjorie Crossman Hurlburt, was the first full time music and art teacher at Wilson High about 1927.

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HATS RECALL YESTERYEARS:

Eleanor Myers, Town Historian, presented the program at the February meeting titled, "Hats, Hats, Hats", and selected-creations from her collection and the museum's were displayed with appropriate background music by Frances Goldthorpe at the piano. Scheduled to model Milady's Chapeaux were, Chris Kelman, Lois Jennings, Peg Fritton, Marlene Dinse, Celeste Crawford, Millie Croop, Carol Wood, Kim and Kaline Hunter, Lois Barnum, Melanie Barnum and Sandy and Kristin Wilson.

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TRUSTEES PLEASE NOTE:

It has been decided to hold all trustee meetings on the 2nd Wednesday of each month. The March meeting will be held at the museum, Wednesday evening, March 14th, at 7:30 PM.

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FINAL THOUGHT:: People who wonder where the younger generation is heading would do well to consider where it came from.

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FAY CAMPBELL'S RECOLLECTIONS OF WILSON: (Part I)

Fay Campbell has been a part of Wilson as long as anyone can remember, and when we talked to him he recalled many incidents of his earlier years. In 1900, when he was 6 years old, he got the thrill of his life when Stanley Dwight gave him a ride on his newest creation, the Wilson Automobile. The new machine looked like a buggy seat on a platform supported by four wheels, and was steered with a handle attached to a bar and the front axle.

When Fay was 10 yrs. old, he and some of his cronies decided to build their own "auto" from an old democrat wagon which they steered with a couple of ropes. One day Earl Armstrong, Willie Bell, Eddie Fillingham and Fay, took their cart back of the golf course to a roadway down the bank which was quite steep. Fay was the youngest and wasn't supposed to ride, but when it started downhill, he jumped on. There was a big oak tree at the bottom which they managed to miss, however, Fay got his leg caught in a wheel and broke it. Earl ran home to get his mother, who brought Fay's parents, and they carried him up the hill. Dr. Draper put a cast on his leg, but Fay had to lie in bed for a month waiting for it to heal.

One person who had a great impact on the lives of youngsters in Wilson was Carrie Martin. Fay was in her Sunday School class at Exley, and it wasn't unusual to see one of the center seats between the aisles filled with young men every Sunday morning. She was, according to Fay, a remarkable person, and he always considered himself very lucky to have had her as a teacher. One year, Mrs. Martin taught both the 7th and 8th grades at the old Union School when they were unable to get a teacher. She was a strict disciplinarian but never laid a hand on anyone--she didn't have to--everyone respected her.

When Fay was about 15, members of her Sunday School class used to attend Conferences at the old Convention Hall in Rochester. Families would take two youngsters apiece into their homes, and Fay recalled that these Conferences produced some of the best speakers and musical programs one could hear anywhere. The group went to Rochester on the old Interurban Trolley out of Lockport, and would stay in the city for about three days.

Fay quit high school after his second year. He was the oldest in his family, and, at that time, it wasn't unusual for young people to quit school to help out at home. It was necessary in Fay's case because his father was crippled up with rheumatism which made it difficult for him to work their farm. They had wonderful neighbors, however, and one time several of them came over to help Fay get in a field of cabbage. In those days it was customary for neighbors to look out for each other.

In the wintertime, when there wasn't too much to do, Fay found work in town. When he was 17 he worked for Taggart and Stevens by the depot. One time Taggart had the boys nailing covers on apple barrels at the Coomer Rd. siding. They had to pile the barrels h-high, and since Fay wasn't too big it was quite a chore for him--especially since the barrels were filled with apples.

One job Fay did for many years was to haul gravel from the lake shore along "Sunset Island". It was all dug out by hand, and dynamite was used to break up the gravel. The loads could only be drawn to the mainland when the water was frozen. Huge pits were dug as the men worked hard to shovel the gravel out into the wagons. Sometimes the horses and wagons would crash through the ice, and Merrit Swick was one who went through quite often. He'd just go home and get another team of mules and pull his horses out--working like a nailer all week long. Much of the gravel was used at the Cold Storage, Grist Mill, and for building the town's highways.

