

Wilson Historical Society

WILSON, NEW YORK 14172

NEWSLETTER

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

JANUARY 1982 Vol. 10 No. 1
(Coleman Press)

THE TOWN AND VILLAGE LOCKUP:

Have you ever wondered how Wilson may have looked in the early 1900's? One old timer who was raised in the village once said, "If you ever watched "Gunsmoke" on TV, you could see exactly how the village looked in those days." Wilson's counterpart to Sheriff Matt Dillon was Constable Ben Stone, and his jail was located between the old Nevy store and Hervey Sanford's Tile Yard, which extended from the jail to the Masonic Building.

The lockup was built when the cobblestone Collegiate Institute was being torn down in 1900 to make way for the new brick Union School. Back of the Institute was a large outdoor toilet and the village fathers decided to have it moved next to Sanford's Tile Yard for use as a jail. A partition through the center of the building was torn out and two barred cells were built into it by Jesse Biggins who ran a Blacksmith Shop on Catherine Street.

The lockup was used for a number of years, but in the early twenties was moved next to the old water tower on High Street by Flagler's Welding Shop. The late Earl Armstrong, a former Niagara County Deputy Sheriff, once told a story about stopping at the jail after school, and when he walked into a cell to look it over someone slammed the door shut and locked him in. The Constable had driven into the country with his horse and buggy so Earl went without supper. To make matters worse, he had a date with a girl on the Island, and when he didn't show up at 7:30PM, she got mad as hops. Earl didn't get out of the "cooler" until 9:00PM, when the Constable returned, but Earl's girl wouldn't have anything to do with him until some of his friends told her the truth about what happened.

On August 27, 1932, an inspection report was made out by Walter Nicholson, Chairman of the State Board of Corrections, and submitted to Fred Bigalow, Town Supervisor, and A.M. McIlroy, Village Mayor, and read as follows:

"This lockup occupies a small one-story wood building on the outskirts of the village. It contains one latticed steel cell and one wooden cell with latticed steel door. Cells are equipped with bunks, mattresses, blankets, and comfortables. There are no sanitary facilities what-ever, but there is an electric light and stove for heat. Since the last inspection, the lockup has been painted throughout with white enamel paint and is in good condition. Constable William Lort has stated that detentions are seldom made here, and the lockup is frequently used for lodgers." The Commissioner then recommended, "When this lockup is used for dention purposes it should be kept under constant and competent supervision as fire risk is extreme by reason of the type of construction and its location and exposure."

So much for Wilson's jail. Let's hope that in the future it will not be necessary to build another, and that the town's main problem will be locking up stray dogs-not criminals.

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THE MAIL BAG:

Friends of Bessie Crawford will be glad to know she plans to be in Wilson again next summer. Norman Think received a letter from her recently and was informed that her daughter, Cleo, retired last June. She will visit her mother in Florida for two months on January 6th, then Bessie will return to California with her on March 5th. She plans to stay there until she returns to the "Island."

John and Marion Goodrich are touring the southlands again this winter and wrote about seeing the antique car museum at Stone Mt., Ga. It took someone like John to learn that the proprietor, Tommy Prostman, once knew one of the builders of Wilson's Niagara automobile, and has brochures about the car that might be available to the Wilson Museum. TV watchers may recall that Tommy Frostman played the part of "Preacher Sam" in the Kenny Roger movie, "Coward of the County".

Mrs. Corrine Tabor Bailey of Canandaigua sent six beautiful tatted "snowflakes" for display on one of the society's Christmas trees. They are about 3/2 inches in diameter and made in a variety of colors. Mrs. Bailey, 90 years young, wrote, "I received the Newsletter today and it is most interesting to me--so many people I used to know in each copy. The enclosed tatted "snowflakes" are for your tree. I have made over a hundred to sell and give away. I was very impressed when I visited the Wilson Museum a while ago." We thank Corrine for her interest and thoughtfulness.

Ella Mae Peters writes that she misses the good times we had organizing and working for the historical society, and misses Wilson but not the winter weather. She said that she may donate another painting of the old Sisson House that used to stand next to hers on Washington Street. Everyone will look forward to her planned trip to Wilson next summer.

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BON MOT: An extravagance is anything you buy that is of no earthly use to your wife. (F. Jones)

MOPPETS LIKE MUSEUM:

Fifty-three pupils from the 2nd grades at Thomas Marks School were guests at the museum Thursday afternoon, Dec 17th. Accompanied by their teachers, Mrs. Susan Cruickshank and Mrs. Sharon Paja, the enthusiastic youngsters showed great interest in the exhibits and several confided earnestly, "Gee, this place is neat" or "Boy, this is nice--I like it here." Some enjoyed the loan display of old toys that 'their grandparents used to play with', while many were attracted to the old military equipment. Girls were fascinated by several pair of baby shoes that were fastened with a button hook, and one boy was captivated by an old Crystal Radio Set and permitted to try on the headphones by Museum Chrm., Lois Jennings. Others were interested in the 1/4 inch thick Edison Phonograph records, and when the 1910 instrument was played, several admitted, "It doesn't sound much like our stereo." The children walked to the museum from school and remained about two hours. After posing for their pictures, Millie Croop gave each boy and girl a small candy cane as a memento of their visit.

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NEW LIFE MEMBERS:

Thanks to her parents, Miss Carole Schnoor will start out the New Year as the 40th Life Member in the Wilson Historical Society. Carole is a charter member and has been active from the start having served as Chairman of the Library and Ways & Means Committees. She has a special talent for photography and one of her pictures was used for the popular color-postcard of the Wilson Boathouse and Harbor. Carole was elected to the Honor Society at Wilson Central School where she graduated with the Class of 1961. Soon after, she was employed in the office of the Thomas Marks School as Secretary. She is an active member of Exley United Methodist Church and has held the position of Church Treasurer for many years.

Joseph Higgins, one of the founders of the Wilson Historical Society, has been given a Life Membership by the Board of Trustees in recognition of his many years of valuable service. Joe grew up in Lockport and attended Canisius High School in Buffalo on a scholarship. He worked 28 years at the Harrison Radiator Div. of G.M.C., and at the time of his retirement was Supervisor of Placement and Personnel. He lives in the "Old Glass Front" home of his grandparents on Ontario Street, one of the oldest in Wilson. Joe has built up a reputation for delicious home-made fudge but also 'dabbled' in other crafts such as working with pottery, refinishing furniture, and painting pictures. He was a Counselor at the old Allegheny Boy Scout Camp for many years, and also Director and Vice-Pres. of the Niagara County Historical Society. He was a leading figure in the organization and development of the Wilson Society and served as Vice-President and Chairman of the Museum Committee for many years. Joe has also been a devout member of Our Lady of the Rosary Roman Catholic Church for 45 years.

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JANUARY HOSTESSES:

Margaret Wilson, Chrm., has announced that the following persons have agreed to be hosts and hostesses: Jan. 3rd, Dianne Albright & Ruth Rawlings; Jan. 10th, Ray and Myra Pease; Jan. 17th, Karl and Gwen Wright; Jan 24th, Ron and Sue Schearer; and Jan. 31st, Ed and Marilyn Allgeier. The museum is open from 2-4PM Sundays and admission is free.

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QUILTING TIME APPROACHETH:

In 1973, the society held its first "Country Fair" and an attractive display of quilts and coverlets were featured by Joe Higgins, Museum Chrm., and members of his committee. The interest generated by that first exhibit sparked one of the most successful ventures ever undertaken---the annual quilting bee. It was the brainchild of Betty Stimson, Joe Higgins, Anna Mae Nevins, Beryl Tovell, and the late Verna Caufield. Soon after, the group got a big boost when Florence Schultz, another quilting expert, joined the circle and has 'chaired' the "pricked finger brigade" ever since. Each year, a quilt more beautiful than the one before, has been sewn and raffled at the spring Fair.

Several quilts made include the "Dresden Plate", "Calico Rose", "Progress", and "Dahlia". One made for our Nation's Bicentennial Celebration featured each State's Flower embroidered on a square and placed in the quilt in the order that each State entered the Union.

