

LAKE ISLAND PARK

Lake Island Park (later known as Tuscarora Park) was acquired in the late 1800's by W. N. Harris and Dr. T. C. Walton. Mr. Harris managed the park which consisted of about 100 acres of beautiful pine groves bordering Twelve Mile Creek. He built a pavilion for dancing where lunches were served, and there were also recreational areas including a ball park. The old Harris boarding house (later Tugwell Cottage) became famous as "the place to go" for summer vacations. Starting in 1891 the Farmer's Picnics attracted huge crowds each year and were held the last Saturday in July. The Picnics were sponsored by the Niagara Co. Farmer's Assoc., and thousands attended yearly.

One of the main attractions of those times were the frequent "Parade of boats" held during evening hours. Boats of all sizes and shapes were trimmed with Chinese lanterns, and the beauty of the occasion was enhanced by the sound of soft music played on mandolins and guitars. In 1889 impressive ceremonies were held when Luther Wilson, from a gaily decorated barge, poured water into Twelve Mile Creek and re-christened it the Tuscarora River. The river was so named because the source of the west branch started in the Indian Reservation.

A news item in Ruth Stedman's scrapbook described Wilson as a pleasant place for a summer resort. The steamer "Eurydice" made regular trips from Toronto, Can., and unloaded hundreds of Canadians at the park piers each year. Other Canadian steamers were the "Cambria" and the "Columbus". The "Columbus" had a capacity of 600 passengers. Crowds of Youngstown residents also used to come to Wilson on barges where there was plenty of room for dancing. A familiar small steamer of that day was "The Annie F. Onen" which used to tow the barges.

Opening of the Rome, Watertown, and Ogdensburg railroad in 1876 made it possible for many vacationers to visit Wilson during the next 30 years. Many Pittsburg visitors came via the R. W. & O. to spend their summers at the Pittsburg Hotel on the "Island". A news item in the Wilson Star dated July 7, 1892 described a ball game played before 400 Canadians and 5,000 residents of nearby towns. It said that the "Niagara Falls Dolphins" defeated the "Toronto Wilmots" by a score of five to three.

The park was popular as a picnic area and included a water slide, bath houses, boats, and merry-ground. In 1899 Mr. Harris completed a 40x70 building called the Garden Opera House. It was said that Mr. Harris catered to a select clientele and allowed no liquor sales, Sabbath desecration, profanity, or other bad conduct of any kind.

Around the years 1904-1909, when Rexford Tugwell attended school in Wilson, boys could still make a dollar or two working for Mr. Harris on special days at what was fast becoming a deserted amusement park. Wilson started to decline as a resort town after 1900 when the Lockport-Olcott trolley line was built.

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**SURVEY PLANNED:** Miles S. Linnabery of Portales, New Mexico, is investigating the possibilities of doing an Archeological survey thesis, using the township of Wilson as a study area. The Board of Trustees has agreed to ask the membership to assist Miles to gain access to private properties where such studies might be made. Anyone having knowledge of Indian artifacts in the area or suggestions where information might be obtained, please call Mr. and Mrs. George Linnabery, who are co-operating with their son so that he may make a preliminary analysis.

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**ORNAMENTS:** Over 20 beautiful hand-made Bicentennial Christmas tree ornaments were turned in to the Society for display during the Holidays. Trustees have agreed to make this an annual event stressing old fashion hand-made ones. Ornaments will be marked with donor's name and year and used to decorate tree.

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**BON MOT:** The trouble with doing something right the first time is that nobody appreciates how difficult it was.

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MUSEUM ACQUISITIONS: Two truckloads of steel tables, chairs, electric typewriters, filing cabinets, and miscellaneous assortment of fans, etc., were donated to the Society by Western Electric of Buffalo. The equipment was picked up by Ollie Clark and Clark Stimson, and unloaded (with help from Edgar Culverwell and Don Croop) at the museum and Exley Methodist Church.

Allan Decker gave the Society 3 magazined slides of Niagara Falls ('25-29) 1 Navy Book, Postcards, 2 prints "The Bell's First Note", Satin wedding dress and veil, Bridesmaid pink veil and headpiece, white baby booties, R.R. Car-bide Lantern, Time Clock, Railroad iron, R.R. red neckerchief, and 1869 Niagara County Directory.

The Fellowship Class of Exley Church gave a ceramic tile with sketch of church on it. Tiles were used in conjunction with the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Methodist Society in Wilson in 1826.

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CAUTION URGED: There is no longer need to regulate lights from fuse box in kitchenette area. Lights in Patterson Room may now be turned on by using wall switches left of entranceway inside room. Someone turned off the furnace and cellar lights early in December causing toilets and drains to freeze. New sump pump is connected to line that controls EXIT lights. EXIT LIGHTS MUST BE LEFT ON AT ALL TIMES. It cost the Society over \$200 last winter to repair water damage to furnace and heater. Lets not let this happen again.

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FROM THE "STAR": The editor of the "Star" must have had a rough week in 1899 as he said, "The reason some people "lose their minds" is because they have given a piece of their own so often, they have none left for themselves".

May 2, 1952: "Clay Parsons, born in Wilson in 1873, was the son of Sylvester Parsons. His mother was Luther Wilson's daughter, Donna. Mr. Parsons founded the Parson's Drug. Co., and for many years managed the once famous Merchant Gargling Oil Co. He was also a trustee of the Farmer's and Mechanics Savings Bank at Lockport.

March 27, 1958: "Surveying instruments used by Mr. Dox and Jessie Haner in "Laying out Wilson", are in the Niag. Co. Hist. Soc. museum. These men also surveyed sections of the Erie Canal, and two of Wilson's streets are named after them."

And for those of you who were sick of winter before it officially arrived, we quote a clipping from Hazel Thilk's scrapbook dated Feb. 16, 1893. "The blizzard of last Monday was the most severe to visit this section in years. North and south roads require shoveling to make them passable. The Wilson stage was unable to make the trip to East-Wilson and Lockport Tuesday because the roads were blocked."

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"THUMBNAIL SKETCH": Martha Stockwell Harvey was born in Wilson and is an employee of Lockport Felt Div. of Carborundum. The Harveys have three children, William, Stephen, and Susan (Gillis), also 5 grandchildren, Michael, Peter, Lisa, Jason, and Tara. Martha graduated from Wilson Central in 1942, and is Sec. of the Administrative Board of Olcott United Methodist Church.

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MUSEUM EXHIBITS: The monthly museum exhibits have really been great. We hope our visitors (as well as members) realize that the museum committee has been operating under difficult conditions. Remodeling causes disruptions and makes their job much tougher. Many thanks to Peggy and her committee-a job well done. Mrs. Dorothy Thilk will have charge of the January exhibit which will feature "Woodenware". HOSTESSES; Jan 2nd, Margaret and Roger Goodman; Jan. 9th, Lois and Burt Jennings; Jan. 16th, Marguerite and Joe Geiser; Jan. 23rd, Leona and Howard Hunter, and Jan. 30th, Marlene and Eob Dinse. Karl Wright suggests that when members agree to serve they should also assume responsibility of providing a replacement for themselves if they can't.

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PLANNING BOARD: The Planning Board, chaired by Whit Barnum, agreed that two projects needed immediate attention in December--installation of storm windows and sump pump hole in cellar. Art Schnoor, Harold Albright, and Dick Adams worked on frames at Art's home which they covered with clear plastic. These were installed on the inside of the museum windows, and not only look good, but should prove to be real fuel savers.

Elwin Upton, Doug Smith, and Don Croop attempted to break through the basement cement with 12# sledges and chizels, but to no avail. Ed Hastings, who was doing work for Exley Church, came to the rescue with a jack-hammer and broke up the granite-like flooring. Art, Don, John, John Myers, and Ed Peters finished digging out the hole to allow for a heavy 2' tile. Water ran in so fast the sump pump had to be held in the hole in order to dig out the rock and clay. The tile was installed with four bushel of gravel placed under and around it. Mr. Hastings returned to cement the tile in place for which the Society is deeply grateful.

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MEETINGS: Jan. 12th, Trustees at museum, 8PM. Jan. 17th, Regular Meeting, 7:30 PM at museum. Program will feature Dr. Sam Bruni of Lewiston who will talk about early American Indians in the Wilson area. Refreshment Committee will be Helen Horton, Chrm., Marion Grundhoefer, and Barbara Johnson. Jan. 19, Square Dance at museum. Try it--you might like it!

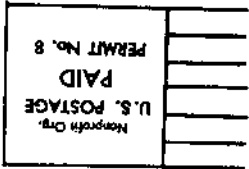
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DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

# NEWSLETTER

WILSON, NEW YORK 14172

Wilson Historical Society



## RESORT TOWN

Wilson's fame as a "Resort Town" dates back to the late 1800's, but now the many hotels that once accomodated the tourist trade have long disappeared from the local scene. Today it would be difficult to visualize a beautiful three story structure dominating the southwest corner of Lake and Young streets, yet one once did. It was the Sutherland Hotel, and one of Wilson's best until it burned down in 1908. It was built by Mrs. Paul (Mildred) Middleton's grandfather, Benjamin Howe Sutherland. It was first managed by Peter E. Secord, who was succeeded by John Tenbrook on July 1, 1897. The hotel had hot and cold running water in every room and was steam heated. There were large pleasant sleeping rooms, two neatly furnished parlors, a gentlemen's reading room, bar, and bath rooms. The dining room was tastefully decorated and famous for its fine foods. On July 30, 1896, Lt. Gov. Saxton came to Wilson by train and dined at the Sutherland prior to speaking to a large gathering at the Farmer's Picnic. Another famous hotel once occupied the site where the Sutherland was built. It was the Ontario Hotel, erected by Luther Wilson in 1834. Mr. J.C. Bradley was its first proprietor, and was being managed by George Koule in 1894 when it burned down.

The American Hotel was a brick building built on the site where St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church now stands. It was originally built to serve as a hospital for a Doctor Kress. When it too was destroyed by fire in 1895, it was re-built as the Tower House. The Tower, or Towne Hotel, had all the latest modern improvements available at the time. It was operated by Alden J. Bowker, and was opened to the public June 6, 1896. He spared no expense in furnishings which wereprocured from A. H. Reed Furniture and Undertaking Parlor. A fire also leveled this popular hotel in 1908.

The Vendome Hotel was built on "Sunset Island" in the early 1880's by "Jake" Miller. It burned a few years later and was re-built as the Glendora. Mr. Walters operated it but it was later sold to William Wright of Pittsburg. Mr. Wright named it the Pittsburg Hotel and it became one of the most popular in the area. It also burned in 1913 and never was re-built.

The Huntington Lodge, located near the southeast end of "Sunset Island", was originally built by its owner as a private summer home. Guests liked it so well they kept returning so it was turned into a summer lodge. It was named for Huntington Jerome Cuddeback, grandson of Jerome Cooper, senior member of the firm, Cuddeback & Cooper. Since it was located in the beautiful pine and oak groves on the island, the owner erected a canvass-covered open air dining room with screened in sides to accomodate the overflow of guests. The Lodge became so popular another building over looking the harbor just west of it, was leased and called the Huntington Lodge Annex. The facilities were managed by Kate R.C. Cuddeback and featured hot and cold running water for baths, large sleeping porches, home cocking, tennis and croquet grounds, as well as rental tents and open fireplaces. Music and dancing were provided during the evening hours, and a special fountain-aquarium illuminated with colored electric lights was a special attraction. The old stone lodge remains today and was acquired by Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Gestwick who are in the process of renovating the historic old place.

Three other popular establishments located near the harbor were the Harris boarding cottage (later known as the Tugwell cottage), which in its day became known as "the place to go" for a summer vacation. The C.E. Ackerman Hotel was located near the pier and featured a dining hall, large barn, and well supplied bar. He also had a large number of fishing boats and tackle available for the fishing enthusiasts who frequented the harbor and lake. Fred Haner also had a place nearby with bar, boats, fishing tackle and bait available. It was said that Mr. Ackerman and Mr. Haner were very accomodating and had a host of friends.

The Hub Hotel on Young Street, built by the Ferrins, is probably the last of the old buildings left in the village to remotely suggest Wilson's eminent past as a "Resort Town".

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DORA HATCH HONEYWELL was born in Warsaw, N.Y. where she attended the Warsaw High School and Miss Broughton's Boarding School for girls. She came to Wilson with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Ransom Hatch, and family. They resided in a colonial home on Lake Street on the lot where the Milburn and Marion Campbell home now stands. She had two sisters, Mrs. Mary Hatch Plumb and Mrs. Etta Hatch Campbell, also a brother Chauncey R. Hatch.

At the age of 22 she worked as an apprentice at the Wilson Star, and later became editor of the Youngstown Times which was also published by the Star. At the time of her husband's death (Charles Honeywell, publisher of the Wilson Star) she became owner and publisher of the paper until her death in 1936.

It was through the efforts of Dora Hatch Honeywell that many historic facts about the town of Wilson were preserved. She solicited and printed news items in the Star for 45 years. In the early years all type was set by hand with each letter or character drawn from its own compartment. After the type was set, proofread, and the paper printed, each letter was returned to its place by hand. Later on, a linotype machine was installed which made her work much easier and faster. She was always alert for news items of interest to the people of Wilson, and local merchants used to remark that they could set their clocks by her prompt appearance to and from work at 7AM and 6PM.

The Wilson Star was founded by Charles Honeywell in 1878 and never missed a publication in the many years it existed. When Mrs. Honeywell died in 1936 the paper was published by her nephew, Milburn E. Campbell.