Saturday night was always a big time in the village, and everyone would come in for a shave and haircut. There were at least 5 or 6 barbers in town, and since few people shaved themselves, there was always a line-up and you'd have to wait your turn. (to be continued)

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FROM THE MAILBAG:

Art Schnoor received an interesting letter from Phil Brown of Washington, D.C., who was interested in getting one of the plaques Art made up several years ago from an old apple tree on the former Daniel Holmes farm.

It may be recalled that Daniel Holmes and his wife, Sally, came to Wilson in 1818 and settled on the 160 acre farm where Floyd and Hazel Salisbury now live. Daniel planted an apple orchard with seed he brought from his father-in-law's home at Saratoga, N.Y. One of those trees was still standing in 1974, and this writer removed one of the limbs which Art cut up into plaque size pieces. The legend of the tree was placed on the wood and about two dozen decopages were made up. Luckily, two of these were left in the museum and Art was able to send one to Mr. Brown.

His interest in the tree was aroused by the fact that Daniel Holmes was Phil's great grand father, and his father was born and raised on the place.

Mr. Brown also commented about the recent Newsletter article about Ida Ereon. Reminded him of the times when Mr. Ereon used to let Phil sit in the projection booth at the old Gem Theater. One time he and some other youngsters were making noise down front, and Mr. Ereon came down the aisle and said, he'd "twist our ears off with his pliers if we didn't keep quiet."

We thank Mr. Brown for his interest and his comments.

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DID YOU KNOW THAT.....

Peter B. Porter, one of Niagara County's great early leaders, introduced the resolution in House of Representatives that resulted in the War of 1812 with Great Britain? His son, Peter A. Porter, lost his life at Cold Harbor during the Civil War, and the G.A.R. Post at Wilson was named in his honor.

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MARCH PROGRAM:

Dorothy Linnabery, Program Chrm., has announced that the Sanborn Band, directed by Wally Goodman, will present a concert in the museum at the March 19th meeting at 7:30PM. The Band is considered as one of the outstanding musical groups in our area. Following the program, refreshments will be provided and served by Mabel Burrows, Ruth Rawlings, Ada Giles, Laura Eick, and Ruth Thomas.

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"FLEETWING" LOG BOOK REVEALED:

Through the courtesy of Mrs. Robert Starkweather and help from Dr. Argue and Norm Thilk, we have been able to get a first hand look at a logbook of the schooner, "Fleetwing". According to the memoirs of Captain James Van Cleave, the "Fleetwing" was built at Wilson Creek in 1862 by John V. Pease, Benjamin Dearborn, and Orrin Quick. The schooner was registered at 127 tons and Orrin Quick was her first Captain.

On an early voyage, the ship capsized off Wilson Harbor drowning the Captain's wife, a child, and the cook. All are buried in Greenwood Cemetery. After the schooner capsized, it was enlarged to 180 ton registry and plied the Great Lakes until 1906.

The Log of the schooner, "Fleetwing", was recorded by Fred L. Quick of Wilson, and covers a three year sailing period from 1884 to 1887. It shows the ship busily engaged in lake commerce and carrying cargoes of lumber, shingles, coal, stave bolts, block stone, sand, potash, wheat and barley. The schooner visited dozens of ports along Lake Ontario, Lake Erie, and the St. Clair and Detroit Rivers. Some of the ports where the "Fleetwing" loaded and unloaded her cargo included Ogdensburg, Oswego, Sodus Point, Charlotte, Oak Orchard, Wilson, Hamilton, Port Whitby, Toronto, St. Catherines, Port Colburn, Port Dalhousie, Buffalo, Sandusky, Cleveland, Detroit, Windsor, Vermillion, Canfield, and Port Huron.

The logbook is neatly written in beautiful, legible handwriting, and the last notation in it reads as follows: "Schooner Fleetwing-1887. Left Wilson Harbor March 21st to fit out schooner at Detroit. Commenced work."

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HISTORICAL MARKERS IN PLACE:

Jan Sporleder, Chairman of the Historical Sites Committee, has had two new markers erected during the past year--you may have noticed them. One is beside Rick's Wilson House Hotel and marks the site of the 1st schoolhouse in what is now the village of Wilson. The school was built of logs in 1820, and Almira Welch was the 1st teacher.