Florence has announced that work will start on a new "Big Dahlia" quilt soon after the New Year. It is planned to sew on Tuesdays from 9 to 3, and Sundays from 2 to 4PM with all work being done at the museum. She urges all who are interested in quilting to come, and if you are just learning, you couldn't find a better group of teachers anywhere.

Others who have worked on the quilting project include Dorothy Lort, Janet Sporleder, Eva Zortman, Faye Pisello, Maxine Jones, and Millie Croop.

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FEDERATION NEWS:

The Niagara County Federation of Historical Societies has been officially organized and the following officers elected: Pres., Judson Heck of Newfane; Vice-Pres., Norm MacAskill of Wilson; Secy., Rosemary Miller of Pendleton; and Treas., Barbara Hathaway of the Town of Niagara. The primary purpose of the group will be to promote co-operation among all the historical societies in Niagara County.

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MUSEUM PROGRESS:

Art Schnoor, Ed Lort, Elwin Upton, and Ralph Dinse managed to get the roof on the new dock storage area before cold weather set in, but we understand Ralph got as much roofing cement on himself as he did on the roof. That puts him in the same class with Millie Croop who covered herself with green paint while helping Bob Rose paint the display cases. You may see Art and George Linnabery most anytime working around the museum--putting down floors, etc. The town supplied a load of stone to cover the new storage shed floor, and about ten shade trees were brought over from Krull Park and planted in our "Hojack Park".

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MATRIMONY TRAIL: There's a way of transferring funds that is even faster than electronic banking. It's called marriage. (McGavran)

NEW MEMBERS:

We are very happy to welcome the following persons to our membership rolls, and suggest you may wish to jot down their names and phone numbers on the Directory that was sent to all members recently: Dr. & Mrs. Gordon E. Shull, Elmira, N.Y.; Mrs. Fayelista Barrows, Sebring, Florida; Mr. and Mrs. Norris Kent, Sebring, Florida; Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Schrader, Wilson; and Mr. and Mrs. Adrian Frerichs, Wilson.

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NEWSLETTER ITEMS:

We try to put some phase of Wilson's history in each Newsletter. Articles are compiled from history books, old newspapers, and other records, but we prefer stories from elderly Wilsonites who can "Tell it like it wuz". Perhaps you have a story you would like to see in the Newsletter. Please call or write us if you do, and if you prefer, we won't use your name.

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ACQUISITIONS:

Norm Thilk has donated a green and white (one-owner) Pontiac Convertible, 1967 model, to the society making it the ninth one received. Although several of the recently acquired cars are not yet old enough to be considered 'antique', all are in good condition, and as the years roll by will increase in value.

Ralph and Naomi Beutel Tomkins of Florida have donated a Red Velvetten Waist; Child's White Coat; Long Brown Skirt piped in Velvet; Child's Whitelace and Batiste Dress; Child's Petticoat; Child's Dress with maroon trim; Child's Panties; Bonnet and Three Christening Dresses; Boy's White Suit, and Child's Apron.

Anna Mae Nevins: Centennial Anniversary Edition of the High School "Crest". The 1946 copy is in "like new" condition and contains an excellent history of the Wilson Schools; also a 1963 Surveyor's Map of the Depot property; and a 1890 Program from the Crown Theater.

Raymond Pasel of N. Tonawanda: Wedding Gown worn by his mother, Anna Pasel, also a black beaded shoulder cape.

Mrs. Louis McLaughlin: Wool Challis Petticoat from her grandmother, Mrs. Solomon Smith of the Maple Road.

Helen Sayer: Paper Mache' doll called a "Nodder" ca. 1945.

Gwen Heidenfeldt: 1939 Book, "Kings and Brothers"--the story of George VI and Edward VIII by Emil Ludwig.

Herbert Kahler of Newfane: Child's Rocking Horse, ca. 1932.

Gerald Schnoor of Rochester: Three old School Desks in fine condition.

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MEMBER IN THE NEWS:

Gary B. Fitch, a 1954 graduate of Wilson Central School, has been elected to the Board of Trustees at Lockport Savings Bank. Gary, a member of the society since 1974, is owner of the Wilson-based fruit company, "Ontario Orchards".

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HAPPY HOLIDAYS:

The Christmas party attracted an overflow crowd to the Patterson Room, Dec. 21st, where everyone was treated to some of the customs and traditions of an old German Christmas. Judy and Ron Zauner and sons Jonathon and Robert explained about the special days celebrated in December, and the program was rounded off with a sing-a-long of Christmas Carols accompanied by Leo Volk and his accordian. Two tables of German delicacies were prepared by the Zauners, Judy and Ruth, also Liz Schearer, Maryanne Sharpe, Eva Zortman, and Trudi Kaiser. One batch of cookies were sent from Germany by Hanne-Lore Staginmus, a pen pal of Judys ever since the 6th grade in school. A ginger bread house made by the Zauners was presented to Hazel Salisbury in celebration of her "39th" birthday. Dora Wakeman and Hazel were in charge of the coffee, tea, and delicious sparkling loganberry punch.

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JANUARY MEETING:

Dr. Mabel Carmer Hill will be guest speaker at the January 18th meeting, and will present a talk on "Herbs, Simples, and Frontier Medical Practises". Refreshment hostesses will be announced.

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ANTIQUe CARS:

Dr. Argue called a special meeting of the officers and trustees in December to place the following cars on record in the minutes of having been officially accepted by the society: 1957 Lincoln Mark II donated by Dr. Argue; 1966 Plymouth donated by Mrs. Marion Sheelar; 1970 Oldsmobile Convertible donated by George Linnabery; 1967 Pontiac Convertible donated by Norman Thilk; and the most recent acquisition, a 1970 Cadillac Convertible Coup donated by Dr. Edwin Gates. Karl Wright suggested that the new transportation building should be given a name, and that persons responsible for its erection and landscaping should be identified on a plaque inside the structure.

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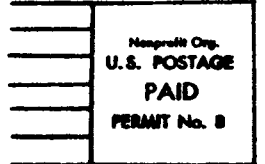
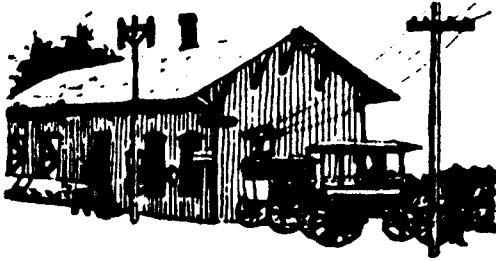
WILSON CREAMERY:

The Wilson Creamery was organized in 1894 and the first officers were, S.H. Pettit, Pres.; C. N. Markle, Sec.; and J. W. Eggleston, Treas. Equipment for the creamery was brought in on the "Hojack" railroad, and the plant was built on what is now the High School parking lot across from where Flagler's used to be. Up to 100 lbs. of butter a week was shipped out until 1897 when the business was converted over to making cheese. Hervey Sanford became President and Charles Markle, Sec.-Treas., but as more and more farmers began shipping their cream by rail to Niagara Falls, the creamery was forced to go out of business.

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HAPPY NEW YEAR:

The reason most of us don't live within our income is because we don't consider that living.
(Highway Patrolman)



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MORE ABOUT THE NIAGARA AUTOMOBILE:

We have mentioned the Niagara Car in a previous Newsletter so you may recall that the automobile was made by the Wilson Manufacturing Co. which was organized Oct. 22, 1900. Stanley A. Dwight was the owner and manager and his mechanic was George C. Brooks. Joe and George Whiteside built the wooden bodies for the cars, and the 1st one was turned out at Brook's Machine Shop located on West Young St. in a small building next to the grist mill which provided steam for the machinery. Fay Campbell remembers the machine shop well, and said that he had the 1st ride in Brook's new machine that looked like a buggy seat on a platform with four wheels. It was steered with a handle on a bar connected to the front axle. By 1903, a more elaborate model was manufactured which boasted a carriage-type body, top, steering wheel, and two kerosene headlamps. The company was later moved to the old creamery building on High St. and several cars were made and sold. The "Niagara Runabout" without top or mudguards sold for \$850; with top and mudguards, \$900; and a motor alone cost 135 dollars.