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C TANNENBAUM: Those who attended the Christmas Party and saw the beautiful decorated tree might be interested in knowing that many of the attractive antique ornaments were donated by one of our charter members, Miss Flossie Lortz. Hand-made Bicentennial Christmas tree ornaments displayed during the holidays were made by: Eva Zortman, Lois Barnum, Leona Hunter, Joe Higgins, George, Dorothy, and Miles Linnabery, Mary Clark, Janette Sporleder, Dr. John Argue, Dorothy Lort, Frances Goldthorp, Marietta Goodman, Dorothy Thilk, and Peggy Ward. Non-members who entered ornaments were Manya Kelley, Maryalice Ward, Francine Waters, Eleanor Harrington, and Lee Anne Sarkees. Ernestine Walpole has printed the names and date ornaments were donated on tags which will be attached to each and preserved for future use.

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NEW MEMBERS: The Society wishes to welcome Mr. William Ott of La Habra, Cal., also Mrs. Harry (Florence Partington) Porter of New Brunswick, N.J. Mrs. Porter is the daughter of a former Exley Methodist pastor, and her husband, retired, was a former President of Fredonia College.

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NEW PUBLICATION: The booklet, "The Valiant Men of Battery M", is now available for \$1.75 at the museum, by mail order, or at Nettie Stimson's Barn Shoppe. It features a re-revised chapter on "The Story of Billy Sherman", a complete list of volunteers who served in Battery M, a description of the cannon used by the Battery, and an account of the Dedication Ceremonies when the Society placed its first historical marker in town at "Billy's" gravesite. Many towns have special attractions for visitors. How many places can you name with a monument erected to the memory of a Confederate Civil War horse?

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GLASS RECYCLING: Yes, the Society is still in need of your old glass, and the project is a "smashing" success. Perhaps you have noticed the new signs at the Jones's home on Lake Street. They were made by Paul Stimson and erected by his father, Glenn Stimson.

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MEETINGS: Trustees will meet Wednesday evening, February 16th, 8PM-museum. The Regular meeting will be Feb. 21st, 7:30 PM at museum. Mrs. John Bush of Lockport will show and talk about Frankoma Collectible Plates. Refreshment hostesses will be Sue Schearer, Sue Goodnight, and Katherine Rutt. A square dance will be held Wednesday evening, February 23rd, 8 PM at museum.

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MUSEUM HOSTESSES for February-Sunday afternoons from 2 to 4-are as follows: Feb. 6th, Kay and Marty Harmless; Feb. 13th, Bessie and Fenton Cole; Feb. 20th, Sheryl Brown and Mrs. H. Marks; Feb. 27th, Betty & Gordon Hausman. The monthly exhibit will be a Book Display under the supervision of Mrs. Dorothy Linnabery.

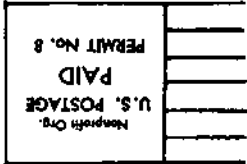
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JOIN THE CLUB: When you remember things that happened thirty-five years ago, but can't remember what you ate for dinner; Lie about how old you are; Would rather not visit people in hospitals; Forget what day it is; Insist that all politicians are crooked; Pretend you can hear when you can't; Are so careful driving an automobile you're a menace on the highway; Get mad if your family says, "Take it easy", and madder yet if they don't; Spend hours depressed wondering where it all will end; Think of the bad things that might happen to your children or grandchildren; or get upset when you get a busy signal on the telephone---then join the club, you're getting old.

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BON MOT: Whatever makes men good Christians makes them good citizens. (Daniel Webster)

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### THE WILSON YACHT CLUB

The first regular meeting of the Wilson Yacht Club was held Sunday, Aug., 7, 1938. Mr. Waldren Hayes was the first Commodore, and some of the other members were Howard Murphy, Ernest Bambach, James Hinchcliffe, Jack Baldau, William Crandall, Clifford Beers, Robert Cone, Charles Hawkes, and William Stein. On August 21, 1938 the Club was granted a Charter by the State of New York, and a decision had to be made for the club's location. Two sites were considered, (1) "Dog Island" (the present site), and (2) the portion of the east end of "Wintergreen Island" owned by the Tugwells. "Dog Island" or "Treasure Island", as it was then known, was selected. It was purchased from Mrs. Fanny L. Sornberger and payments of \$50 a year were made to her.

On January 13, 1939 a decision was made to make an addition to the original building and \$300 was appropriated. Originally motor boats were allowed but now the club is limited to sailboats. Annual Regattas with the Olcott Yacht Club began in August, 1940. Also in 1940, dredging of the harbor was discussed; and talks held with Arthur Ness about building a bridge to the island. Up to the present day, club members have been active in harbor improvements, preservation of the island, and beautification of it. (Research on the Wilson Yacht Club was done by Miss Flossie Lortz.)

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**LOOKING BACK:** A recent edition of the Niaga. Falls Hist. Soc. Newsletter, "Out of the Mist", brought back some boyhood memories. Store ads were featured that had been run in a 1901 edition of the Niagara Falls Gazette--places that some of our older members may well remember such as "Amberg's", "Cole and Merriam, Druggists", "George S. Cowper", "The Hub", and the "Myers Carriage and Wagon Shop". The ad that caught our eye was for the "Croop Bros." firm which stated that both stores would be open evenings from December 10th until Christmas "With so many toys to please the children it would be folly to try and describe them to you."

I recall visiting the Dennis Croop home at 402 Memorial Parkway, and remember the beautiful unobstructed view of the Niagara River; also the fun of touring the (once famous) Shredded Wheat Factory. The tour ended with visitors sampling small packs of shredded wheat served with cream and sugar in the plant restaurant. And who, having heard them, could ever forget the excellent Shredded Wheat Band?

Dennis and Lester were born in Clarence and Dennis went to Niagara Falls circa 1880. He established two general stores, one at 113 Falls St., and the other at 2112 Main Street. The brothers also conducted a large wholesale warehouse in New York. Both were active in Masons, and Dennis was a member of the 50 year Club of Niagara Falls Lodge 81, I.O.O.F, and Niagara Falls Exempt Fireman's Association. He died February 1, 1947.

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**WELCOME:** Our Society is not only international, but now we can boast two new members from the paradise of the Pacific, Hawaii. We welcome Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Fitch of Paia, Maui, Hawaii.

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**MARCH MEETINGS:** March 16th, Board of Trustees, 8 PM at museum; March 21st, Regular meeting, 7:30 PM at museum. Program will feature Miss Theresa Lasher of Niagara Falls Library, who will present a slide program identifying architectural design of period homes in Niagara County. Refreshments will be served by Gertrude Schnoor, Jane Sinclair, and Marie Luff.

The monthly exhibit will be an old book display with Dorothy Linnabery in charge. Sunday afternoon, March 27th, Mr. Tom Fare of the Wilson faculty, will give a demonstration on book binding and repair. **HOSTESSES** March 6th, Barbara and Adorno Johnson; March 13th, Shirley and David Smith; March 20th, Sue and Amy Schearer; March 27th, Janet Sporleder and Helen Horton.

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**FAIR CHAIRMEN:** Please try to attend the 10 AM planning session Tuesday, April 12th, at Eleanor Myer's home, corner of Lake and Wood.

MUSEUM: Due to the severe blizzard, Doctor Argue directed that (except for the regular meeting) the museum should be closed during the month of February to conserve gas. It will, however, be open during March but the thermostat will be set at 60 degrees. It is suggested that all Sunday Hostesses and others using the museum be aware of this and dress accordingly. The trustees have authorized Art Schnoor to purchase a used Andes coal circulator which is believed large enough to heat the entire building. This will meet Fuel Gas requirements for an auxiliary heating system making the Society less dependent on gas.

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FAIR UNDERWAY: A planning session was held at the home of Eleanor Myers, Chairlady for the 1977 Memorial Day Fair, with a very good response. Expectations are to make this year's Fair bigger and better than ever. Past fairs have been successful in spite of inclement weather--hopefully, the sun will once again shine in Wilson on Memorial Day.

Betty Stimson and Lois Barnum emphasize there can't be too many donations of home-baked pies, salads, baked goods, and especially rolls. They are also looking for another good used refrigerator for use in the food distribution area. Lois Jennings, Chairlady for the Society's "Flea Market", would like everyone to start gathering "fleas" now. They may be left any Sunday afternoon from 2 to 4 and put behind the piano in the Patterson Room.

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HISTORIC CAR: Dr. John F. Argue recently donated a very generous gift to the Society making it possible to purchase a rare 1904 Covert Automobile from the Ford Museum in Michigan. The car is in excellent condition and one of the first built by the Covert Co. at Lockport, N.Y. The doctor hopes that this car will be the start of an antique car museum in the town of Wilson, and has given an additional \$500 to start a fund to try and raise enough money to build some type of suitable steel building to house the Covert and other possible later acquisitions. The trustees have approved the idea and directed the Planning Board, chaired by Whitney Barnum, to provide an estimate of the size and cost of an initial building suitable to house the autos. Dr. Argue's proposal could well be the start of an unprecedented public attraction for Wilson. Hopefully, not only the Society, but other community-minded organizations in town will get behind this worthy venture.

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FAMILY RECORD SHEETS: If you have neglected to fill out a "family record" sheet, it is hoped you'll do so soon. New sheets have been made up and are available if you need one. Pres. Argue has appointed a committee, temporarily chaired by Dorothy Thilk, to try and interest students and all area residents in learning more about their family origin. A file will be kept in the museum of as many genealogies as it is possible to collect. Jean Argue, Nettie Stimson, Dorothy Lort, and Don Croop will assist Dorothy to get the project underway. If you would be interested in serving on this type of committee, please tell Mrs. Thilk. Involvement by more people in all types of Society activity is desirable, but only you can tell us where your interests lie.

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ACQUISITIONS: The trustees recently authorized the formation of an acquisitions committee to accept donations to the museum. The Committee is composed of the Museum Chairman, Peggy Ward; Library Chairman, Nancy Kent (in absence of Millie Middleton); and Representative of the Board of Trustees, **Joe Higgins**. All persons are asked to clear donations through one of the afore mentioned persons. After gifts are accepted, a referral slip will be signed and given to donor. The Library Committee will then enter a record of the gift in their files. The display or storage of all museum acquisitions are the responsibility of the museum committee.

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MEMORIALS: Twelve persons have become paid Life Members of the Wilson Historical Society. Each contributed \$100 which has been placed in a special high interest account from which only the interest may be withdrawn. What a fine way for members to make a "living memorial" to the Society in this trust fund. Year after year, long after they will have departed from this life, their \$100 investment will continue to provide funds to help operate the Society. Perhaps a wooden plaque might be made up someday on which the names of paid life members could be attached with name of donor and date inscribed on small brass plates. Future generations might then see at a glance (or even join) those, who, by their generosity help insure the future of the Society in Wilson.

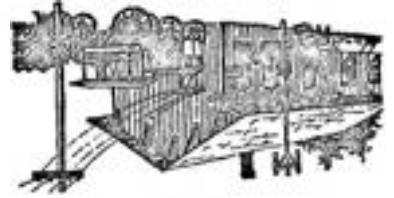
Other Memorials are now being entered in the beautiful Memorial Book which was donated by the Richard Adam's family in loving memory of his wife, Ellen. Mrs. Ernestine Walpole graciously consented to enter memorials in the book.

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QUILTERS ALERT! Another quilt will be stitched this year with work starting around the middle of March. Anyone interested in helping please call Betty Stimson or Florence Schultz for information. The coverlet to be used is very beautiful, and, basing an opinion on quilts previously made, the finished product will be of excellent quality. It will be raffled off at the Memorial Day Fair in May, and Nettie Stimson, Chairlady of the Ways and Means Comm., is in charge of ticket sales and distribution.

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*April 1977*



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**THE EMINENT SINGER FAMILY:** Thomas M. Singer was born in Canada, and married Amy A. Staats of Wilson. Thomas enlisted for service in the Civil War October 15, 1861 at Lockport, N.Y. He served in Battery M, 1st N.Y. Light Artillery until October 23, 1862 when he received an honorable discharge for physical disability. (Mrs. Grace Singer has his official discharge papers.) Thomas died May 4, 1915 at age 76, and his wife Amy died June 27, 1916.

Roland R. Singer, son of Thomas and Amy Singer, was born on his parent's farm on Chestnut Road, South Wilson, June 26, 1867. He received his education at the old Collegiate Institute and Lockport High School. He taught school for sometime and later contributed substantially to the commercial expansion of Wilson Village. In 1904 he engaged in the produce business and in 1912 organized the Wilson Cold Storage which he managed to the time of his death. He also organized the Central Milling Co., and Wilson Lumber Co. In addition, he owned 600 acres of the choicest fruitland in northern Niagara County.

Mr. Singer was elected Supervisor of the town of Wilson in 1913 and served four two-year terms. He had the unusual distinction of being elected chairman of the Niagara County Board of Supervisors in which capacity he served six consecutive terms. He was a member of Exley Methodist-Episcopal Church and served as a trustee for ten years. He was also a member of the Wilson I.C.O.F., Wilsonian Club, and Wilson's Men Club.

He married Miss Emma A. Push October 12, 1892, and they had three children, Delbert, Harold T., and Helen. Roland R. Singer died September 10, 1922, and Rev. William Partington officiated.

Harold T. Singer, son of Roland Singer was born June 10, 1896 at Wilson. During World War I he enlisted in the U. S. Naval Aviation Service, and was honorably discharged December 8, 1918. He spent most of his years in Wilson as a successful fruit grower. He married Grace Kenyon, a language teacher at Wilson High School, September 22, 1930. Grace was born at Lisbon, N.Y., and graduated from St. Lawrence University. She spent most of her twenty-five years in the teaching profession at Wilson where she is still a well-known figure in the community. She is a member of St. John's Episcopal Church, The Retired Teacher's Assoc., Delphic Circle, and Wilson Historical Society. Her late husband, Harold T. Singer died August 23, 1975.