Some years later, a cobblestone school replaced the log building and is referred to in the 150th Anniversary Edition of "The History of the First Baptist Church of Wilson" which states, "April 21, 1838, the church convened in the cobblestone schoolhouse at the Wilson Four Corners." After the Civil War, the old school became the Headquarters for Wilson's P. A. Porter Post of the GAR. It was later used as a cobbler's shop, and before being demolished in the early 20's was believed to have been used for a short time by the newly organized volunteer fire company.

The other historical marker is erected on the Beebe Road (north of Ide) at the site where, in 1884, Frederick Kruse built a brick kiln on the north side of his house. He was a brick-layer by trade, and made the bricks for many of the old houses and buildings in the town of Wilson. One outstanding example of his work is the Larry Pease home on Wilson-Burt Road which took three years to complete.

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THUMBNAIL SKETCH:

William F. Bartz was born in Java Center in 1921, and attended the Buffalo Aeronautical School and Armored School, and was a gunnery instructor in the U. S. Airforce. He is a member of the Catholic Church, American Legion, and Wyoming Valley Grange. He was also owner of Bill's Garage in Java Center for 38 years and a Past Pres. of the Java-Strykersville Kiwanis Club. He married Mary Scriptor at Java Center in 1943 and they had 5 children, Dan, Larry, Gilbert, Howard, and Kathy (Myers). Mary attended Mt. Mercy School of Nursing, Univ. of Buffalo, Univ. of Mass., Alfred Univ., Geneseo State, and St. Bonaventure. Her family originated at Arcade and Java Center, and her father and mother were General Electric Dealers. The Bartz family moved to Wilson in 1980.

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CLASS REUNION:

The Wilson High School Class of 1924 held their 60th reunion at the Best Western Motor Inn, Lockport, on August 8th. It was the 1st reunion the Class ever held. Five graduates from a Class of eleven attended including, Grace Brown Wright, Winifred Dulin Stacey, Mildred Lash Toenniessen, Gladys Woodcock Weber, and Ora Pettit.

Members unable to attend were Virginia Rogers Boyd, Annabelle Duxbury Benedict, Mary Wilson Middleton, Douglas Grant, Drusilla Ward Brown, and Marion Williams (deceased).

The reunion was initiated by Mrs. Winnie Stacey, and it is hoped that another get-together will be possible next year.

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IMPRESSED WITH MUSEUM:

Phil Brown of Washington was in Wilson during July, and later wrote Art Schnoor to tell him how impressed he was with the museum. He said, "everything was so well kept up and the displays were grand." He also had a good word for the museum hostesses who "were very gracious and made sure we saw every room."

An early photo of a 1928 basketball team donated by Mabel Wilson caught his eye, and since the players were unidentified, Phil performed a helpful service by writing in their names. The only two he didn't know was the team's manager and the "Allgeier who lived up Townline Rd."

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PROGRAM FOR SEPTEMBER:

Monthly meetings resume at the museum Sept. 17, 1984 at 7:30PM. Mr. Lee Simonson, Niag. Co. legislator, will be our guest speaker and will give a talk on "Autographs". He is reported to have a large collection including one signature from George Washington. Mr. Simonson is an eloquent public speaker and we suspect the September meeting will be very interesting.

Following the program, refreshments will be served by Faye Pisello, Chrm., Elsie Fitch, and Betty Cornell.

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ONLY IN AMERICA does a mother drive her kids 3 blocks to a physical fitness class.

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END OF THE RAILROAD CABOOSE:

Members who joined the historical society in 1972 may recall that the Wilson Museum became a reality primarily because of Dr. John Argue's interest in antique cars. He acquired the depot to store old vehicles and parts, but when he donated the facilities to the town of Wilson they were gradually converted to a museum and meeting place for the Wilson Society.

Dr. Argue has since donated several very valuable antique cars to the museum, but we can also thank him for another acquisition which we probably would never have received except for his dogged perseverance--namely, the old 1903 caboose.

We believe this caboose may someday be one of the museum's greatest attractions. For many years cabooses served as rolling offices and ferried repair crews and tools from one place to another. Some, like Wilson's work caboose, was a home on wheels for the men who worked, ate meals, and slept in them.

Today, computers do all the paper work and in 1982, in view of all the operational changes, the American railroads and the United Transportation Union agreed to gradually phase out all cabooses. One might say, therefore, that in a few years it will be the end of the line for the end of the train.

Thanks to careful renovation work performed by Burt Jennings and his committee, the Wilson caboose should become more valuable each year, and a rare attraction for future generations.