We wrote C. Thomas Protsman, Curator of the Antique Car Museum at Stone Mt., Ga., and he sent an interesting letter in reply. He said that after the Wilson auto company closed, George Whiteside went to work for E. R. Thomas Co. where he became head foreman and trouble shooter. Protsman was personally acquainted with Whiteside and they visited at each others homes. He added that George was a remarkable person and re-roofed his entire house by himself when he was 93 years old. When Whiteside died, Mr. Protsman was one of the Pallbearers for the funeral and later settled his estate.

He sent an original sheet of stationary with the Wilson Automobile Mnf. Co. Letterhead on it, and claims to have an assortment of original blueprints, pictures, letters, and other material that he would be willing to have copied for the museum. He suggested it would be best to stop there to determine which items would be most suitable. Perhaps one of our members who travel to the sunny south each winter would be willing to do this for the society.

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THOSE EXTRAORDINARY GIRL SCOUTS:

We have many happy memories of a frolicking group of young Wilson Girl Scouts who belonged to Troop No. 1 in the care-free years of the fifties. We can still see them as they proudly marched in Memorial Day parades; cooked May Day breakfasts beside 12 Mile Creek; or painted trash barrels as a Civic project for the village. Then there were those primitive overnight camping trips near our pond where, though all were forbidden to swim, they'd somehow manage to "fall in" for a dip. Also the Halloween parties in the old barn, and the softball games with the "East Wilson Wildcats" that the girls generally managed to win. Annual picnics saw them piling into a Ransomville Bus, as an accomodation from Lester Schultz who always enjoyed driving the girls to area parks like Akron Falls, Chestnut Ridge, or Letchworth.

They were some of Wilson's finest young ladies and a few we recall offhand included Annie and Mary Margaret Welker, Gail Pettit, Wendy Jennings, Patty Winger, Cynthia Albright, Kathy Horton, Priscilla Berry, Kathy Bulmer, Kim Messersmith, Lynn Rockwood, Caroline Campbell, Emma Lou Schrader, Kay Myers, Sue Argue, Mary Lynn Brydges, Arlene Wilson, Diane Salisbury, Cindy Albright, Peggy Heidenfeldt, Barbara Goodrich, Karen Thilk, Anne Weiler, and Barbara Cornell. One of this group, Kathy Horton, served as a patrol leader and troop treasurer and later graduated with the Class of 1960. Some years later, she attended a Lutheran Bible School and decided to enter the field of Missionary Service.

Today, Kathy is calling on some of her training from Scouting as she experiences the discomforts of a primitive life style in Labsibot, Nepal, a small village along the southern slopes of the Himalaya Mountains. To get there, she had to take a 4 hour bus ride, then walk six hours to a place called Amp Pipal where she rested before walking another eleven hours to her destination. While staying with a Nepali farm family, her room was described as having a mud floor with slate ceiling and three straw mats. Her personal equipment included a sleeping bag, pack, books, single candle, and pan for boiled water. She sustains herself on tea and homemade bread, rice, a spinach-like vegetable, lentils and milk. For afternoon snacks she has popcorn and also keeps peanut butter and crackers in her room. She bathes and washes her clothes under a water spout, and an outhouse serves as a necessary room. In February, Kathy will move with her co-worker, Carol Evans, to the South Lalitpur area where they will be the first of the more permanent mission residents. There they will teach and organize classes and workshops as they pursue their missionary goals.

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BON MOT: One great, strong, unselfish soul in every community would actually redeem the world.

--Elbert Hubbard

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IN MEMORIAM:

Edward C. Lort, East Young St., Wilson, died unexpectedly at Inter-Community Hospital, Newfane, December 23, 1981. Mr. Lort, 65, was the son of William T. and Florence Winters Lort and was married to the former Dorothy E. Allgeier. Until retirement, he was an engineer for the Frontier Stone Corp. in Lockport. He was also an Exempt Fireman of Wilson Vol. Fire Co. No. 1; member of Ontario Lodge F&AM of Wilson; Life Member of the Wilson Historical Society; Retirees Townline Bowling League and Newfane Golden Agers. Ed helped with many of the renovation projects at the museum, and will be sorely missed by all who knew him.

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NEW LIFE MEMBER:

Anna Mae(Higgins)Nevins has become the 42nd Life Member of the society which she helped found. She has served as a trustee and member of the museum comm., and also was Dealer Chrm. for the first annual "Country Fair." She continued to serve in this capacity through 1980 when over 90 dealers signed contracts for space.

Anna Mae was raised in Lockport and, following her marriage to Willard Nevins of Wilson, helped operate the Nevins Grocery store on Young Street for many years. She was a past president of the Wilson BFW Club and has been an active member of Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Church for over forty years.

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JANUARY MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

In a desire to conserve energy, the trustees voted to discontinue Sunday afternoon visiting hours during the months of January and February. The plan was put in effect on Sunday, January 24th, and will continue through Sunday, February 28th. Visiting hours will resume on Sunday, March 7th. Margaret Wilson, Chrm., wishes to thank all members who consented to serve as greeters for the Sundays the museum was closed.

In keeping with the decision to conserve energy, Florence Schultz announced that the quilting project would be continued and completed at her home. She will welcome anyone who wishes to help any day at any time, but suggests you call first to make sure she will be home. She resides at 2419 Lake Rd., Ransomville and her phone number is 791-4190.

Karl Wright, Chrm., presented a revised set of By-Laws, and after some discussion they were accepted. Minor changes in wording were made to insure there were no over-lapping of committee responsibilities. Karl Wright, Norm and Martha MacAskill spent considerable time on the revisions and are to be commended for the fine job done.

Dr. Argue appointed Burt Jennings chairman of the caboose renovation committee relieving Bob Rose of this added responsibility. Bob, as chairman of the antique car building, will now be able to devote full time to the car museum which will be run independently of the regular depot-museum. His committee will be in charge of the upkeep and display of all autos and artifacts assigned to the auto museum; however, all auto-related acquisitions will be accepted and recorded by the Acquisitions Committee.

Lois Jennings, Chrm., will be assisted by Dorothy Lort and some one appointed by the Board of Trustees. After artifacts are recorded and given an identification number, they will be assigned to their proper location in either the museum, library, or car museum.

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CONGRATULATIONS:

Rev. and Mrs. Joel Holls of Buffalo are the proud parents of a new baby girl, JillMarie, who was born December 23, 1981. Congratulations, Sue. Grandparents are Elton & June Kropp.

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NEW MEMBERS:

It is a pleasure to add the following persons to our membership roll: Mrs. Pearl Leggett of Ransomville; Ms. June E. Samcoe of Cheektowago; and Phyllis & Mark Huntington of Lockport.

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FEBRUARY PROGRAM:

Guest speaker at the February 15th meeting will be Major George A. Bray III, who will present a program on Roger's Rangers and the French & Indian Wars. Refreshment hostesses will be Nettie Stimson, Chrm., Mary Clark, and Ruth Rawlings.

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ACQUISITIONS:

Herbert Kahler of Newfane has donated a 48 star flag; 25 copies of Woman's Home Magazine, dated 1877 and earlier; 4 bottles; old sugar bowl; World War II Gas Ration Stamps; 1950 bus schedule for Lockport-Wilson; egg scale; 3 spoons found at lake near Somerset; and Walt Disney Snow White Recipes and Clown straw.

Clarence Monroe: Four copies of the 1941 Pine Camp Digest.

Joseph Higgins: 1901 Bible; 1934 Modern Webster Dictionary; and Man's Felt Hat.

Norman Thilk: Eight letter sent to Mr. & Mrs. J. W. Hackett from N. D. Hackett while he was visiting in Kansas City, Mo. in 1912; also Kodak Camera No. 120.

Harold Albright: Business card that belonged to his father, William Albright, also picture showing the inside of the old Albright Opera House.

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WHIT BARNUM TOASTED:

Whitney Barnum, who has completed 30 years of public service as Highway Supt., Town Supervisor, Clerk of the Niag. Co. legislature; was honored at a "roast & toast" dinner at the new Eagles Hall in Lockport, Frid., Jan. 22nd. A large number of well-wishers attended and enjoyed, not only the primerib dinner, but also the good natured "ribbing" and anecdotes that followed. Rep. Matt Murphy was Master of Ceremonies and presented Whit with a gift from his co-workers and friends.