Thomas K. Singer, son of Mr. and Mrs. Harold T. Singer, seems to have inherited the management abilities of his father and grandfather. He was recently elected a Corporate Vice-President of the Kaiser Aluminum and Chemical Corp. of Oakland, California. He has been with Kaiser for over 22 years and is also manager of the company's Washington operations. He resides in Bethesda, Md. with his wife, Jacqueline (Moulin) whom he met in Casablanca. They have five children and the eldest is Marc, a freshman at Hamilton College, Flint, N.Y. Vivianne attends the girls school at Tudor Hall, Banbury, Oxfordshire, England, and there are three girls at home, Claire 15; Michelle 12; and Gail 10.

Note: The late Delbert Singer lived in Wilson most of his life. He served in the U.S. Army Air Corps during World War I and later operated a large farm east of Clcott. His wife, Beatrice Brown, came from Ohio and she is now living in Houston Texas where her daughter Virgil Singer Scott resides. Helen Singer, (Mrs. Dunning Idle) makes her home in Gaithersburg, MD. We are indebted to Mrs. Idle for much of the information which we have compiled on the Singers.

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**APRIL MEETINGS:** All Fair Chairmen at home of Eleanor Myers, 10 AM, April 12; Trustees at museum, 8 PM, April 13th; Regular meeting at museum, 7:30 PM, April 18th. Program will be "An Evening with Fabel Wilson. Hostesses will be Gwen Heidenfeldt, Nancy Kent, and Shirley Smith.

Monthly Exhibit will be "Hats from the Past" under the supervision of Eleanor Myers. Hostesses April 3rd, Dianne and Lloyd Albright; April 10-open; April 17th, Gerry and Earl Swann; April 24th, Dorothy and George Linnabery.

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BCN MCT: If you don't learn to laugh at trouble, you won't have anything to laugh at when you're old. (Ed Howe)

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS: Annual dues expire April 30, 1977. A renewal form is enclosed for your convenience. Please complete and return to Mildred Croop, Treasurer. Some historical societies have found it necessary to raise dues this year. Thanks to the prudent use of our funds by the officers and trustees, along with voluntary help from many of our members, it is possible for our Society to keep renewal rates at the same low figure when we started.

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QUILT STARTED: Work has begun on a new quilt which will be awarded to some lucky person at our spring "Old Fashioned Fair". It is being worked on Tuesdays and Thursdays at the museum from 9 AM to 3 PM--also Sunday afternoons. Mrs. Schultz, an exceptionally fine quilter, is in charge of the project and will be present every day. She says that good quilters are welcome anytime and may set their own hours. Last year's beautiful Bicentennial Quilt was sewn at her home because of the illness of her late husband, Clarence, and most of that quilt was done by her and Mrs. Peryl Tovell. Incidentally, you probably won't wish to miss out on a chance to acquire the 1977 quilt, so see Nettie Stimson for donation tickets. Try to interest all your friends--the quilt award has been one of the Fair's most popular projects.

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"OLD FASHIONED FAIR": Fair Chairmen will need your help and co-operation. They are listed here in case you'd like to volunteer in specific areas: Gen. Chrm., Eleanor Myers; Dealers, Anna Mae Nevins and Verna Caufield; Food tent, Betty Stimson and Lois Barnum; Hot Dogs, Arthur Schnoor; Coffee and Donuts, Dora Wakeman; Candy, Bessie Cole; Cheese, Sara Berry; Lemonade and Popcorn, Gue Schultz; Flea Market, Lois Jennings; Fish Pond, Dianne Albright; Souvenirs and quilt, Nettie Stimson; Balloons, Ed Peters; Movies, Douglas Smith; Art Display, Dorothy Thilk; Membership, Chris Kellman; Museum Display, Peggy Ward; Antique Cars, Dr. Argue; Publicity, Norman MacAskill and Dorothy Innabery; Advertising, Millie Croop; Plants, Flossie Lortz; "Set-up", Lynn Sherrie; Cleanup, Everybody.

\* \* \* \* \*

SPRING CLEANING: Things have begun to hum again this spring under the direction of the Planning Board and supervision of Art Schnoor. A partition was removed in basement; coal bin built; paint, electrical supplies, and ca-boose materials put in cellar; cabinets, files, tables placed in Patterson Room and library; Fair supplies stored in basement cabinets; Drain cover put in basement floor and covers over crawl space openings; lumber sorted out and work begun to cover walls of Patterson Room with barn boards; Kitchenette started and area cleared; Masonite backing put on display cabinet, hinges on cupboards; Podium built for Patterson Room; Marble counter tops donated by Mildred Middleton from old drug store acquired and brought to museum; Space heater purchased from Mr. Hausman hooked up--and we hope everyone will be patient while things are being done. Members who "pitched in" to help out were, Dick Adams, Whit Farnum, Fenton Cole, Millie and Don Croop, Eloise and Edger Culverwell, Helen and Ralph Dinse, Dan and Kent Douglas, Joe Geiser, John Goodrich, Howard Hunter, Lois and Furt Jennings, Eleanor and John Myers, Ed Peters, Dick Schultz, Tom Sharpe, Dorothy and Norman Thilk, Bob Thomas, and John Weiler, Ed Lort and Art Zortman. Thank You, one and all.

\* \* \* \* \*

THURSPHILL MENTION: Marion Stockwell Winger was born in Wilson, and is Pay-roll Supervisor at Great Lakes Carbon Corp. She graduated from Newfane High, Niagara Co. Community College, and University of Buffalo. She is a member of Our Lady of the Rosary Roman Catholic Church, Smithsonian Institution, Common Cause, and Company Rep. for United Giver's Fund. The Wingers have two children, Michael and Patricia. Her mother was Rosella Champion. Her Stockwell ancestors came to America in 1630 and the John Stockwell home still stands in Suffield, Ct. We recently received a letter from Marion that should be of special interest to some of our Society members. We quote:

"I was in Gettysburg, Pa., recently, and happened on a display in a cabinet at the Park Visitor Center. In a case were two instruments: A German Silver Pife and a small Clarinet. Under the instruments were this statement:

These instruments were used by Enoch Pettit of Wilson, Niagara Co., N.Y., in the Civil War from 11/22/62 to the end of the war. He enlisted in Co. F, 151st Regiment of Volunteers. Mustered into Union Military Service on 11/22/62 as a musician. Since he was a Quaker, it meant that he also helped with the wounded and sick. During his service, he marched with Sherman to the Sea. These instruments were donated by his grandson, the Rev. Winfred Pettit Moody, who as a boy, was taught to play them by his grandfather Enoch. The Reverend was pastor of Stone Street Presbyterian Church of Watertown prior to World War I."

\* \* \* \* \*

YOUNG VISITORS: Two Boy Scouts, Troop #827 of Ransomville, recently hiked to the Wilson Museum on a Sunday afternoon. "Chuck" Chesnut and Jeff Wiepert thought it would be fun to visit and at the same time get credit for their hiking badges. While following the old R.W. & O. tracks, they found some "tie date nails" which they donated to the hostess for our collection.

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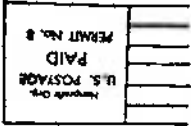
COULD BE! The modern woman wears just as many clothes as her grandmother did--but not all at once. (Modern Maturity)

HILSON HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
MRS MARY KENT, LIBRARIAN  
59 LAKE STREET  
HILSON, NEW YORK 14172

May 1977 Vol. 8 No. 5  
DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

NEWSLETTER  
WILSON, NEW YORK 14172  
Hilsonian Historical Society

May 1977



### PEOPLE OF THE LONG HOUSE

In the October 1974 "Newsletter" we featured an item about an old map titled, HO-DE-NO-SAU-NEE-GA, or People of the Long House. It was originally drawn by Lewis Morgan and Ely S. Parker, Seneca Indian Sachem, in 1851 from old French maps dating back to 1720 or earlier. The map was redrawn in 1962 by Mr. Eber L. Russell, former Historian of Perrysburg, N.Y., who added over 150 translations based on 50 years of research as a Seneca Indian scholar. Included are ancient Indian trails, lakes, villages, springs and other places with their aboriginal names.

Mr. Russell was once awarded the Peter Doctor Citation for distinguished service as a "true advocate of Indian legend, Tradition, and History." School libraries and colleges in Western New York have been recipients of over 20 reels of his recordings on local Indian History. It took Mr. Russell six weeks to reproduce (in color) each master map by hand. Of the few copies made, one was purchased by the Buffalo Museum of Science, another by St. Bonaventure University, and one is on exhibit at the Holland Land Co. Museum at Batavia.

The Wilson Historical Society is the recipient of one of these rare maps through the generosity of Mrs. Penton (Bessie) Cole, daughter of Eber Russell. Unfortunately, the map was displayed in the sunniest room of the museum where it faded to the point where it was becoming difficult to read. Since it took Mr. Russell six weeks to draw the map and his many years of research might soon disappear, we felt an effort should be made to preserve it. We obtained permission from Bessie Cole to re-trace the 3x3 1/2 foot map, and the project was completed over a three week period entailing some 23 hours--much of it by use of a magnifying glass. We can really appreciate the work which was originally done by Mr. Russell, and would now respectfully suggest that our museum committee keep the map in the Patterson Room where bright sunlight will no longer be a problem.

The Mythology of the early Indian tribes is most colorfully described on the unusual map. For instance, one may learn that the "Stone Giants", or (Ken-Non-Squah) were greatly feared by the Indians because they were evil, and lived in stony places where they often came out to devour people. In contrast were the "Little People", or (Jun-Jyio) who were fairies about 10" high. There were three tribes of these "Little People" and they were always good and helpful. One tribe made the plants and trees grow, colored the berries and leaves, and put them to bed in the fall. Then there were the Medicine Men who cared for the sick and injured animals. The last and most numerous were the "Stone Throwers" who left boulders in the fields and made rock cities.

The Viking ship shown on Lake Ontario indicates the Indian awareness that Norsemen traveled through N.E. America before the time of Columbus--a legend which has lately been authenticated. The great horned serpent in the lake was probably inspired by the great whales who were once able to enter Ontario via the St. Lawrence River. The map also reveals that a party of Indians were once returning from Ohio (O-Hee-You), when they caught a great fish they had to lift into their canoe. It was still alive when they reached Lake Erie, and according to legend, accounts for the huge muscalonge now found in the lake.

The aboriginal name for Tonawanda Creek was (Ta-Na-Wun-Da). It was said that the Tonawanda-Senecas were tricked out of their land--some 70,000 acres--by fraud. They sold it for 20¢ an acre and were obliged to buy back a small portion at \$20 an acre. We also may learn from the map that our close friends, the Tuscaroras, were once called (Dus-Ga-O-Weh-O-No-Ga), or cloth shirt wearing people. They moved originally from the Carolinas, and prior to coming to Lewiston, lived along the Delaware River in S.E. New York State. The Mohawks were known as "Possessors of the Flint" and used the flint mine near the Hudson River called (Ah-Gook-Aki), an Algonkin flint mine for hundreds of years.

INDIAN PRAYER: "GREAT SPIRIT-- Grant that I may not criticize my neighbor until I have walked for a moon in his moccasins.

\* \* \* \* \*

IN MEMORIAM: The Society extends its deepest sympathy to the family of Mrs. Paul (Mildred) Middleton who passed away recently after a lingering illness. Mildred Diez Middleton graduated from Wilson High School, Deaconess School of Nursing, and retired as Supervising Nurse at Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center. She belonged to Exley United Methodist Church, Daughters of the American Revolution, Cambria, and Niag. Co. Historical Societies. Mildred was not only a charter member of the Wilson Historical Society, but also one of the ten founders who met to plan its organization, April 18, 1972, at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Norman Thilk. She was appointed Library Chairman, June 28, 1972, and served in that capacity until her demise. Her active committee spent uncounted hours compiling valuable records for the museum library. Her energy and vitality were an inspiration to all who knew and worked with her.

The Memorial Committee, with approval of the Board of Trustees, has decided to place a plaque over the door to the room she loved best which will henceforth be known as the "Mildred Middleton Library".

\* \* \* \* \*

ANCESTRY: The Genealogical Comm. is enclosing forms with this newsletter so that members or any one else interested may have a record of their ancestry on file in the museum library. These could be very valuable someday to a descendant trying to trace his or her ancestry. Please give completed forms (or mail) to Dorothy Thilk. Extra sheets will be available upon request.

\* \* \* \* \*

BARN BOARDS: Efforts to get barn boards to finish the Patterson Room were successful even though they are becoming a scarce commodity. We thought you might like to know that "yankee Ingenuity" has devised a way to make one's own barn boards. First get boards from top of piles in lumber yards. Next paint them with "cheap beer", and while still wet, slap on rottenstone (about 90¢ a pound). When dry, wipe off excess. Now if your spouse doesn't approve having you paint beer on wood, there is a last resort. You can purchase 3/4 inch random width planks 8' tall in bundles that will cover 28 sq. ft. from the Vermont Barnboard Co.-for about \$30 a bundle. By our calculations, this might make the Patterson Room one of the most valuable in the town of Wilson.