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SOCIETY ACTIVITIES:

Carol Schnoor is investigating possibility of co-operating with school to promote visits to the museum by 4th graders to help them with their study of local history....Plans are being studied to build an 80 foot addition to the transportation building in co-operation with the Town....Art Schnoor has installed vents and eve troughs in antique car building and cabinets and shelving will be built in for car memorabilia....Pumps have been acquired and installed on windmill by Chuck Messersmith....Norm and Martha MacAskill prepared and supervised Wilson Hist. Soc. exhibit at Farm and Home Center Fair this summer.....3 Tape recorders are being purchased for use in various rooms in museum to describe exhibits.....a Sandwich type board with "Museum Open" will be made to place by road when facilities are open.

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SEPTEMBER MEETINGS:

September 12th: Trustee Meeting at Museum, Wednesday evening, 8:00PM.

September 17th: Regular Meeting at Museum, Monday evening, 7:30PM.

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NEW HOSTESS CHAIRMAN:

During the coming year,if your phone rings and someone asks you to serve as Sunday afternoon museum hostess, you will probably be talking with Mrs. Helen Borngraeber who has consented to perform this very important service. Helen, wife of the late Stanley Borngraeber, is no stranger to Wilson having taught English at Wilson High for many years. She is also a Charter member of the society, and has served as trustee since it was founded in 1972.

Greeters for September will be: Sept. 2nd, Edgar and Eloise Culverwell; Sept. 9th, Chuck and Marion Campbell; Sept. 16, Waldo and Leona Beutel; Sept. 23rd, Bob and Marlene Dinse; and Sept. 30th, William and Maxine Jones.

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IN MEMORIAM:

Florence Beyer Reid, 101, a former Wilson resident, died at Key Biscayne, FL, and was buried at Pleasant Hills, CA, Friday, July 20, 1984. She was a member of the Miami Springs 7th Day Adventist Church and the Wilson Order of the Eastern Star. She is survived by her daughter in-law, Mrs. Cloe Reid of Wilson, also 3 grandsons and 7 g.g. grandchildren. Burial was in Flagler Memorial Park, Miami,FL. Memorial contributions may be made to the Wilson His. Soc.

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ACQUISITIONS:

Mrs. Pearl Leggett of Ransomville has contributed several interesting items including Lula Shippey Leggett's wedding shoes (1895); Pearl's baby shoes (1905); hand-made box decorated by wood-burning craftsmanship; 23 old postcards; and framed photo of Russel Ferris, Pearl's grandfather and Civil War Veteran.

Donald Wiltse: A timely article from USA Today, "Cabooses Rolling into Sunset".

Dr. Harry Blandette: 1962 4-door Chrysler.

Frances Marks Landy, Bellvue,WA: Class Day Program, Wilson High, 6/23/19; Class members; Newspaper account of Junior Class meeting,1918; Program for play, "The Farmerette" presented by Presbyterian Philathea Class, December 12, 1918.

Bessie D. Crawford, Cal. & Fla.: Framed Litho print (1862) Fort Federal Hill, Baltimore,MD 129th Regt. N.Y. Volunteers, Col. Peter A. Pppter. Picture belonged to David and Eleanor Crawford who had two sons in Civil War. They were grandparents of Lou R. Crawford and g. grandparents of town historian, Eleanor Myers. Bessie also donated quilt pieced by Orlena Kruske also pieces for another quilt.

Irene Laubacker, Lockport: 1821-1878 History of Niagara County.

Harry Brown,Kenmore: Lady's dress (ca.1875) including bodice, skirt, and under dress.

John Myers: Brass doorknob, lock, and plate for front door of museum.

Dr. Argue: 2 Framed composites of early cars; 10 photos, interior of museum; 2 framed series of antique cars, and 1983 calendar featuring antique cars.

Millie Croop: Child's Muff(ca. 1900); Woven table cloth (1900); Black silk Spanish Shawl; and Woman's Black Seal Alaskan Muff.

Jean Fraser, Sun City,AZ; Five cent check issued to her by Supt. of Banks of N.Y. State for settlement to depositors of Wilson State Bank when liquidated 7/26/1932.

John Demmin: Socony Road Map of New York State (1925).

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FINAL THOUGHT:

We are happier in many ways when we are old than when we were young. The young sow wild oats. The old grow sage. --Winston Churchill.