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AIN'T IT THE TRUTH:

A family is a unit composed not only of children but of men, women, an occasional animal, and the common cold.

--Ogden Nash

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RECOLLECTIONS OF HELEN SINGER IDLE:

Helen Singer Idle of Gaithersburg, Md., visited Wilson in the summer of 1980, and recalled some of her girlhood years here from 1905 to 1923. Of particular interest to her was the Exley Methodist Church which, except for an addition, looked the same as it did when she attended many years ago. There were no girl scouts or other youth organizations then so most of her social needs were fulfilled by the Sunday School. She noted that Mildred Moody (Eakin) was her first Sunday School teacher but she was fond of all her teachers including Mrs. Millicent Crowie, LaVerda Bush, Catherine Frittro, Kate Stevens, and Mrs. Arthur Loomis. She said that her father, Roland R. Singer, became very active in the church and when he died in 1922, four Minister friends, the Reverends Copeland, Eastman, Fairburn, and Partington, officiated at his funeral.

There were few extra curricular activities in school so Helen was very pleased when she was picked to play the leading lady in the senior play, "Anne What's Her Name", but during practice she imitated the voice of an old lady so well, she was asked to play the part of an 82 year old grandmother instead. During her first two years in high school she played basketball while in her Junior and Senior years she played a mandolin in the school orchestra.

Several tragedies occurred during Helen's youthful years that remain firmly etched in her mind. One was when Kenneth Welker and several of his 12 year old friends were playing with their BB guns. As boys will sometimes do, one raised his gun and said, "Hold still, Kenny, I'm going to shoot your cowlick." Unfortunately, the BB entered Kenneth's eye and blinded it. At the time, Kenny's father was assistant manager at the Wilson Cold Storage. Today, son Kenneth Welker, is Mayor of the village of Wilson.

There was also the time at the old village ice house when Burt Seekins dropped a 300 lb. piece of ice on his toe and broke it; but perhaps the greatest tragedy of all was when Helen's uncle, Frank Bush, got his coat caught in machinery at the Bush Mill and was injured so badly he died a few days later.

Roland Singer served eight years as Supervisor of the town of Wilson and also acquired a number of business interests in the Wilson Lumber Co., Central Milling Co., and Wilson Cold Storage. His various associations brought many colorful visitors to the Singer home like Henry Turkopp, the watermelon king from Columbus, Ohio. There was also Mr. Bean from Buffalo who joined her father in organizing the "Singer and Bean Cold Storage." Another good friend was Supervisor Fred Krull of Lockport who purchased the beautiful park at Olcott and later gave it to the village.

Helen Singer's grandparents both came from the East Wilson area. The Thomas Singer farm was on Chestnut Road in South Wilson and, in more recent years, was known as the Hazen farm. Delbert and Harold Singer were born there, and the big red barn built by their grandfather, Thomas, is still standing. Near the peak by the roof the date, 1883, may still be seen. It was here that 5 yr. old Harold, while watching the men draw in hay, got his hand caught in a pulley and lost two of his fingers.

Her mother's people, the Bush family, lived in the fieldstone house on the west side of Beebe Road near the airfield. Martin Bush built and sold the "Bush Pump", and many were distributed throughout the area. Later, he became associated in the milling business at the Bush-Chapman Mill on West Young St. in Wilson. Although Martin Bush and Thomas Singer lived within a few miles of each other, they didn't become acquainted until Roland met Emma at a camp meeting near Olcott, fell in love, and were married.

These are just a few excerpts from Helen Singer Idle's interesting account which will be kept on file and preserved because of its value as a historical document.

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NEW BOOKLET TO BE PUBLISHED:

A new booklet, The Albright Opera House, will be available soon. It was written by Harold Albright who has recalled some amusing anecdotes. The 24 page booklet will be illustrated with three rare photographs.

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MUSEUM TALLY:

Lois Jennings, Museum Chrm., has checked the guest register and determined that 1,557 persons visited the Wilson Museum from January, 1981, through January, 1982. There were guests from 15 states as well as Canada, New Zealand, Mexico, and England. Millie Croop, Treas., reports that \$300.90 was collected from Sunday afternoon visitors over the same period. In view of these figures, we think it was well worth the effort. Our "greeters" made it possible.

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SPECIAL PRESENTATION:

Whitney Barnum has presented a beautiful black walnut plaque to the museum which bears the names of all Wilson Supervisors from 1819 through 1981. He previously donated a plaque to the Wilson Town Board which, in addition to the supervisors, includes the names of all town board members and town clerks.

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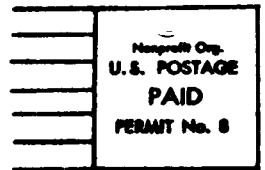
NOT EXACTLY WHAT THE DOCTOR ORDERED:

Dr. Mabel Carmer Hill, like a real trooper, delivered her talk at the January meeting under rather adverse conditions. The large turnout was greeted by a balky furnace in the Patterson Room, so everyone dragged their chairs to the front waiting room and ticket office. Here a short business meeting was held. In the meantime, the furnace decided to work, so everyone hauled their chairs back to the Patterson Room. But that wasn't all, Edna Rose, Refreshment Hostess, got a couple gray hairs while Art Schnoor tried to thaw out the water lines to the kitchen sink--to no avail. Fortunately, the sinks in the rest rooms worked so members and guests were able to get their usual cup of coffee or tea following a fine talk by Dr. Hill. One thing you'll have to admit, our meetings are anything but dull.

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THE LAST WORD:

Retirement should be based on the tread, not the mileage. --Allen Ludden



Wilson Historical Society

WILSON, NEW YORK 14172

NEWSLETTER

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

MARCH 1982 VOL. 11 No. 3
(Coleman Press)

LION'S ROAR HEAR IN WILSON:

The Wilson Lion's Club was organized in 1941 with the late Senator, Earl W. Brydges, the first President. The Club's membership is made up of prominent business leaders from the area, and has been foremost in promoting many worthwhile community projects. Perhaps the most noteworthy has been their support of the Buffalo-Eye-Bank Research Society which was founded by the Lions Clubs of Western New York and provides corneal service for the blind. Also top on their list of achievements has been their underwriting of eye glass costs for the needy.

The Lions have also supported many community activities like the Wilson Little League, the All-Sports Booster Club, the Wilson Free Library, the Golden Age Club, Wilson Historical Society and Wilson Boy Scouts. They have also sent a student delegate to Boy's State each year. Other activities have included repairing headstones and cleaning up Greenwood Cemetery, entertaining boys and girls in the Niagara Co. "Big Brothers-Big Sisters" program, and promoting Halloween parties at the Wilson Fire Hall for young people.

The Club has raised funds for these various projects in a number of ways including personal donations, public dances, minstrel shows, and by sponsoring outstanding musical dramas at the Wilson School like "Music Man", "The King and I", "Fiddler on the Roof", and "Bye Bye Birdie". The productions have shown to sell out crowds each year and were made possible with the use of local talent and support of many community-minded people. Updating of the school's stage-lighting system was made possible because of a large donation from the Lion's Club.

Current officers are Jon Swick, Pres., Lynn Sherrie, Vice-Pres., Fred Lampman, Sec., Jim Breinling, Treas., and Floyd Clark, Tail Twister. Directors are Jim Akers, David Hazen, Peter Zabel, and Marty Miller.

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MUSEUM TO RE-OPEN:

After a six week well-advised shut down to conserve energy, the Wilson museum will open its doors to the public, Sunday, March 7th. Lois Jennings, Chrm., has announced a new exhibit featuring old bottles will be in place, and in addition to our own collection, there will be loan displays from Dianne Albright and Roger Goodman.

Margaret Walker, Hostess Chrm., has obtained the services of the following persons to be greeters Sunday afternoons from two to four: March 7th, Lois and Whit Barnum; March 14th, Susan Schearer and daughter, Amy; March 21st, Leona and Wally Goodman; and March 28th, Marilyn and Ed Allgeier.