\* \* \* \* \*

QUILT DONE: The Society's beautiful "Calico Rose" quilt was finished in a record 21 days totaling about 225 hours of fine sewing. Florence Schultz, Betty Stimson, and Beryl Tovell, who initiated the project, were capably assisted by Joe Higgins, Anna Mae Nevins, Verna Caufield, Dorothy Lort, Faye Pisello, Janet Sporleder, and Millie Croop. (Note: We stopped at Fort Boonsborough, Ky., recently, where expert quilters were demonstrating their skill. We left that historic shrine feeling that our Wilson Society quilters don't have to take a back seat for anyone.)

\* \* \* \* \*

MAY MEETINGS: Trustees, May 11th, 8PM at museum: Regular Meeting, May 16th 7:30 PM at museum. Theresa Lascher, of the Niagara Falls Library, will show slides and discuss period architecture of area homes; Fair Committee, May 17th 10:00 AM at museum: "Old Fashioned Fair", Memorial Day, May 30th.

The museum committee is selecting monthly themes for future exhibits. A chart has been posted on bulletin board so members can sign names and phone numbers in areas where they can help or provide exhibits. MAY is "Wool Processing" with Eleanor Douglas; JUNE is "Candles" with Marty Harmless; JULY will be "Basketry" with Diane Albright; AUGUST is "Furniture Refinishing"; SEPTEMBER is "Getting the Most out of Antiques" with Nettie Stimson and Audrey Orr; OCTOBER is "Harvest Time"; and DECEMBER will be "Toys and Dolls", Peggy Ward.

Sunday afternoon hostesses for May 1st are Flossie Lortz and Cynthia Wilson; May 8th, Kay and Arthur Ness; May 15th, Kris Kellman; May 22nd, Zilpha and Archie Petty, and May 29th, Millie and Don Croop. (Note: We wish to again clarify a previous announcement that all persons who accept dates to serve as hostesses are themselves responsible to get replacements if they can't serve.)

\* \* \* \* \*

MUSEUM PROGRESS: You have to see it to believe it, and we won't repeat names of those who return day after day, but in order to update our volunteer workers we must include, Archie Petty, Walter Hutchison, Rodney Toenniessen, Berne Kent, Elwin Upton, Joe Higgins, Charles McManus, Larry Halstead, Norman MacAskill, and Fred Berry.

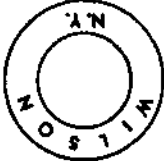
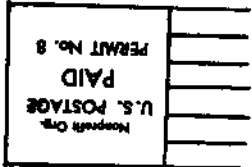
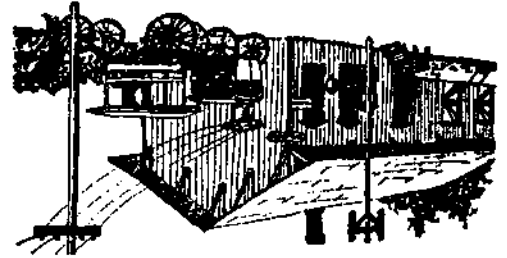
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FAIR: Bessie Cole has asked for cash donations or candy. Those delicious home-made candies are a real winner. With an early spring, prospects for a beautiful Memorial day grow brighter--if it is, we'll need all the salads, etc. we can get. Plans are being made to interest 4H and Girl Scout troops of Wilson as well as WCS students from 9 to 19 yrs. to enter pie baking contest. Every girl to enter a pie will receive a one year free membership in the Wilson Society, and a special award will be given for the best pie in the 9-14 group, and also one in the 15 through 19 group. Watch local papers for Fair news.

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MAY MEETING: Refreshment Hostess for the May 16th meeting will be Flossie Lortz, Christine Kellman and Cynthia Wilson.

\* \* \* \* \*



TABOR COMMEMORATION

Hiram B. Tabor, M.D., was born November 21, 1813 in Topham, Vermont. He attended Woodstock Medical College where he received his M.D., then moved to Grand Island, Vermont. When he came to Wilson, he married Charlotte Gifford, niece of Squire Reuben Wilson, but she died of typhoid fever at age twenty, September 23, 1839. The doctor then married Sarah J. McNitt of Somerset, who was born February 12, 1818. They had five children, Elbertine(1842), Justine (1845), Eldridge H.(1849), S. Corienne(1853), and Fred(1855). Sarah died in Wilson on August 8, 1893.

Doctor Tabor acquired land from Simon Sheldon, September 11, 1846 at the northwest side of where the creek intersects Lake Street. He built his home and practised his profession there for forty five years. The bridge nearby soon became known as the "Tabor Bridge".

The Doctor was very active in community affairs, and was one of the founding trustees of the Greenwood Cemetery Association organized October 25, 1850. He was also a member on the Board of the old Collegiate Institute, and was instrumental in having it closed and consolidated with Union Free School District #1 in 1869. He was a member of the Niagara County Medical Association, and once served as its President. He was also Niagara County Coroner for a time. He also served as Worshipful Master while a member of Ontario Lodge number 376 Free and Accepted Order of Masons. The archives of the Postmaster General lists him as having been Postmaster of Wilson from June 2, 1855 until December 24, 1859.

He was a member of the old Methodist-Episcopal Church, and when the new edifice was erected and named for the Exley family, he held the office of church secretary and chairman of education. Dr. Tabor died July 11, 1885.

The bridge over the Lake Street tributary of the East Branch of 18 Mile Creek was originally built by the town. It was replaced in 1886 with a beautiful iron structure that attracted visitors throughout the area. It was rebuilt again in 1915 and probably electrified at that time.

In 1976 the Village of Wilson, with E. Kenneth Welker, Mayor, decided to clean up the creek and bridge as a contribution to the celebration of our Nation's 200th birthday. Plans were made to have the structure painted and the Niagara Mohawk Power Co. was contacted to replace the lighting fixtures. A New York State historical marker was purchased by the Wilson Bicentennial Committee, and Mr. Robert Hoftiezer, present owner of the Tabor home, gave his permission to have the marker placed on his property.

A short ceremony to dedicate the "Tabor Bridge" and home will be held at the site at 7:00 PM prior to the regular monthly meeting of the Society on June 20, 1977. Mr. Leonard Tabor of Wilson, great grandson of Dr. Hiram B. Tabor, is expected to attend and unveil the marker.

\* \* \* \* \*

**NEW MEMBERS:** The Society would like to welcome the following new members: Mrs. Beatrice Salisbury, Wilson; Miss Blanche Wilson and Donald Schultz, Newfane; and Mr. and Mrs. Edward Hastings, Ransomville. Also, Junior members Amy Woodruff, Machias; Peter Jones, Wilson; Kevin Schultz, Newfane; and Sue Evans and John and Douglas Hastings of Ransomville.

\* \* \* \* \*

**THANK YOU:** Co-operation from the chairmen of the Refreshment, Program, Membership, Museum, Library and Sunday Hostess Committees has been great. We wish to remind everyone that any notices or news items must either be sent or phoned in to me by the 15th of each month to appear in the next "Newsletter".

\* \* \* \* \*

**SIGN OF THE TIMES:** Young "Hippy" to wife: "I'll run over and get my unemployment check, pick up our food stamps, and then see what's holding up my Federal Education Grant. You drop the kids off at the Day Care Center, pick up our glasses at the Health Department, and then see if you can get our Welfare Limit increased. I'll meet you later at the Federal Building so we can join in the mass demonstration against our lousy, rotten, government."

**FLAG DAY:** June 14th is the day set aside to commemorate the symbol of our democracy, the American Flag. It has changed in appearance many times since the original 13 stars and stripes flew over the Continental Army. It was then that Gen. Washington said, "We take the stars from heaven, the red from our mother country, separating it by white stripes, thus showing that we have separated from her, and the white stripes shall go down to posterity representing liberty."

Most people know that Francis Scott Key wrote the Star Spangled Banner, and that Thomas Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence, but few people know who wrote the Pledge of Allegiance. It first appeared in the September 8, 1892 edition of the Youth's Companion as part of the official program to commemorate the 400th anniversary of America's discovery. It was first recited the following month at the Columbian World Exposition at Chicago. The families of Francis Bellamy and James Upham, members of the Youth's Companion staff, claimed authorship of the Pledge for 47 years. Finally, Congress appointed a committee to weigh conflicting evidence, and in Dec., 1945, the late Francis Bellamy, an ordained Baptist minister, was officially designated as author of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Flag Day reminds us that there are some today who constantly complain about what's wrong with America, but they often lose sight of what's right with America. Most of our institutions and traditions have stood the test of time, and in many communities like Wilson, where faith in God helps mold the lives of their people, respect for law and the rights of others increases. As Flag Day approaches this month, let's remember what those white stripes stand for. Then, with good education for all, nobody should be enslaved by poverty, racial intolerance, or religious prejudice.

\* \* \* \* \*

**MUSEUM ACQUISITIONS:** Alice Nelson, picture of Nelson homestead; Leonard Mudge, scrapbook, photographs, and 3 ledgers belonging to Fred Mudge; Dr. John Argue, postcards; Floyd Salisbury, dowel-form cast iron tool; Gertrude Schnoor, poem written by Alma Farrell; Faye Pisello, hand-written note dated 1870, found in her home (possibly from old schoolhouse); Leonard Tabor, antique document box (1830) and 1866 pocket diary; Oscar Munch, trustee book for Dist. schoolhouse #7 (1906-1941); Blanche Wilson, 48 star American Flag; Mabel Wilson, china wash bowl and pitcher that belonged to Reuben Wilson, also tin match holder; Phyllis and Joe Hurst, dguerretype and letter dated 1859; Melvin Shippey, Salem, Ky. spar found 800' below ground; Esther Casselman, R.R. lunch bucket, old store bottles, 2 glass battery holders, wood bowl and hinged box with wood burning designs; Ronald Martin family, 2 cannon balls found in Wilson; Donald Loker, old newspaper clippings; Don Croop, snapshots of quilters at work and book-repair demonstration; Wayne and Marie Getman, 2 hand-made quilts; Beatrice Salisbury, copy of Wilson Tattler, Jan. 1913, and 9 photos of Wilson "Old Timers".

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**CLEAN SWEEP:** Over 50 volunteers responded during the past couple months in the continuing effort to clean up and complete various jobs in the basement, kitchenette area, Patterson Room, garage, and grounds. Helpers not mentioned previously include Rex Stacy, Carole Schnoor, Sara Berry, Art Ness, Ted Lonsbery, Tom Sharpe, Jr., Dianne Albright, Archie Petty, Edgar Culverwell, Betty Stimson, Flossie Lortz, and "Chuck" Messersmith. Thanks to Dianne Albright, Carole Schnoor, Helen Dinse, and John Weiler, the Patterson Room walls look beautiful after a dusty three-day brushing session.

\* \* \* \* \*

**PERSONALS:** Wally Goodman recently directed the Niagara-Wheatfield Wind Ensemble in the "Sound for America International Festival" at Nashville, Tenn. The Ensemble, one of 300 entrees, received a silver trophy for their school, and each member was awarded a silver medalion..... Winnie Fisher has been given the Niagara County 4H distinguished service award. She has been leader of the South Wilson Pioneers for over sixteen years.

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**JUNE ELECTIONS:** The Nominating Comm., composed of Christine Kellman, Verna Caufield, and Anna Mae Nevins, has presented the following slate of officers to be voted on at the June meeting: Pres., Dr. John F. Argue; Vice-Pres., Joseph Higgins; Treas., Millie Croop; Rec. Secy., Martha MacAskill, Cor. Secy, Nettie Stimson; and trustees for three years, Arthur Schnoor, Betty Stimson, and Ed Peters.

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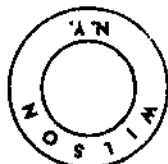
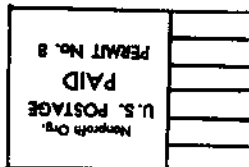
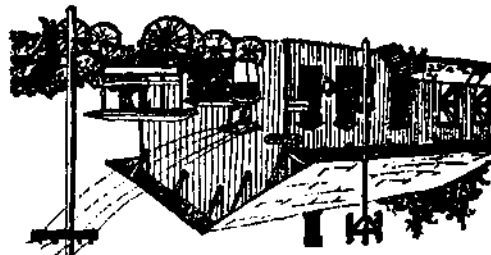
**JUNE EVENTS:** CO-sponsored historical musical, St. John's Episcopal Church, Sun., June 12th, 3:30 PM; Trustees meeting, museum, 8 PM, June 15th; Tabor marker dedication at Lake St. bridge, 7 PM, June 19th. Meeting at museum following ceremony. Betty Stimson will show old pictures of Wilson on "magic lantern". Hostesses, Marion Campbell, Marguerite Geiser, and Marie Reynolds. Monthly exhibit is "Candles". Please call Kay Harmless if you can help. Sun. afternoon hostesses: June 5th, Helen & Ralph Dinse; June 12th, Donna and Sidney Pettit; June 19th, Phyllis & Joe Hurst; June 26th, Stu & Ernie Walpole.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Bon Mot:** The difference between courtship and marriage is the difference between the pictures in a seed catalogue and what comes up.

\* \* \* \* \*

**NEWSLETTER**  
WILSON, NEW YORK 14172  
**Wilson Historical Society**



**DEDICATION:** A short ceremony was held at the Tabor bridge in spite of a brief shower. Dr. Argue spoke about the bridge and home before introducing Mayor Kenneth Welker who related some of Dr. Tabor's contributions to the Wilson community. Leonard Tabor, g.g.grandson of Dr. Hiram B. Tabor, unveiled the marker and dreary skys were brightened by the presence of his cousin, Mrs. M. P. Bailey of Canandaigua, and Mrs. Frances Landy, former Wilsonian, whose home is now in the State of Washington.