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FISHERY IMPACT ON WILSON:

Dick Robinson and John Mulchany, representing the Niagara County Cooperative Extension's "Community & Natural Resources Development Program", spoke before a group of Wilson business leaders at the Conservation Club recently on the subject of the expanding fishing industry and the impact it may have on Wilson. It was pointed out that thousands of sportsmen are being attracted to this area as news spreads about the fine fishing possibilities; and that the business establishment and others should be planning now to fill the needs of visitors. They emphasized the lack of camping and overnite facilities in Wilson and discussed a new "sleep and breakfast" concept that might be made available by local residents with an extra room to rent out.

A local information center was suggested that might include a map and directory with local points of interest like overnite facilities, restaurants, gas stations, tackle shops, churches or other services. Marge Clark, David Hazen, and Carol Scheffler volunteered to look into the matter to see if some type of plan could be worked out to help put Wilson on the map as Niagara County's leading "fishing and boating paradise".

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MARCH MEETING:

We couldn't seem to find "hootenanny" in our dictionary, but if Dorothy Linnabery says we're gonna have a hootenanny, we'll have a hootenanny. Mr. David White will be the guest leader at the March 15th event, and the program will consist of music and song. Bring an instrument to play if you like because everyone will be able to get "into the act".

Celeste Crawford will be in charge of refreshments and the other members of her committee will be Jean Swanson and Jeanette Schlyer.

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TRUSTEE MEETING:

Dr. Argue's office, Wednesday, March 10th, 8:00 PM. Committe Chairmen are welcome.

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THIS IS the time of year when you'd be a lot happier if it wasn't this time of year.

PROMOTES WILSON:

Harold E. Mosher, Town Supervisor, was elected under the campaign slogan, "I Love Wilson." His years of involvement in the community leave no reason to doubt the sincerity of that statement. He was born in Lockport in 1925 and has lived in Wilson for 44 years.

He graduated from Wilson Central School in 1944 and joined the military service in 1947. He was honorably discharged with the rank of Petty Officer, 2nd Class, and has since served as Past Adjutant and Commander of the Wilson American Legion Post. Under the G.I. Job Training Act, he became a certified auto parts specialist, and today he and his son, Marc, operate an automotive parts distribution business at the corner of routes 425 and 104, Cambria.

His dedication to the community has covered a variety of interests, and some may remember when he worked in the old Welker and Brown Drygoods store. Today he is an Exempt Fireman, and served 20 years as a volunteer in the Wilson Fire Company. During that time, he was chairman of the Field Day committee for five consecutive years. In 1975-76 he was a member of the Wilson Bicentennial Committee, and also was a committeeman on the local Cub and Boy Scout troops. As a past president and secretary of the Wilson Lion's Club, he helped found the Wilson Little League and also sponsored and managed some of the teams. He also co-chaired the popular Lion's Club musicals presented in the school auditorium. His involvement in politics dates back to 1958 when he served as village trustee for 12 years and later was elected village Mayor from 1970 until 1976.

The Moshers were married in 1948 and had four children, Michael, Marc, Maureen, and the late Matthew. Mrs. Mosher, the former Barbara Estony, is also a 1944 graduate of Wilson Central School and a Past President of the Gnostic Guild. The family attend Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Church in Wilson.

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UNUSUAL QUILT COMPLETED:

A small handful of determined ladies have been patiently sewing quilts for our annual "Country Fairs" since 1974. Because of their efforts, and the efforts of two very competitive "salesmen", the quilt raffle has become one of the society's best sources of income.

The 1982 quilt is reported to be very unusual, and Florence Schultz stated she has never seen anything quite like it in our area. She suggested that it might be well to display it against an outside wall of the museum on "Fair Day" so everyone will be able to see and enjoy the beauty of its "Big Dahlia" design. The quilt was sewn at Mrs. Schultz's home and about 175 hours of labor were put into it by Florence, Beryl Tovell and Betty Stimson.

Donation tickets on the quilt will be distributed again this year by Betty Stimson, and she urges all members to try and dispose of at least one book. In addition to the quilt, there will be a 2nd prize of "Wind Chimes" made by George Linnabery, a 3rd prize "Raggedy Ann" Doll made by Betty Stimson, and a 4th prize Wilson Historical Society Cookbook.

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SPEAKING OF QUILTS:

A special exhibit of old quilts from the collection of the Niagara County Historical Society will be on display at the Lockport museum during the month of March. The county society is also planning to sew a "60th Jubilee Quilt" featuring symbols of each of the 12 towns, 3 cities, and 5 villages in the county. Representatives of each historical society will be asked to help quilt the symbol for their area.

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ACQUISITIONS:

Herb Kahler has been keeping the acquisitions committee busy filling out transmission slips. A recent donation was a Diamond Match Company box full of childrens' toys and booklets.

Joe Higgins has donated a beautiful long white antique doll dress, an umbrella (ca.1930), a Japanese Parasol, and a child's umbrella.

Ruth Rawlings donated an old White Petticoat and a New Year's Card printed ca. 1890.

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FORT NIAGARA ASSOCIATION:

Did you ever stop to realize that most of us live within a 30 minute drive of one of the most historic outposts in our nation's history, Old Fort Niagara? Today it is a State Historic Site operated by the Old Fort Niagara Association, and all revenue received is used to maintain the fort which receives no direct state aid.

A drive is underway to enlist new members interested in the early history of the Niagara River and the archaeology of the Old Fort. Membership includes free admission to the Fort and all programs which include many special events and military re-enactments throughout the year. Members also receive a monthly newsletter and may benefit from special discounts on museum shop items. Individual memberships are \$10 per year, Family memberships \$15 per year, and all memberships are tax deductible. You may join by sending the appropriate fee to the Old Fort Niagara Assoc., P.O. Box 169, Youngstown, N.Y. 14174.

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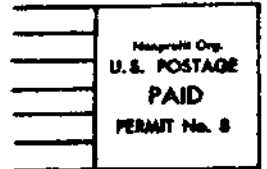
EAST WILSON PIONEER:

Mary Halsey Bull, daughter of Rev. Herman and Sophia Woodworth Halsey, was born May 24, 1830 at Bergen, N.Y. Her parents moved to Cambria Center that same year and in 1842, acquired 300 acres of wild lands from the Holland Land Company. The District #7 schoolhouse on Chestnut Road was built on land donated by the Halseys. Mary attended school there several years, and when the Collegiate Institute opened in Wilson, was one of its earliest and most attached students. After graduation, she taught in several local districts.

Mary Halsey married Benjamin F. Bull, June 26, 1862, and spent the remainder of her life on the John Bull homestead, home of her husband's father. (Present home of Millie & Don Croop). Mary had one son, Edgar, who married Ruby Gaylord and they had three children, Dorothy Bull Reichenderfer, Alice Bull Carter, and Glenn Halsey Bull. The only descendents of Mary Halsey now living in Wilson are the family of Mrs. John (Margery Carter) Williams.

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BON MOT: The difference between a good speaker and a poor speaker is a comfortable nap.



Wilson Historical Society

WILSON, NEW YORK 14172

NEWSLETTER

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

APRIL 1982 Vol.11 No. 4

10th ANNIVERSARY EDITION

(Coleman Press)

WILSON IN 1916:

The horseless buggy was just coming into its own in 1916, but those hardy souls who drove a horse and buggy could still get "old Dobbin's" harness fixed at "Germain's Horse Furnishing Goods and Repair Shop". If you wanted a new car, you could pick up a snazzy "Mitchell" from "J. A. Diez", who also sold Chase tractors. If your preference ran to a Buick or Overland, "Treichler and Housel" were the people to see. Autos weren't as reliable then as they are today so if your car broke down you could get it repaired at either the "Wilson Garage" run by W. L. Dox, or the one run by "Faery and Allgeier", and if you needed a blacksmith, you could always run over to Elberta and see George H. Upton.

Rooms at the "Hub Hotel" went for \$2.00 a day, and if you wanted to step out on the town you could always spruce up at the "L. W. Smith Clothing Store" and get your hair clipped at either "Hub Ferrin's" or "Arthur Bundy's" Tonsorial Parlors. You could catch the latest drama at the "Albright Opera House", but if bowling was your thing, you might polish up your game at the "Timothy Wilson & Son" bowling parlor next to the bank. If your night out proved to be too much for you, you could always get hold of Dr. John Burns, Dr. George Smith, or George Middleton, druggist.