Dr. and Mrs. Argue were honored at the meeting in the museum with paid Life Memberships in the Society. The presentation was made by Chris Kellman, Chrm. of the Membership Comm., in recognition of their outstanding service.

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**LIBRARY:** The Library Comm. will meet at the museum at 7:00 PM on the 4th Tuesdays of July, August, and September. Nancy Kent, Chrm., would appreciate having any donations for the Society brought there then so they may be properly accepted and recorded.

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**MUSEUM ACQUISITIONS:** Received from Dorothy Thilk, G.A.R. Souvenir Tumbler & Card; Peter Purek, 1852 Collegiate Institute History Book; Halsey Buell, Jr., Brace & Bit; Helen Forngraber, Purple stripe Cotton Dress with velvet trim & Beige Coat with ornate wool plaid trim; Phyllis Gifford McCarthy, Baby Shoes, Gloves, 1903 Classbook and Autograph Album (Anna Mosher's), also WHS Yearbook (Grandma Mosher's) and Dairys (Grandma Gifford's), (Curtis and Anna Gifford), & 1842 Autograph Album (Grandma Pettit's); Joseph Modie, Detroit News (10/9/'35)

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**VISITORS:** Joe Higgins was host at the museum last month to greet Mr. William Fedder and a busload of pupils from IasSalle High School. Mr. Fedder wished to show the students what a group can accomplish when they work together.

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**NEW MEMBERS:** Membership renewals have resulted in one new Life Member, Don Croop, also 17 new annual members have joined. They include Mr. & Mrs. Edward Fritton, Burt; Dr. & Mrs. Edwin W. Gates, Niagara Falls; Mrs. Linda Linnabery, New Mexico; Mr. & Mrs. James Conrad, Mrs. Helen French, Mr. & Mrs. Daniel Sheehan, Mr. & Mrs. Howard Ford, Mr. & Mrs. Frank Craig, Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Fare, also Mark, Scott, and Pam Wales, all from Wilson.

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**JULY EVENTS:** Trustee meeting, Wed., July 13th, 8:00 PM at museum. The annual picnic will be held for members and elderly guests Sunday afternoon, July 17th, at 1:00 PM at museum. Norm MacAskill, who is in charge, suggests everyone bring a generous dish to pass, table service & your own folding tables and chairs. There will be a boat ride in August & no meeting.

\* \* \* \* \*

**MONTHLY EXHIBIT** will be "Basketry" supervised by Dianne Albright. Members are encouraged to attend special demonstrations on "splinting", July 10th, by Judy Betz, and "caning" July 24th, by Bessie Cole. Booklets on splinting, rushing, and caning will be available at cost.

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**ELECTION:** A proposed budget was presented and approved and new officers were elected by motion to have the Secretary cast one vote in favor of the slate selected by the nominating comm.: Dr. Argue, Pres., Joe Higgins, Vice-Pres., Millie Croop, Treas., Martha MacAskill, Secy., Nettie Stimson, Rec. Secy., and trustees for 3 years, Arthur Schnoor, Betty Stimson, and Ed Peters.

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**PLAQUE:** The Memorial Comm. has ordered a plaque with funds donated in memory of Mildred Middleton on which the names of 30 paid Life Members may be placed. Each name will be engraved on a brass plate. The memorial to Mrs. Middleton will be entered in the Memorial Book.

\* \* \* \* \*

**FOOD FOR THOUGHT:** Yesterday is a Cancelled Check; Tomorrow is a Promisory Note; Today is Ready Cash--Spend it!

COUNTRY FAIR: A pleasant day attracted hundreds of people to the Fair making it the most successful ever held. Guided by Eleanor Myers, Chrm., all committees functioned smoothly. Sara Berry's popular cheese tent and Bessie Cole's home-made candy delicacies were sold out early, and the cafeteria-style food concession, directed by Lois Barnum and Betty Stimson, was well supplied with salads, pies, cupcakes, coffee, and fruit juice. Delicious chili, made by Jan Sporleder, was a real treat, and a dining tent was conveniently located nearby. Art Schnoor had the best hot dogs available, and his crew was busy all day. Dora Wakeman reported dispensing over 600 cups of coffee and 36 dozen donuts, and Sue Schultz and her willing helpers sold nearly 50 lbs. of popcorn and 25 gallons of lemonade plus iced tea.

A special innovation this year was a pie-baking contest supervised by Winnie Fisher and Marion Campbell. Young people from ages 9 to 19 were eligible, and 17 entries were judged by Mrs. Barbara Mosher and Mrs. Salome Fenn. Awards in the Senior division went to Daryl Demmin and Tracy Kent. Junior winners were Darcy Demmin, Mary Okoniewski, and Edward Kent. All received free memberships in the Society as did Marquette Barmasse, Jaime Cowles, Eric Freischlag, Caryn Grenville, Susan Johnson, Elaine Kent, Lori Myers, Mary Lynn Reinbolt, Cathy Reinbolt, Jeff Sporleder, and Kevin Stubbs.

Entertainment included a lively concert by the Wilson High School Band directed by Jack Waxfield, also old-fashioned piano rhythms by Berne Kent and Frances Goldthorp. Spontaneous "sing-a-longs" added to the jovial mood of the crowd. A woolen products exhibit and spinning wheel demonstration was arranged for by Peggy Ward, and a special picture display of old Wilson scenes put together by Dorothy Thilk and Helen Borngraeber was especially interesting. The antique car show was bigger and better this year thanks to Doc Argue and Ken Tracey, and featured the Society's 1904 Covert Car, built by the former Covert Gear Co. of Lockport. It is the only car of that make known left in America. Free sound movies were shown all day by Doug Smith, and no doubt helped boom popcorn sales. Ed Peters found it hard to keep up with the demand for balloons and Dianne Albright's "fish pond", though well stocked, was cleaned out early.

Lois Jennings was in charge of the Society's popular "flea market" tent, and a booth for plants was featured this year for the first time. Jane Moxham and Kay Ness received many plants grown by members and some were donated by local florists. The quilt raffle was supervised by Nettie Stimson, and Whit Barnum sold the greatest number of tickets. The quilt was won by Mrs. Hilda Smith of Medina, N.Y. (mother of Marlene Dinse). A 2nd ticket was drawn for a silver bracelet donated by Pat Tomasula of Buffalo, and was awarded to Vivian Jago of Newfane. Chris Kellman and her congenial hostesses accounted for 12 new adult members and 3 juniors along with many renewals. "Chuck" Campbell and crew kept the crowd informed of activities and helped little boys find their "lost" mothers. The public address system used was installed in the old caboose by John Myers.

We feel that satisfaction in a job well done is all the thanks our members want, however, we should acknowledge the 62 Wilson Businessmen who donated funds to advertise the fair; also Jack Perry and Mike Vince who provided and erected much needed tents; Strate Welding of Lockport who donated gas and equipment for inflating balloons; The Wilson Central School Band; Wilson Fire Co. First Aid unit; Civilian Defense Personnel; and Wilson Jaycees who helped man parking lots provided by Pfeiffer's Foods, Ontario Orchards, and the Farm and Garden Supply. Durwood Park store gave the Society a special price on donuts; White House Dairy, in Lewiston, cut and wrapped cheese at no cost; Tom Fare printed the quilt tickets; Pfeiffer's Foods donated 4 gallons of Loganberry concentrate; Jack Perry loaned his popcorn machine; and the projector and films for movies were loaned by Nioga through courtesy of Marie Reynolds, Librarian, Wilson Free Library.

Without Dealers there would be no Fair and thanks to Anna Mae Nevins, Verna Caufield, and Joe Higgins, approximately 60 attended. Thanks to everyone, the Country Fair was a great success, and in case you're wondering about next year, we hear that Dora Wakeman has her workers already lined up.

\* \* \* \* \*

IN MEMORIAM: Gordon C. Hausman died recently after an attack at age 55. He graduated from Wilson High School, was a member of St. Peter's Lutheran Church veteran of World War II, Wilson Fire Co., Lion's Club, Past Commander of the American Legion Post, Wilson Historical Soc., and served on the village Board for 12 years. The Society extends its deepest sympathy to his wife Betty & Fam.

\* \* \* \* \*

OVERSIGHT: We recently learned that Mrs. Dunning (Helen Singer) Idle, is an artist in her own right. A painting exhibited in the Patterson Room was donated by her and shows the old Singer home on Lake Street as it looked when she was a girl. Her son, Dr. Dunning Idle, a graduate of Princeton and Yale, holds a prominent government position and lives with his family at Rockville, Md.

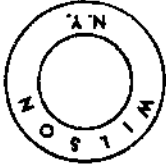
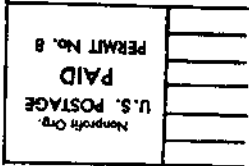
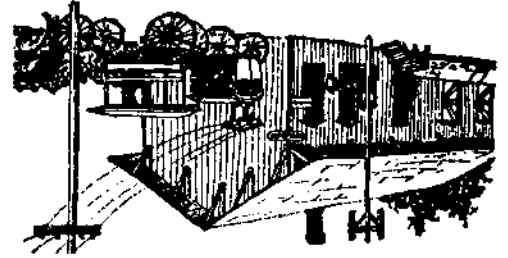
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NEW SIGN: The new 3x4 foot Historical Society sign near the road was made and erected by Rex Stacy. Mrs. Carol C. Smith painted and lettered it.

\* \* \* \* \*

BON MOT: If you have a fifth on the fourth, you may be unable to go forth on the fifth.

\* \* \* \* \*



**UNION FREE SCHOOL:** The Wilson Union Free School District was formed in 1869 from four of the seventeen districts in town at the time. They included the former Pettit St. school Dist. #1, the Maple St. Dist. #2, The Townline Dist. #5, and the Randall Rd. Dist. #9. The old cobblestone school on Pettit St. was used for the four lower primary grades, and the old Collegiate school on Lake St. was used for the other academic and grammar departments. Stephen C. Hall was hired as the first Principal and there were five teachers. Nine Board members were selected including H.N. Johnson, Pres., Sylvester Parsons, Vincent Seeley, J.G. Brown, Jerome Clifford, Harvey Sanford, Henry Perry, W. Richardson, and Lorenzo Pratt.

The school year was divided the same as the old Academy had been with three terms of 15 weeks each. The preliminary curriculum in 1884 consisted of English, Arithmetic, Grammar, and Descriptive Geography. Advanced studies were Algebra, Bookkeeping, Drawing, Plane Geometry, Astronomy, Chemistry, Physics, Botany, Physical Geography, Physicology, Zoology, English Literature, Rhetoric, American Government, History of England, Principles of Teaching, and Latin Grammar. By 1893 courses available also included German, Plane and Spherical Trigonometry, General History, Greek History, Roman History, N.Y. State History, Civics, Economics, and advanced Drawing.

When the compulsory education law became effective Jan. 1, 1895, Wilson educational facilities began to increase in size. All children from eight through twelve were required to attend school from Oct. 1st to June 1st. All between the ages of 12 and 16 had to attend regularly unless employed, and those between 12 and 14 had to attend at least 16 consecutive weeks each year. In 1895 a truant officer was hired for \$1.00 a day when needed.

In 1899 a brick addition was attached to the cobblestone building on Lake St., and the primary grades were moved into it from Pettit St. About this same time, the State Education Dep't. condemned the cobblestone part of the former Collegiate Institute, and threatened to withdraw teacher training classes unless it was replaced with a new building. Teacher Training classes were free and the district received State Aid for each student attending, however, if there were not at least 10 students, no classes were held. Miss F. Elvira Martin instructed a class in 1902-03 containing the following students: Mae Hoag, Josephine Baker, Lettie Farley, Elizabeth Searle, Amy Allen, Mabel Wright, Louisa Bickford, Mabel Henry, Avis Eduarts, Mae Stevens, Emma Laffler, Lori Henry, Elton Wille, Clara Sayer, Clara Balcolm, and Grace Smith.

In March, 1900, the voters approved replacing the old cobblestone landmark with a new 60' square brick building which was erected and attached to the brick addition that had previously been built. The new school contained 7 class rooms, cloak rooms, laboratory, trustee room, teacher's room, and a 40 x 60 foot auditorium on the second floor.

Principals hired to run the Union Free School from 1869 to 1941 were Stephen C. Hall, F. A. Greene, Thomas Greene, Melville Cooper, Sheldon Pardee, A. Hall Burdick, Sheldon V. Pardee, Charles S. Luther, H. C. Hustleby, Charles Scheck, Alexander McIlroy, and Arthur Blemaster.

\* \* \* \* \*

**PIONEER:** Daniel Putnam, born in 1795, died in Wilson in 1878 at age 83. He was a soldier in the War of 1812, and well acquainted with the pioneer way of life and the Indians. It was said that often, when returning from a hunting trip, the Indians would stop him and ask for game or ammunition. He usually gave them game as powder was scarce and without it a person had little security. He became a Cooper by trade and followed it all his life. His son, Henry, built ships at what was known as the Putnam Yard. he built four vessels and was Captain of one for five years. He quit navigation in 1885 and erected a manufacturing plant for woodenware products. He employed many people making bushel measures, picket for fencing, and barrel headings.

**IN MEMORIAM:** The Society extends its sympathy to the family of Thomas L. Sharpe II who passed away unexpectedly. Tom was a willing worker around the museum, and contributed many hours of time since he and his wife, Maryanne, joined the Society in 1974.

NOTICE: If this newsletter has a "star" by the address label it indicates we are unable to mail you another copy until your dues are paid. The trustees limit the newsletter to 3 months for delinquent members although members are not dropped from the rolls until they become 6 months in arrears.

\* \* \* \* \*

AUGUST EVENTS: Trustee meeting, Wed, Aug. 10th at Thilk's cottage-7:00 PM. Paddleboat Ride Sun., Aug. 21st, at 1:00 and 3:00 PM. Space limited. Bring picnic lunch. Give reservations to Lois Barnum. Watch local papers for monthly exhibit.

Sunday afternoon hostesses for August will be: Aug. 7th, Millie and Don Croop; Aug. 14th, Betty Stimson; Aug. 21st, Chris Kellman; Aug. 28th, Gertrude and Art Schnoor. We wish to again remind hostesses that if you are unable to be present, it is your obligation to get a replacement.

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TOURIST ATTRACTION: There is a good reason why Sunday Hostesses are urged to have all visitors sign the guest book. The Travel Bureau of the N. Y. State Dep't. of Commerce requests a count each June of those who visited the museum in the past year. This helps them to determine the volume and trend of tourist traffic in the State.

All Wilsonians should be proud of their village and town and want to see it improved. The Wilson Hist. Soc. has done its share in putting Wilson "on the map". We can all be pleased that Wilson's Museum is listed in the beautiful N.Y.S. publication, "Vacationlands", and for those of you who have not yet seen it we would like to quote from it: "WILSON- Hotels, 3 yacht clubs, marinas, Lion's Club. Wilson Historical Museum on Rt. 425. Scale model steam engines in 1912 railroad station. Changing exhibits, Sun. 2-4, free." (Note: We are presently trying to have them include Society's antique cars, the 1904 Covert and the 1909 Metz. Since the Covert is the only known car of its make in the U.S., it should be a real attraction for antique car buffs.)

In addition to the museum, the "Cobblestone Trail" (prime project of the Bicentennial Comm.) is an offshoot of the Historic Niagara Trail. Through the courtesy of Nettie Stimson, hostess, hundreds of tourists were directed to the "Information Center" in her Barn Shop where they not only learned about Wilson, but bought many of the booklets and ceramics that Nettie displayed and sold for the Society.

The report sent in to the State Commerce Dep't. verifies that more than 3,500 persons visited the museum from June 1976 to June 1977. We say more than, because often people will not sign the guest book unless urged to do so. It is interesting to note that we had visitors from all over New York, also Michigan, Pennsylvania, California, Delaware, New Jersey, Washington, Illinois, Ohio, Florida, Iowa, Massachusetts, Vermont, Maryland, Missouri, Alabama, Alaska, North Carolina, Texas, Oklahoma, and Florida. We also had visitors from three foreign countries, Canada, England, and Japan.

It would be interesting to know how many sales of gasoline, food, antiques, or other products were made in Wilson because of the magnetic attraction of the Wilson museum.

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BRIGHT SPOT: We heard many comments about the beautiful geraniums around the flagpole. We have Flossie Lortz to thank for this splash of color.

\* \* \* \* \*

COMM. CHAIRMEN: Dr. John Argue, Pres., has appointed committee chairmen for various work areas of the Society, also several new ones to help spread out the work load, facilitate new ideas, and involve more members in the operation of the Society. They are as follows: Nancy Kent, Library; Dorothy Thilk, Historic Sites; Lois Jennings, Museum; Christine Kellman, Membership; Don Croop, Publications; Norm MacAskill, Program; Ernestine Walpole, Ways and Means; Whit Barnum, Planning; Willard Rose, Caboose; Millie Croop, Memorial; Winnie Fisher, Refreshments; Verna Caufield, Sunday Hostesses; Eleanor Myers "Country Fair"; Betty Stimson, Housekeeping; Ed Peters, Grounds; Lois Barnum, Tours; Karl Wright, By-Laws; Acquisitions, Nancy Kent; and Genealogical, Dorothy Lort.

A few years ago all Committee Chairmen were invited to attend trustee meetings. Last year they were asked to make reports at the trustee meetings instead of the regular meeting. It was felt this would shorten the time invited guests would have to wait to present programs. The Society extends its appreciation to the Chairmen who worked hard in their jobs last year: Peggy Ward, Museum; Millie Croop, Membership; Nettie Stimson, Ways and Means; Helen Borngraebler, Sunday Hostesses, and Louis McLaughlin, Caboose.

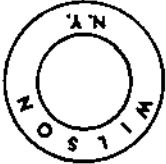
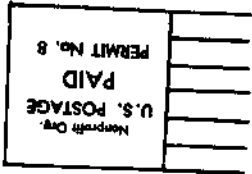
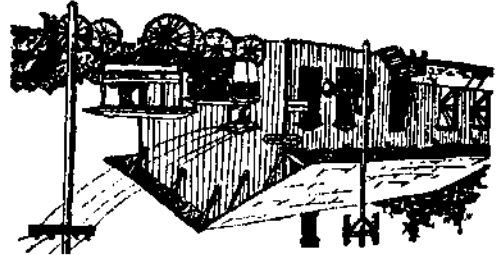
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ACQUISITIONS: Membership on the acquisitions comm. is made up from the Library Chrm, Museum Chrm., and representative of the Board of Trustees. They are Nancy Kent, Lois Jennings, and Joe Higgins. They have the responsibility of accepting or rejecting donations to the Society.

Membership on the MEMORIAL committee is also predetermined, and consists of the Treasurer, Millie Croop, Planning Chrm., Whit Barnum, and Museum Chrm., Lois Jennings. Their responsibility lies in deciding how memorial gifts shall be used, and see that a record is kept in the Memorial Book.

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BON MOT: The accent is on youth today but the stress is on parents.



**TOWN HIGHWAYS:** Prior to the advent of concrete and macadem-asphalt, town highways consisted mostly of mud, dirt or gravel. A responsible person known as a "Pathmaster" was assigned to maintain each highway. It was his job to keep the road level and free of ruts, and this was done with a "hone" drawn by a team of horses. The "Pathmaster" was paid for his efforts with a tax credit.

Prior to 1940 there were approximately  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles of improved hard surfaced highways in the township. A  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile strip ran from Townline (now Wilson-Cambria Rd.) to Daniels Rd. which was known as the German Rd. (now Braley). The other  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile was that part of Chestnut Rd. from Stockwell's Corners east to the New-fane line. The remaining 35 miles of town highways had about 10 miles of water bound macadem roads. Of these, four miles were on the "Slash Rd. (now Maple) from Chestnut to Ide, and one mile of the Braley Rd from Daniels to Elberta.

The water-macadem roads were built in the 1920's and were 10' wide and composed of 10 inches of crushed fieldstone. Six inches was coarse stone, (#3A modern grade), two inches was finer stone (#2 modern grade), and this was topped with 2 inches of fine stone (#1A modern grade). After highways were scraped and excavated, the three grades of stone were spread, alternating with dirt and water, and each grade rolled with a steam roller. Crushed stone was acquired through the efforts of farmers and their families living along the newly constructed road who hand-picked stone from the fields and "fencebalks". They then drew the stone to a portable crusher operated by the highway commissioner's men. The crusher was usually placed in several locations for this operation. Roads to be built were determined by highway officials and their selection generally depended on the amount of stone available and the ambition of the farmers to get the fieldstone to the crusher.

"Old Timers" need no explanation why modern roads placed over water-bound macadem roads require less maintenance than do roads without the old-fashioned base under them. Several of these roads were taken over by the County Highway Dep't. and account for the broad shoulders and good drainage those roads now have. The Ide Rd. was turned over to the county in the mid 20's, and Chestnut Rd. (from Townline to Stockwell's Corners), and Beebe Rd. (from Stockwell's Corners to Warren's Corners) were turned over in the late 20's. Beebe Rd. (from Stockwell's Corners to Wilson-Burt Rd.) was acquired by the county in the late 30's. By the same application of old-fashioned practicality, the Lake Rd. (before it was paved with concrete), was covered with lake gravel drawn from the beaches by farmers with horse and dump trucks borrowed from the highway department. One of these wagons, donated by the Pfeiffer Co., now sets on the Wilson Museum grounds.

Wilson's first highway superintendent was "Chick" Wilson and he was followed by Ed Toenniessen. William Rohring served from 1920 to 1925; Rudolph Volls from 1916 to 1927; George Upton from 1928 to 1935; Fred Barnum from 1936 to 1947; Arthur Zastrow from 1948 to 1949; and Ralph Evans from 1950 to 1955. Lee Farquharson has served over 20 years as highway Superintendent from 1956 to the present time.

A far cry from the "Pathmaster" of the early 1900's, Wilson now has a modern, well equipped highway department making it possible to cope with the increasing needs of modern day living--even emergencies like the Blizzard '77.

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(A "thank you" to Whitney Barnum and Marilyn Allgeier for the above item)

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**IN MEMORIAM:** The Society extends its condolences to the family of Grace A. Kronenberg, wife of Supreme Court Justice Frank J. Kronenberg. She was a member of the First Presbyterian Church of Lockport and active in community affairs for many years. Mrs. Kronenberg joined the Wilson Society in 1975 and became a Life Member in May, 1976.

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**NEW MEMBERS:** The Society welcomes two new members, Mrs. Dunning (Helen Singer) Idle of Maryland, and Mrs. M.P. Bailey of Canandaigua, N.Y.

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STAY WITH IT: Betty Stimson wishes to remind everyone to keep that used glass coming in. You don't have to remove the labels, but bottle tops or other metal should be removed.

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MUSEUM DISPLAY: "Decorating with your antiques" will be the theme for September. Members are asked to bring items to display at the museum, Saturday morning, September 3rd, at 10 o'clock. Hostesses in charge for the month are: Sep't. 4th, Ella Mae and Ed Peters; Sep't. 11th, Sara and Fred Berry; Sep't. 18th, Millie and Ted Ionsbery; and Sep't. 4th, Marion and "Chuck" Campbell.

The museum committee has decided to have a "Museum Cleaning Day" on the 2nd Wednesday of each month. Please mark your calendars. This is a chance for every one to get involved. Remember, many hands make light work.

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MEETINGS: Trustees will meet Wednesday, September 14th in the museum at 8:00 o'clock. Regular meeting will be Monday evening, September 19th, in the museum at 7:30 o'clock. Program will be "Vacation Echoes": Hostesses are Gwenn Wright, Dora Wakeman, and Garnette Upton.

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THE GENEALOGICAL COMM. has suggested that "sources of information" be included when filling out Family Tree forms (such as family bible, books, etc.) If you have already filled one out and turned it in, you may add this material by contacting Dorothy Lort

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ACQUISITIONS: Mrs. James Stephen, pyralin button hook handle; Berne Kent, Records, Programs, & Lists of Wilson graduates; Rex Stacys, Webster Dictionary and Niagara Histories (1821-1921); Nettie Stimson, 2 framed pictures from Niag. Co. History book; Jennie Bigalow, 6 post card views of Wilson; Family of Olive Wilson, 8 Wilson High Yearbooks, 6 old picture albums, & 23 valentines; Norman & Shirley Moore, Dress, coat, child's dress, shawl, parasol, beaded cape & mitts; Joe Higgins, "The Book of Pleasures" (1850); BPW, 1954 Charter & small green flag; Carrie Biddleman, Holy Bible; Dorothy Thilk, "Picturesque America", Vol I & II; Florence Jacobs, 14 assorted views of Wilson and Depot; Fred and Sara Berry, 46 star American Flag; Eloise Culverwell, Leather case for railroad tickets owned by Dr. Cramton's wife, Rachel; Zelma Schrader, 3 daguerreotypes; Ruth Gale, Embroidered silk shawl worn by her in 1910; Estate of Bessie C. Bartholomew (via Dr. and Mrs. A.E. Ferington) 1875 woolen hooked rug. The wool was gathered by a Wilson family, sheared, washed, treated, dyed, and spun on a home loom. A swan woven into it is a symbol of the family's home area in England; Melissa Mollosky, memorabilia from Cpl. John F. Webster of Civil War Battery M fame. Included are commemorative badge of the Gettysburg veteran and certificates showing him to have been a charter member of Peter A. Porter Post of Wilson, G.A.R., member of Alpha Phi Society, Wilson Collegiate Institute, graduate of Niagara Falls Business College, and 1860 Teaching Certificate; Edna Goodrich, "Whirlygig" standing over 6' tall. Octogan shape top turns on square base like a "lazy susan". Many "pie-cut" shaped drawers were used to store various types of nuts, bolts, washers, etc used in hardware stores.

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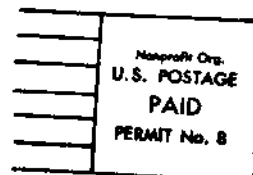
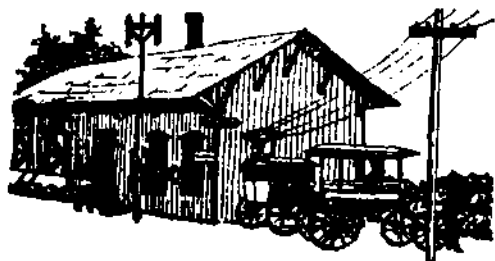
LOOKING BACK: About 20 years ago, June 14, 1957, to be exact, ground-breaking ceremonies took place for the Inter Community Hospital at Newfane. Several Wilson Historical Society members participated as members of the Board, Norman Luff, Rex Stacy, and Stanley Borngraeber (deceased). Dr. Argue was a member of the staff and Chief of Staff in 1960.....about the same time, Gary Fitch was the Wilson School area Community Ambassador representing Wilson in Bombay, India. The week before he left a special student day observance was held at Exley Methodist Church at which Paul Stimson ushered. Others taking part that day were Jean Goodrich, Susan Argue, Audrey Cole, Susan Freer, Judy Berry, Dan Albright, and Cam Dean.