"Miller and Brown" was a popular store for Dry Goods and Groceries or Furnishings, and "J. W. Hackett" specialized in Groceries and Meats. The "Central Milling Company" on Young Street was operated by C. J. Chapman and Roland R. Singer, and "H. L. Treichler" was headquarters for your hardware, heating, and plumbing needs. Insurance might be obtained from the "Wilson Insurance Agency" while financial transactions could be handled at the old "State Bank", present home of Marine Midland.

If one lived south of the village, "Taggart and Stevens", across from the depot, was a good bet for General Merchandise, while "J.C. Wright" manufactured Evaporated Apple Products including Sweet Cider and Vinegar. While there, you could always get your building supplies from the "Wilson Lumber Company" managed by Mike Radigan.

The old "Union High School" was also in its hey day that year and officers of the Senior Class were Norman Eick, Pres., Homer Johnson, Vice-Pres., Mabel Wilson, Sec., Vesta Schweigert, Treas., Edith Swick, Poet, and Hazel Wilson, Historian. Other members of the Class included Mary Berlin, Clara Stoddard, Marion Cramer, Ursula Wolfe, Doris Weaver, Gertrude Patterson, Marion Thompson, Mary Brennan, Fred Tscabold, George Norton, Glenn Bickford, and Harwell Dyer.

Some of them, still living today, must marvel at the growth of the Wilson school system in their lifetime. Today, over 100 students graduate from the Wilson Central School each year.

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ACQUISITIONS:

Ernestine Walpole has contributed a large variety of clothing, some that belonged to her grandmother, Ernestine Israel, in the 1880's. In addition to dresses there are bonnets, aprons, camisoles, chemise, petticoats, purses, crocheted bags, beaded bags, and childrens' bibs and bonnets. There is also a 1958 Centennial Dress, several souvenirs and pictures, also a complete World War II Uniform, 1930 Tuxedo, and 1932 Palm Beach Jacket.

Eleanor Brydges has donated several mementos of the "Earl Brydges Era" including two large photos, early campaign literature, and souvenirs.

Ruth Phillips gave a "Clown Cola" Beverage Bottle and a Schreiber-Manru Lager Bottle.

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APRIL HOSTESSES:

Margaret Wilson, Chrm., has announced that the following members will serve as greeters at the museum on Sunday afternoons from 2-4PM: April 4th, Cheryl Brown and Eleanor Caufield; April 11th, Edgar and Eloise Culverwell; April 18th, Ora and Marion Pettit; April 25th, Norman and Martha MacAskill.

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CONGRATULATIONS TO ROYALTON:

The Town of Royalton Historical Society was organized in 1977, and recently put out their first newsletter, "Royalton Reflections". The Town was established in 1817, one year before Wilson, and gained historic prominence as the home of Belva Lockwood, the first woman to ever run for President of the United States. The society had 33 members in February and their President is Jerry Rademaker of Middleport.

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10th SOCIETY PUBLICATION:

The Wilson Historical Society publication, "The Albright Opera House", is available now at the Wilson Museum or Stinson's Barn Shop. It sells for 75 cents per copy. (\$1.25 by mail.)

TEN YEARS OF PROGRESS:

The Wilson Historical Society was founded April 18, 1972, at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Norman Thilk, Pettit Street, Wilson. Plans for its organization were discussed by Dr. John and Jean Argue, Supervisor Whitney Barnum, Mayor Harold Mosher, Justice Jane Moxham, Mildred Middleton, Joseph Higgins, Anna Mae Nevins, and Dorothy and Norman Thilk. An organizational meeting was set up at the Town Hall, April 24, 1972, at which forty persons attended, and motions were made to form a nominating and by-laws committee. At a special meeting on May 9, 1972, Winnie Stacy, Chrm., presented a slate of officers which were duly elected as follows: Dr. John Argue, Pres., Karl Wright, Vice-Pres., Laura Eick, Sec., Mildred Croop, Treas., and Ella Mae Baker (Peters), Cor. Secretary. Seven trustees were elected including David Weiler, Dora Wakeman, Flossie Lortz, Helen Borngraeber, Anna Mae Nevins, Joseph Higgins, and Whitney Barnum. The purpose of the organization was outlined under Article I of the Constitution which states, "The purpose of the society shall be to preserve for posterity the historical records and memorabilia of the Town and Village of Wilson."

On July 17, 1972, the society voted to publish a bi-monthly newsletter and in May, 1973, it was mailed on a monthly basis to provide more up to date coverage of meetings and events. An average of 84 letters were sent out in 1972 and today 360 copies are mailed to members' homes.

During the first year, all meetings were held at the Town Hall but in October, 1972, Dr. Argue transferred title to the old NYC Depot over to the Town of Wilson with the stipulation that the society would be entitled to use it for a meeting place and museum. Dr. Argue was represented by Henry De Lang, Att., and the property was accepted for the town by Whitney Barnum, Supervisor, and Richard Southard, Town Attorney. The first meeting was held in the depot, June 18, 1973, and three months later on September 10, 1973, the trustees and officers voted to open the museum to visitors on Sunday afternoons from two to four.

With the help of Richard Southard, the society was incorporated as a non-profit organization and received its temporary charter from the NYS Board of Regents, June 23, 1972. The society pursued its program diligently during the next three years enabling it to meet the requirements for a permanent charter, February 20, 1975.

A Planning Board was organized June 17, 1974, for the purpose of proposing new ideas for improving the museum and grounds. Whitney Barnum was the first chairman, a position currently held by Arthur Schnoor, 1st Vice-President.

Many improvements were made to the museum and grounds, mostly by volunteer labor, and hours were spent scraping and painting the depot--both inside and out. Rest rooms and library were built; the freight room was cleaned out and remodeled as the new "Patterson Room"; Linden trees were planted east of the depot and a flagpole was erected; a railbed was built and the caboose was set in place and painted; a kitchenette and overhead storage room was built and painted; steps and railings were installed; a thermal-ionic fire sensor system was wired in; two gas furnaces were installed; crash bars were placed on exit doors; a new 40x60 cement block building was erected; wiring services in both buildings were updated; and cement walks were laid.

The new cement block building was built on the south east corner of a four acre plot of land donated to the town by Dr. George Badger of Lockport. The land was dedicated as "Hojack" Park on June 15, 1981. A room at the west end of the depot was renovated and named the "Arthur Schnoor Room" in recognition of Art's dedicated efforts to keep the renovation program going. Ceilings were lowered in both the Patterson and Schnoor Rooms and lighting fixtures added; Rest rooms were built adjoining the antique car building; "Hojack" Park was seeded and landscaped with approximately 60 trees--some given as Memorials; a storage area was built on the south dock and a tool shed was added at the west end of the depot. Truly a remarkable list when one considers the amount of volunteer labor that made it all possible.

Other improvements included rugs for the library and Patterson Room; purchase of 75 folding chairs for the meeting room; also 12 tables, 7 display cases, coal heater, several fine memorials and other miscellaneous items.

In addition to volunteer labor, there have been many personal donations of materials, money artifacts. There have also been special contributions from the community-at-large including gifts from the Lion's Club, Harrison Radiator Div., GMC, Upson Company, Edmunds Company, Bob Rohring, Don Kerwin, Erie County Savings, Village, Pfeiffers, Jack Perry, proceeds of Fashion Show sponsored by the Delphic Circle, Gnostic Guild, Lakeshore Mothers' Club, Elberta Mothers' Club, and installation of the railroad caboose by Floyd Clark which he moved from Lockport. The society has also acquired 10 antique and older model cars from members and friends with an appraisal value of \$74,500.00.

In return, during ten years of operation, the society has spent \$18,310.00 for building supplies and materials to improve the museum and grounds which belong to the Town of Wilson.

It should further be noted that the Town of Wilson has been the principal backer of the museum complex with yearly contributions of money, materials, and services.

In 1972, the society had 139 members. Five years later the number had increased to 393, and today, there are 538 members on the rolls. This includes 36 Life Members and 39 Juniors. (An additional 6 Life Members have died, but the investment they made will help to support the society indefinitely.)

If the society is to accomplish as much in the next ten years as it did during the past ten, it will be necessary for the present membership to carry on the work that has been started. Some who helped with the society's initial growth are now departed or moved to other locations, however, we must try to maintain the enthusiasm with which it all started, for in the words of Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm."

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IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT:

When you renew your 1982 membership by mail, your new card will be attached to the next copy of your "Newsletter". This will save a considerable amount in postage.

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MEETING SCHEDULE FOR APRIL:

April 5th: Special meeting of all "Country Fair" Chairmen will be held in the Patterson Room, Monday evening at 7:30PM. Plans will be made. It is important that you attend. Officers and trustees will meet at the Patterson Room, Wednesday, April 14th, at 8PM. Regular monthly meeting in Patterson Room, Monday evening, April 19th, at 7:30 PM. Museum Committee will set up new exhibit, "Kitchen through the years--1800 and on", Tuesday, April 20th, at 1 PM. If you have items you can loan for this display, please call Eleanor Myers, 751-6053.

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APRIL MEETING:

Your Newsletter editor will discuss the early history of the Holland Land Company and trace the development of the towns on the Niagara Frontier. Refreshments will be served by Marilyn Allgeier, Chrm., Jane Sinclair, and Carol Hastings. A birthday cake will be provided to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the Wilson Hist. Society.

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"COUNTRY FAIR" MAKING PROGRESS:

The time for another Fair is just around the corner and some preparations are already underway. Quilt tickets have been printed and are being distributed by Betty Stimson and Millie Lonsbery. Some out-of-town members have requested books and others may also by contacting Betty, however, all non-local stubs, donations, and unsold tickets should be returned to her by May 24th.

Posters for the Fair have been printed and are being distributed at various antique shows by Eleanor Myers, Norm Luff, and Norm MacAskill; while Nettie Stimson has addressed and mailed out 160 contracts in anticipation of attracting 100 dealers to this year's event.

Edna Rose is again chairman of the society's "flea market", and invites everyone to start collecting their unwanted "goodies" and bring them to her or the museum real early. They may be left at the museum any Sunday afternoon from 2 to 4PM, but be sure to indicate they are for the "flea market".

Seventy-six Businessmen in the town of Wilson gave contributions last year to advertise the fair. Millie Croop plans to canvass the town in April to solicit their help again. Be sure to watch for their names in our fair ads, and remember them when you shop or need service.

The Wilson Little League will sponsor another Chicken Bar-B-Q this year from 1 to 5PM, and everyone is urged to support this worthwhile community activity. Members who feel unable to work at the fair might consider baking a pie or two for our food concession. Past experience shows we are always in need of more.

The importance of the "Country Fair" to the society's operation cannot be overemphasized. Since 1973, it has been the main source of revenue for meeting necessary expenses. Here is a list of essential services that were paid for during the past year:

New York Telephone	\$ 282.25
Niagara-Mohawk Electric	\$ 441.25
National Fuel Gas	\$ 886.13
Newsletters, posters, contracts, mailing fees, etc.	\$ 596.46
Total-(2/1/81-2/2/82)	\$2,206.09

Sue Toennlessen, General Chairman, has the difficult task of convincing our busy members that their services are needed. Many have already agreed to assume responsibility for various fair activities including Bob Ross & Doc Argue, antique cars; John Myers, audio and electric; Judy Zauner, coffee and donuts; Winnie Fischer, bar-b-q-beverages; Millie Croop, ads; Lucy Monroe, candy; Betty Stimson, cashiers; Jan Sporleder, chili; Ed Hastings, clean up; Nettie Stimson and "Chuck" Campbell, dealer contracts and space assignments; Diane Albright, fish pond; Edna Rose, flea market; Betty Stimson, food tables and cleanup; Carol Smith, funnel cakes; Art Schnoor, hot dogs; Chris Kelman, membership-guest register; Lois Jennings, museum display; Berne Kent and Linda Williams, musical background; Emma Lou Reppentine, popcorn and lemonade; Don Croop, posters-announcing; Dorothy Linnabery, publicity; Florence Schultz, quilt; Gwen Heidenfeldt, supplies; and Bill and Peg Fritton, ways and means. They need your support, and so does our society.

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IMPORTANT FAIR MEETING:

There will be an important meeting for fair committee chairmen, Monday evening, April 5th, at 7:30PM, in the Patterson Room.

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PRESERVING THE TOWN'S RECORDS:

The town of Wilson is fortunate to have a museum where memorabilia from Wilson's past can be collected and displayed. Up to 1972, this was not the case. Preservation of artifacts is essential and we suggest that persons who have items to donate should properly turn them over to the Wilson Historical Society.

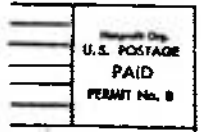
Records that pertain to the town's history are of special interest to the town historian since it is one of the primary duties of the historian to research, record, and write the town's history. This can be done through local newspapers, or by the publication of newsletters and booklets.

There is a great deal of risk involved when valuable records or documents are stored in one place, and this point is well emphasized when one considers the tragic number of fires throughout Wilson's past. Not only were all early survey records destroyed, but also all vital statistics prior to 1884. It would seem, therefore, that some effort should be made to duplicate rare documents so such losses will not occur again.

Residents of the town have several sources available for historical research including the Town Historian's files, the Wilson Museum, the Wilson Free Library, and the Wilson Town Hall. Additional research material may also be obtained from the office of the Niagara County Historian in Lockport, and the Niagara County Genealogical Society.

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WHEN ELEPHANTS FIGHT, it's the grass that suffers. --African proverb.



Wilson Historical Society

WILSON, NEW YORK 14172

NEWSLETTER

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

MAY 1982 Vol. 11 No. 5
(Coleman Press)

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, VILLAGE OF WILSON:

On May 11, 1982, the incorporated Village of Wilson will be 124 years old. It received its official blessing from the New York State legislature in May, 1858, when it started its proud heritage with only 715 residents. Luther Wilson was the first President of the Board of Trustees which included Luren Wilson, Reuben Wilson, William Grout, and Henry McChesney. John Roamer was the first village clerk, and Orsemus Ferris was Superintendent of the Greenwood Cemetery Association. Wilson's oldest Fraternal group, Ontario Lodge No. 376, F&AM, was in its third year of operation, and Daniel Farley was Niagara County Sheriff. Also, in 1858, the First Baptist Church of Wilson hired a new pastor, Rev. L. C. Pattengill, at a salary of \$500 a year.

Ship building was starting to catch hold at the harbor and the "Josephine" had just been launched. People were interested in the steamer "Northerner" that was making regular runs between Lewiston and Ogdensburg, and many more were going to Niagara Falls to enjoy a ride on the latest sensation, "The Maid of the Mist".

Wilson progressed like most other villages in the late 1800's but not without the usual controversies prevalent in any growing "youngster" or community. For example, an article in an issue of the former "Wilson Star" observed, "We have been surprised of late to hear so many citizens drying down Wilson. We hear complaints that Wilson is not growing, that good citizens are leaving, that no factories are being located here, and that the town is on the decline." Sound familiar?

Some village Ordinances adopted in 1898 shed some light on the temperament and attitude of its people in those days. Though humerous by today's standards, they were nevertheless viewed seriously by residents then:

"No person shall fasten any beast to a tree; ride or drive on village sidewalks; nor ride or drive on village streets faster than a trot.

No person shall obstruct any cross walk or street with animals or wagons, or leave any animal or wagon on street unless securely tied.

No horses, animals, or geese shall be permitted to run at large; no person shall deposit garbage on the streets; no person shall make an indecent exposure in any public place; and no person shall injure, tear up, or destroy any tree, post, or other fixture.

All persons found intoxicated on streets, using profane language, inciting fights, or making noise, shall be punished; also any person who discharges a firearm, unless in self defense, shall be punished.

No person shall throw, catch, knock, or play ball on the streets in a manner offending anyone; and no non-resident shall be allowed to hawk, peddle, or sell by auction any goods or wares, except meat, fruit, or farm products."

A comment in the old Lockport Journal stated that, "Wilson...intends to be very nice and sedate and woe be unto the luckless person who violates any of the new ordinances."