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ALONZO P. SWICK will be remembered as one of Wilson's best known fruit growers. He was the son of C. Edgar Swick and Alice M. Dobbs, both of Wilson, and he graduated from Wilson High School. He later attended Cornell University. "Lon", as he was known to everyone, married Florence Webster of Daniel's Rd., daughter of Eugene Webster of Wilson and Ella M. Raymond of Cambria. She also graduated from Wilson High and attended Teacher's Training Class. She is presently a member of the Wilson Historical Society.

Mr. Swick farmed at his East Lake Rd. home for most of his life and held many prominent positions in connection with his occupation. He was Vice-Pres. of the Niag. Frontier Growers Market, Inc. of Buffalo, and an Extension Service Committeeman. He was also Pres. of the Niag. Co. Peach Growers Assoc., and Pres. of the Niag. C. Farm Bureau, Home Bureau, and 4H Club Assoc. He was a leader in the 1st Baptist Church of Wilson and very active in civic affairs. He was Pres. of the Lion's Club, clerk of the Zoning Board, and Town Justice of the Peace for many years. In addition he was a real estate broker and actively responsible for getting the Marine Midland Bank to open a branch in Wilson.

When the Swicks celebrated their golden wedding in 1958 they had 13 grandchildren. They had three children, Mrs. Frances Diez, Mrs. Lucille Upton, and Ronald Swick. A record of the descendents of this prominent Wilson family should be on file in the Wilson museum.



**Wilson Historical Society**

WILSON, NEW YORK 14172

**NEWSLETTER**

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

Oct. 1977 Vol. 6 No. 10

**FORMER WILSONIAN:** A recent communication from Kira Karsten Woodruff of Machias, N.Y., brings back some fond recollections of her grandfather, Otto Lampe, who, for many years operated the old country store at Stockwell's Corners. Bessie, Kira's mother, married Arnold Karsten, and up to the time of her tragic demise the old store flourished with a Lampe behind the counter for three generations. Ott was a congenial, good-hearted soul, but he also could hold his own in a good argument. We recall that his pet "peeve" was about people who ran bills up at his store when they were out of work, but once back to work, would look the other way when passing by and seeing him sitting on the front perch. We still recall the pleasure of driving our model A Ford up to his gas pump, handing him a dollar bill and saying, "fill 'er up".

Four of Kira's grandparents spent nearly all their lives at Stockwell's Corners. Her father's family, the Karstens, came from Germany in 1891 and the Heubners came to Niagara County from Prussia in 1843. Her great grandfather, Augustus, started the Lampe store (later Karstens), and he married Marie Meiers at Wilson in 1861. The family line of Kira's grandmother, Grace Halstead, dates back to Abraham Halstead who was born in 1570 and lived in Yorkshire, England. Kira's husband, Jim Woodruff, grew up at a grocery store in West Valley. Now that his folks are retired he is building a new store for dog supplies and sporting goods. Kira writes, "I'll bet my Dad would have liked that kind of store." (Note: The Wilson museum has a framed photograph of the Lampe store and home as it looked in the early 1900's. It was donated by Myra Karsten, now Mrs. Raymond Pease of Lockport.)

**HAVE YOU NOTICED?** Bob Rese is beginning to prove that actions speak louder than words. All the old plywood siding is now off the caboose and some of the holes have been neatly patched. If anyone has been depressed by our "slow moving freight", now's a good time to volunteer to help Bob turn the long-time eyesore into a pleasing museum attraction. We understand Bob would like to get a coat of paint on it before winter sets in.

**GLASS RECYCLING:** The company at Brockport turned down another truckload of glass because of metal rings which some people apparently didn't remove from their discarded bottles. Maxine and Bill Jones are regretfully closing down the operation which they've conducted at their home for several years. The Society is losing a good source of income and are indebted to the Jones family for all the work they did. We also wish to thank Betty Stimson and Dick Reppentine who did so much to make the project a success.

**WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT:** Frances M. Lardy paid her old home town of Wilson a visit last June. She recently wrote: "I was amazed at the development made at the museum. What a wonderful asset to the town and village! The people should be proud of it. It shows the great co-operation Dr. Argue has had, and how hard everyone has worked." Frances has also sent an old Lockport bottle as a donation to the museum.

**SOUVENIR MYSTERY:** Bill and Carol Smith have donated a mysterious glass pipe to the museum that they acquired at a "flea market" at Belfast. The thick glass pipe is about six inches long with a 2 1/4 inch hollow bowl. There is a hand-painted orange flower with green leaves on the side, and "souvenir of Wilson, N.Y." lettered on one end. It would be interesting if anyone could identify when this item was available in Wilson or the vender who sold it.

**THUMBNAIL SKETCH:** Mrs. Harry (Florence Partington) Porter, New Brunswick, N.J., was born in Manchester, England. She came to Wilson in 1920 when her father, Rev. Wm. Partington, was pastor of Exley Church. She attended Syracuse University and was a music teacher. She attends the Episcopal Church, is a member of Sigma Alpha Iota, AAUW, Sigma Kappa, and Wilson Society. The Porters have two children, Harry & Randall, also four grandchildren.

**IN MEMORIAM:** Wilfred H. Moody, 86, was born in Wilson in 1890 and died at Hamden, Conn. recently. He was the son of the late Alfred and Evelyn Pettit Moody, and graduated from Wilson High School and Syracuse University. His entire career was spent as an educator and he retired as Principal of Hamden High School in 1957. Mr. Moody was a Life Member of the Wilson Historical Soc. and, in addition to giving the Society a musician's sword worn by his grandfather in the Civil War, gave the beautiful chandelier in the old depot waiting room as a memorial to his mother and father. The Society extends its condolences to the members of his family and to his only surviving sister, Mrs. Mildred Moody Eakin of Lakeland, Florida.

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**MUSEUM EXHIBIT:** The theme for October and November will be "Harvesting at home and on the farm". John Goodrich and Rex Stacy will get the display ready and would appreciate calls from anyone who might have items they can use.

Hostesses for Sunday afternoons from 2 to 4 will be: Oct. 2nd, Frances and Sheryl Brown; Oct. 9th, John and Jean Argue; Oct. 16th, "Chuck" and Marion Campbell; Oct. 21st, Mabel and Margaret Wilson; Oct. 30th, Bob and Edna Rose.

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**JOINS COMMITTEE:** Mrs. Dorothy Linnabery has joined the Publications Comm., and will assume responsibility for publicity in local newspapers, radio, or television. Please phone or give all notices directly to her.

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**ROMANTIC HIGHWAY:** In the early 1800's, Route 104 was the only navigable road into the Niagara wilderness, and the section from Warrens Corners to Lewiston was part of the famous "Lewiston Trail". When the road was paved in 1915 it was considered an engineering masterpiece and because of its cost, called "The Million Dollar Highway." (a staggering amount before the days of "Amos and Andy") In 1935, in an effort to publicize Niagara Falls as the "Honeymoon City", an attempt was made to name the road the "Honeymoon Trail", and signs with two red hearts pierced by an arrow were placed along it between Niagara Falls and Rochester. The promotion didn't last long so today the area's most "Romantic Highway" is simply referred to as The Ridge or Route 104.

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**PROGRESSING:** Dr. John Argue and your editor had the honor and pleasure of attending the first organizational meeting of the Newfane Historical Society. We have watched this active group expand its influence in the community under the skillful guidance of Jeanne Voepel, Judson Heck, Sue McNight and others including Gilbert Hartley, Peggy Chesty, Marion Gifford, and Pauline Gooding. The annual "Apple Blossom Festival" in May has proved to be a welcome community attraction and now, with the recent acquisition of the Hrvol home, West Creek Rd., for use as a museum, we may anticipate great progress in the future for the Newfane Society.

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**LOOKING BACK:** If you'd lived in Wilson in 1895 you'd have known that Timothy Wilson was manager of Lake Island Park; the side-wheeler, "Garden City" made regular runs to Toronto; a boy could buy 5 packs of firecrackers for a dollar; O.S. McChesney sold his drugstore to Norman F. Keck; there were two doctors, Dr. W.L. Draper and Dr. F.U. Gaskill; W.E. Gifford was selling "the best coal in town"; George King was making suits to order at his shop on Wilcox St.; and the Clark Bros. offered first class turnouts from their livery stable.

\* \* \* \* \*

**WEDNESDAY, October 12th, is CLEAN-UP DAY AT THE MUSEUM.** Call Betty Stimson.

\* \* \* \* \*

**ORNAMENTS:** This year's project to make hand-made Christmas tree ornaments will feature two categories; old fashioned ones made from natural materials such as nuts, flowers, berries, corn etc, and those following a railroad theme which might include miniature depots, bells, engines, cars, lanterns etc. All ornaments may be turned in at the Nov. 21st meeting or any Sunday afternoon prior to then. All ornaments will have the name of donor attached and year, and become a permanent part of the Society's collection. Please phone Dorothy Linnabery for further information. (751-6567)

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**MEETINGS:** The Trustees will meet at the museum Oct. 12th at 8 PM. Regular meeting will be at the museum Oct. 17th at 7:30 PM. Program will be a slide presentation by Warren Harrington on a trip to Australia. Refreshments will be served by Sara Berry, Esther Albright, and Ernestine Walpole.

\* \* \* \* \*

**NEW MEMBERS:** The Society welcomes Mr. and Mrs. Robert (Mildred Gaskill) Treacy of Ohio, and Mrs. Dorothea Gaskill Weaver of St. Petersburg, Fla. There are now 360 active members in the Wilson Historical Society.

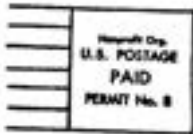
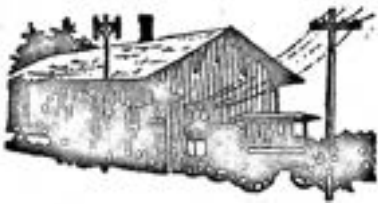
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**LIFE MEMBER:** Martha L. MacAskill has been given a Life Membership in the Wilson Historical Society by her husband, Norm. What a nice way to surprise that "someone special" in your life.

\* \* \* \* \*

**BON MOT:** The computer is a great invention. There are just as many mistakes but they are nobody's fault.

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**Wilson Historical Society**

WILSON, NEW YORK 14172

**NEWSLETTER**

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

Nov. 1977 Vol 6 No.11

END OF AN ERA: The State Dept. of Transportation has announced plans to abandon restoration of the "Hojack" line from Niagara Falls to Wilson. The 100 year old railroad has served the farmers and business communities well along the lake, but there will probably be few tears shed over her demise. During the past four years we have compiled much information about the line as it related to Wilson. We are putting this material in the Newsletter so that even though the old railroad is being "laid to rest", her past accomplishments will be on record and preserved for the future.

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THE "HOJACK": The Lake Ontario Shore Railroad (HojackLine), was organized in the spring of 1870. In October, the same year, local directors included Reuben F. Wilson, Wilson; Joseph Fowler, Ransomville; Cliver Scovell, Lewiston; and Burt Van Horne of Newfane. Towns along the proposed route were bonded to aid the undertaking, Somerset \$90,000, Newfane \$88,000, Wilson \$117,000, and Lewiston \$152,000. Hezekiah Seeley, William Hamblin, and James Hopkins were appointed R.R. Commissioners at Wilson, and issued bonds at 7% interest with some principal payable annually.

The builders faced a big task because from the outset the railroad really wasn't needed. There were no large cities along the rim of the lake, and Rochester had been by-passed when the road was surveyed through Charlotte. The agricultural lands it was to pass through were good, but it wasn't believed there was enough produce to justify the road--especially since the N.Y. Central would parallel it 10 miles to the south. Construction became a long and hard job, and work stopped for a while 18 miles west of Oswego. When operations resumed, a stretch of track was finally laid 51 miles further west to Ontario. Here work stopped again, but promoters raised more financial backing in Rochester, and the road was pushed through to Kendall in 1875. At the time it was an insignificant little railroad with two second hand locomotives, two passenger cars, and about 50-60 freight cars. The old Lake Ontario Shore Railroad was destined never to reach Wilson. In early 1876 it was sold on the block at Oswego to the Rome, Watertown, and Ogdensburg line for 73 cents on the dollar of its bonded indebtedness.

The R.W. & O. immediately extended the tracks from Kendall to Lewiston where it was hoped to span the Niagara River. This project failed in the planning. The first passenger train passed through Wilson on June 12, 1876, but after the line was completed, the R.W. & O. came upon hard times and barely escaped going into receivership. Two expensive bridges had been built over the Oswego and Genesee rivers, and the bridge at Burt was considered an outstanding piece of construction for the time--390' long and 78' along the water's edge. In 1883 a re-organization was accomplished when Charles Parsons acquired control of the railroad's stock. He hired Henry Britton, a brilliant operator, to help him and together they proceeded to make the R.W. & C. a prosperous railroad.

The line was extended from Charlotte into the heart of Rochester in 1887 with freight and passenger terminals near the famous "four corners". Plans were made to do the same at Buffalo. Rails were re-laid, operational details perfected, bridges reconstructed, and new rolling stock acquired. The combination of Parsons and Britton became a great constructive force, promoting the R.W. & O. in every way possible.

The New York Central was not unaware of the railroad's success, and banking interests brought the Vanderbilts and the Parsons together. On March 14, 1891, an announcement was sent out by the R.W. & O. management that the entire road and property of the company had been leased by the New York Central. Thus did the R.W. & O. go out of existence, however, the time honored name was retained for a number of years on time tables and advertising literature. Only N.Y.C. & H.R. was emblazoned on all new cars or locomotives released from New York Central paint shops.

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BON MOT: Life is what happens when we are making other plans.

\* \* \* \* \*

JOHN G. GOODRICH, a native of Newfields, New Hampshire, obtained his early education at Exeter High School and received his B.S. at the University of New Hampshire. He later obtained his Master's degree at Cornell. His father, Fred G. Goodrich, came from Maine where he was a carpenter. His mother, Mabelle, lived in New Hampshire where her family originated.

John became Niagara County Agent in charge of fruit and served in that position for 14 years. He was one of Niagara's top fruit growers at his Lake road home to his retirement. Always community minded, he is active in Exley United Methodist Church, Chairman of the Wilson Town Zoning Appeals Board, Niag. Co. Farm Bureau, Niag. Co. Extension, N.Y. Horticultural Soc., and Wilson Historical Society.

He married Marion Downes of Lockport at Emmanuel Methodist Church, Lockport, in 1936. Mrs. Goodrich was a teacher at Lockport High School and received her B.S. at the N.Y.S. College for Teachers at Albany. She also substituted at Newfane and Wilson Central schools. Marion is also an active member of Exley United Methodist Church, Wilson Historical Society, Niag. Co. Womens Comm. of the Farm Bureau, and Women for the Survival of Agriculture. Her father, a dentist, was Dr. Chester R. Downes of Lockport. He was born at Florence, N.Y. and of English descent. Her mother, Olive Pickering, was born in Toronto and her family was of Canadian origin.

The Goodriches have three children, Mrs. Jean Patchin, Dr. Philip Goodrich, and Dr. Barbara Phillips. They are also the proud grandparents of Peter and Wendy Goodrich.

\* \* \* \* \*

IN MEMORIAM: John C. Parker, 60, charter member of the Wilson Historical Society, died recently at his home on Lower Mountain road. John was an Air Force veteran of World War II, and later retired from the tool and die trade to start up his own ceramic and printing business. He published the Society's monthly Newsletter as well as producing all the ceramics and booklets that were sold. We worked closely with John during the past five years and will miss him, not only as an important member of the Publications Committee, but as a kind, generous, and thoughtful friend.

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LIFE MEMBER: Cleo Anne Crawford Salerno of Walnut Creek, California, has been given a Life Membership in the Society by her mother, Mrs. Bessie Crawford of Wilson and Florida. Seventeen members have now had their names engraved on brass plates and attached to the beautiful wooden plaque which has been hung on the north wall of the Patterson Room.

The Society also welcomes Rev. and Mrs. Rae L. Frothers of Wilson, who bring the total membership to 369 persons.

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CLEAN-UP: Wednesday, Nov. 9th, 9AM. Call Betty Stimson for information.

\* \* \* \* \*

MEETINGS: Trustees, Nov. 16th, 8PM at museum; Regular Meeting, Nov. 21st, 7:30 PM at museum. Program, Tree trimming (and don't forget those hand-made ornaments) Refreshment hostesses are Helen Romngraeber, Marie Getman and Marge Goodman. John Tracy, son of Ken & Dot Tracy, will give a pottery demonstration.

Sunday afternoon hostesses are as follows: Nov. 6th, Mrs. Tom Sharpe and Tom Sharpe III; Nov. 13th, Ruth and Bob Thomas; Nov. 20th, John and Marion Goodrich; and Nov. 27th, Helen Romngraeber.

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VISITORS: Oct. 8th, about 50 members of the Soc. of Architectural Historians of Buffalo, guided by Teresa Lasher of Niagara Falls. Lois Jennings and Millie Croop served as hostesses for this special Saturday group.

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COMMUNITY COLLEGE WEEK: Wilson was one of nine Niagara Co. Historical groups to enter a display at the college, Oct. 16th., from one to five. In our opinion, the Wilson railroad exhibit was an "eye-catcher" with Somerset playing a close second. Thank you, Dorothy Thilk and Nettie Stimson, for your time and talent.

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SPECIAL EXHIBIT: The Library Comm. will put up a special display in the Patterson Room during Nov. & Dec. that will feature materials received from the N.Y.S. Bicentennial Commission on the 3 stages of life and change in N.Y.S. over the past 200 yrs. The exhibit will contain reproductions of important State documents & scenes of historic interest. It is hoped that local teachers will arrange for class room visits.

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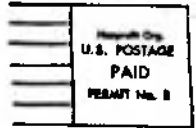
HELP!: The Ways & Means Comm. wants to have postcards made up showing local Wilson scenes such as the harbor. Please bring your good photos to Nov. meeting

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PAKE SALE: Annual Pake Sale will be held on Election Day atarting at 10AM. Please bring your baked-goods donations to either the Water District Building or the Wilson Town Hall. Contact Lois Parnum for further information.

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RENOVATION: Art Schnoor needs help. He is willing to work Saturdays but can't do everything alone. Call him at (751-6373) and let him know when he can count on you. Do you remember the old English Proverb about "the straw that broke the camel's back?"



Wilson Historical Society  
Wilson, N. Y.

**NEWSLETTER**

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

Mrs. Nancy Kent, Librarian  
Wilson Historical Society  
58 Lake Street  
Wilson, N.Y. 14172

Dec. 1977 Vol 6 No.12

THE "HOJACK" (part 2) The "White Mountain Express, made up at Chicago, passed through Wilson mostly at night. On July 27, 1883, the high-speed train left Niagara Falls at 7:30 PM--20 minutes late. It was hauled by two locomotives and was made up of a baggage car, day coach, and nine sleepers. As it roared eastward, a strong wind off Lake Ontario dislodged a freight car from a siding at Carylon, about 30 miles west of Charlotte. The "White Mountain" crashed into it and was de-railed. Both engineer and fireman were killed, and the wreckage caught fire resulting in 17 lives lost and 40 seriously injured. Another famous train, the "Wabash", also made up at Chicago, sometimes passed over the R.W. & O. tracks through Wilson to Oswego. This train was also on a fast schedule, but like many local trains, had little reputation for adhering to it.

A story was told of a "drummer" who, when buying a ticket for Charlotte, asked the ticket agent how late his train would be. He was astonished when the agent replied, "On Time", because such a thing was quite rare.

"How come its on time?" the traveler asked in amazement.

"Oh, this is yesterday's train, responded the agent, "She's just twenty four hours late!"

In 1885, five trains operated for passenger service in each direction. There was through sleeping car service via Watertown to New York City. There also was through sleeping car service from Niagara Falls to Portland, Maine. That train passed through Watertown at 4AM, arrived at Fabyan, New Hampshire at 4:28PM, and reached Portland at 8:25 PM.

In 1888 the R.W. & O. had regained its status as a profitable road. It then had 91 locomotives, 91 passenger cars, 48 baggage, mail, and express cars, and 2,302 miscellaneous freight cars. When the New York Central took control in 1891 the Lake Shore Railroad really came into its own. Now the greatest fruit industry in the United States was growing along its rails, and even the great and powerful New York Central sometimes found itself hard pressed to find equipment enough to handle the large amount of apples, peaches, and pears that were grown and shipped from Ontario's southern shore.

Many people have wondered why the railroad became known as the "Hojack". As the story goes, Jack Welch, a farmer, was one of the line's early engineers. He was so used to driving a team of horses that everytime he approached a station he'd holler "whoa" at the engine. Because of Jack it is said that the railroad was jokingly referred to as the "whoa Jack" and later "Hojack" line. Another early engineer was William Secor of the Brayley Road, Wilson.

The first station at Wilson was probably built about 1876-77. That depot may have burned down after the Farmer's Picnics started in 1891, if we can believe this quotation from an old newspaper clipping describing an excursion from Sanborn to the Wilson picnic. "We pull into Wilson. No Depot, no freight house, no nothing. A car on a siding does the express business. Someone saved the sign "Wilson" from the fire and nailed it to the hand-car house."

In 1897, W.L. Dox took a picture of the Wilson Depot and reproduced it as a picture postcard. It was this picture that Berne Kent sketched providing the Society with a symbol to use on letterheads, ceramics, newsletters, etc.

That depot was enlarged by the New York Central in 1912-13 with a 30 foot addition on the east end for a new waiting room. The freight house, baggage room and ticket office were also enlarged, and a slate roof then put over the entire complex. The beautiful brick walk was also built at that time.

When reading articles in the old "Wilson Star", one finds that even then the United States Postoffice came in for its usual amount of criticism. A letter received at Wilson on March, 1894, and mailed from Niagara Falls on January 19, 1882, prompted the editor to comment, "We knew the R.W. & O. is slow, but this beats all records."

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BON MOT: The older we grow, the more we realize that no one who is as young as we are, is old.

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**MUSEUM ACQUISITIONS:** John Swiger, tool box from Pierce-Arrow; Whit Barnum, 1976 Legislative Journal Report-Blizzard of '77; Hazel Thilk, Frontier Star (1956-58) & Suburban News (1965); Alice Nelson, 1st Day of issue stamp, "Battle of Oriskany"; Ruth Gale, steel beaded purse; Cheryl Brown, articles of old clothing; Frank Baker, Medal from St. Joseph's Academy, Lockport, 1871; Frank Bellinger, commemorative flag from Battle of Oriskany Bi-Cent. celebration; Gertrude Kraatz, WW2 ration cards, Yearbooks, 1938, 1940, 1942; Zelma Schrader Long blue crepe dress with red beading; Helen Borngraeber, old photographs, and Norman and Shirley Moore, collection of old clothing.

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**UNUSUAL OCCUPATIONS:** One would hardly expect tobacco to be grown in the town of Wilson, yet it was an important crop on the farm of George K. Wright in the late 1800's. The leaf tobacco was dried, made into "Wright" cigars, boxed, and sold as far west as Michigan. Another unusual occupation was one pursued by Timothy Wilson and a friend named Emerson. They cut bullrushes which were used in the manufacture of whiskey barrels. According to Walter Wilson, there was only one rush out of three that could be used. These were cut in lengths 24" long, put in bundles, and retailed for about 30¢ each. Town Historian, Dorothy Thilk, has learned that the rushes were shipped via the "Hojack" to Paducah, Ky. One rush was placed between each stave of the new whiskey barrel.

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**MUSEUM ACTIVITY:** Ceiling strips have been nailed on giving the Patterson Room a "Cape Cod" effect. Firing strip material was donated by Burt Jennings and it has not gone unnoticed that Burt also replaced glass on a display case. John Myers is busy finishing up the electrical lighting, and Art Sdnoor has rehung the outside doors. Crash bars have been acquired and it's hoped will be installed soon. We can't keep up with Art--everytime we think we have, he has several more jobs under way. Two years ago the Patterson Room was a dream, today, thanks to all who volunteered their services, it's a reality.

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**CAN YOU HELP?** The Society can use wooden wardrobes, display cabinets, sewing forms, mannequins, wigs & wig forms, old shelving, tablecloths. Notify Lois Jennings, Museum Chrm. if you have any you would donate. Lois, in co-operation with the Library Comm., is doing a "bang-up" job in getting the museum organized. She is also organizing sub-committees to handle the many museum related activities under her jurisdiction.

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**PROGRAMS:** There was a fine turnout at the Nov. meeting, and with our new coal heater working the building was warm and cozy. The pottery demonstration and talk by John Tracey was especially interesting, proving once again that Wilson has more than its share of talented young people. You might be interested in visiting his Christmas Pottery Show at 4512 East Lake Road, Wilson, Sat. 10-6 December 3rd, and Sun. 12-5 on December 4th.

The December 19th Christmas party will, like last years, give everyone a chance to participate. Tables will be set up where you can "do your thing" and will feature everything from making popcorn balls to decorating cookies and having a taffy pull. Various craft tables will be set-up for making ornaments, etc. There will also be a Pinata demonstration by two Mexican exchange pupils. Hostesses for the December meeting will be Marion Goodrich, Dianne Albright, and Sue Cruickshank.

The museum will be humming with the Christmas spirit all through December, and will feature a toy and doll exhibit under the supervision of Peggy Ward. Peggy could fill the museum with her own fine collection, but hopes that other members will call her and offer to share some of their cherished possessions.

Sunday afternoon hostesses will be: Dec. 4th, Lois and Whit Barnum; Dec. 11th, Stuart and Ernie Walpole; Dec 18th. "Chuck" and Bernie Messersmith; The museum will be closed on Christmas Day, Sunday, December 25th.

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**RETIRED:** Mr. Charles Boyer has retired as Curator of the Niagara Co. Hist. Soc. Museum following 20 years of loyal, dedicated, hard work. His successor will be Mr. John F. Krahling of Buffalo who received his B.A. from Canisius in 1976. Mr. Boyer will continue to serve as Curator of the Col. Bond House which is a monument to his competence.

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**CLEAN-UP DAY:** Wednesday, Dec. 14th at 9 AM. Please don't expect to be asked. Care of the museum, by necessity, is the responsibility of all local members.

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**MISSING:** John Myers isn't lost, but he says his two-section wood ladder is. He thought perhaps, if someone borrowed it, they might return it to the museum. It seems wood ladders are better than aluminum for electrical work, and John doesn't want to "light up" like a Christmas tree---even if it is the Holiday Season.

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**MARKER:** The Historical Sites Comm. is planning to place a marker near the site where Rueben Wilson first landed and built a cabin in 1810.

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**FOUND IN OLD WILSON SCHOOLBOOK:** "Love is humbug, All things show it. Once I thought so, now I know it!"