Now, some eighty years later, people might hesitate to classify Wilson as being "very nice and sedate", but as the village approaches its 125th anniversary, they might agree that its local government is in good hands.

Today, the Village Board consists of Mayor Kenneth Welker, Berne Kent, and Jon Swick, and the Clerk-Treasurer position is held by Jean Seefeldt. Gerald Sacca is Village Attorney, Lewis C. Schrader is Village Consultant, and Emma Lou Reppentine is Deputy Clerk-Treasurer.

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NEW LIFE MEMBER:

Ed Peters played the part of "Peter Rabbit" this year and gave his wife, Ella Mae, a special surprise in her Easter Basket---a "Life Membership" in the Wilson Historical Society.

Ella Mae (Holmes) Peters received her early schooling in Pennsylvania, and upon moving to Wilson, resided on Washington Street and was an active member of Exley United Methodist Church for many years. She was secretary to Dr. John F. Argue, and when the Wilson Historical Society started in 1972, became a charter member and was elected as the society's first Corresponding Secretary.

Ella Mae's hobby is painting and one of her pictures, the old Kruze house on Beebe Road, was painted by her and presented to the museum. Retired now and living near Leesburg, Fla., she has added a studio to her home and conducts painting classes for several students.

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SIGN OF THE TIMES:

An "acceptable level of unemployment" simply means that the government economist to whom it is acceptable still has a job. --Los Angeles Times.

"COME TO THE FAIR":

On Monday, May 31st, at 6:00AM, the museum grounds will be open to allow Dealers and others to set-up and make preparations to welcome the general public at 10:00AM. Dealer placement will be supervised by Nettie Stimson and "Chuck" Campbell.

Gwen Heidenfeldt is the new Food Chairman, and plans to round up a good supply so everyone can keep up their energy, strength, and good spirits. Visitors may sample special treats like Art Schnoor's Hot Dogs; Jan Sporleder's Chili; Carol Smith's Funnel Cakes; or Lucy Monroe's Home Made Candies. There will also be a variety of salads and pies at the Food Tent including Elwin Upton's Beverages and Pfeiffer's Loganberry Juice. A new Comm., headed up by Gerry Swann, will supervise the Museum Kitchen, and Betty Stimson will oversee Cashiers and Junior Helpers for the Food Tent.

Day long activities will include Diane Albright's "Fish Pond", always popular with the children, and Julie Bulmer will try to see that no child goes home without a balloon. The society is indebted to Strate Welding of Lockport, who has provided gas and equipment for inflating balloons since 1973. Peg and Bill Fritton will have the Ways & Means Table, and in addition to booklets, note paper, and ceramics, will introduce a new line of womens' and mens' T Shirts and Caps. A special T Shirt will also be provided for all junior members who accept job assignments. Edna Rose will again supervise the society's "Flea Market", and Doc Argue and Bob Rose will set-up the annual antique car show. Fairgoers will also be able to enjoy the catchy background piano rhythms of Berne Kent and Linda Williams.

Exhibits and museum personnel will be under the supervision of Lois Jennings with special emphasis on an Old Kitchen Display arranged by Eleanor Myers, and a School Exhibit and Hospitality Center planned by Dora Wakeman. The Hospitality Theme will also be encouraged by Chris Kelman who will be in charge of the Guest Register and Membership tables.

The Martin F. Jennings American Legion Post No. 306 of Wilson will honor their departed comrades at a Memorial Day Service at Greenwood Cemetery, which will begin with a parade from the Fire Hall at 10:00AM. The ceremony holds special significance for everyone, and all who are able are urged to attend this tribute to Wilson's servicemen. At 12:00 Noon, members of the Legion will hold a brief ceremony on the museum grounds. The society also acknowledges the co-operation of the Wilson Volunteer Fire Company who provide an ambulance and First Aid Crew to stand by in case of unforeseen emergencies; and the services of Jack Perry and Mike Vince who provide tents for the dining area and "flea market".

Each year, as the fair attracts more people, it becomes very important to provide good parking for cars. Ed Allgeier will be the new Parking Chairman and will have his crew direct visitors to the parking facilities provided by Pfeiffers Foods, Ontario Orchards, and Bob Rohring. Most of the Dealers will be able to park by their tables.

The 2nd annual Chicken Barbecue sponsored by the Wilson Little League will begin serving at 1:00 PM. Winnie Fischer will be in charge of the coffee, tea, and pie concession for the Bar-B-Q with proceeds benefitting the society.

A casual observer at the Fair isn't always aware of the many persons who contribute, for instance, Johnnie Myers sees that all electrical requirements are met, hooks up audio equipment, and is always on call to prevent small problems from becoming big ones. Also in this category are the many who clean up, set-up, provide baked goods, sell quilt tickets, make announcements, lend equipment, provide ads and publicity, or volunteer to work at the fair. When the crowd has left there is still work to be done, and all those who stick it out to the end, can appreciate the excellent clean-up job done by Ed Hastings and his crew.

The Fair will "wind down" at 5:00PM when the beautiful Dahlia Quilt made by Florence Schultz and her faithful helpers will be raffled off. Betty Stimson is in charge of ticket sales and everyone who makes a donation will also be eligible to win a set of Wind Chimes, Raggedy Ann Doll, or Wilson Historical Society Recipe Book.

With a break in the weather the '82 Fair could be a winner. The Farmer's Almanac predicts normal temperatures and below normal precipitation for May, but let's be on the safe side and add a few prayers anyhow.

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ACQUISITIONS:

Rex Stacy has contributed an unusual old large storage cupboard containing a variety of old ledgers, diaries, calendars, almanacs, inkwells, etc. Detailed list in transmission record.

Rev. Rae Brothers: 1910 Crochet-faille lined bag; Brother's Baby Bonnet (ca. 1950-20); and Paper Weight owned by Rev. Brother's grandfather Seaman.

Dr. John Argue: Brochures on Essex Six Coach and Hudson Super Six.

Dr. Edwin Gates, Niagara Falls: A-1 Tube Radio built around 1921, ten years after the first vacuum tubes came into use for radio; also a large variety of old Newspapers, Magazines. Detailed list on transmission record.

Wilson Central School: Two demonstration "Hospital Dolls" and copies of Wilson Crest and other miscellaneous school memorabilia. Dolls obtained via Berne Kent & Nettie Stimson.

Winnie Fischer: South Wilson Glass Mug-Commerative for Installation Dinner 1/17/1982.

Dorothy Linnabery: 4" Strap Saddle Bottle.

Janet Sporleder; Ceramic Bowl of Spatterware.

Diane Albright: 3 Mens' Swallow Tail Coats (1815-1880), two vests, excellent condition.

Clarence Monroe: One eight foot and one sixteen foot railing from old "Union School".

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CRESTS NEEDED:

The museum has a collection of Wilson High School "Crests" dating from 1938 to 1970. The 1941, 1944, and 1965 issues are missing. If you know anyone who would care to donate one or all three of the copies needed, it would be nice to have a complete set. Members of the Acquisitions Committee are Lois Jennings, Dorothy Lort, and Bob Rose.

The book, "Gift of Christmas Past", a return to Victorian traditions, has been acquired by the museum committee. It will be available for members' use in the library.

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COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES:

The Society's By-Laws and Constitution were revised Jan. 13, 1982 and the duties of the various committees as designated under Article VII are briefly outlined as follows:

Library: Collect, catalog, care, arrange and repair books, manuscripts, newspapers, pictures, and other collections of a like nature.

Museum: Collect, clean, repair, and store acquisitions; arrange museum exhibits & identify.

Publications: Publish research studies, monthly newsletter, bulletins, booklets, etc.

Historical Sites: Establish authenticity and historic validity of proposed sites; order and install markers; arrange dedication ceremonies, etc.

Membership: Conduct membership drives and recommend changes in policy or rules affecting general membership.

Program: Arrange for guest speakers, movies, slides, etc. for all meetings.

Ways & Means: Devise ways and means to provide finances for society, subject to Trustees approval.

By-Laws: Consists of five members, one of whom shall be 2nd Vice-Pres. Shall review the Constitution regularly.

Planning Committee: Six members including Museum Chairman. Develop plans for building and grounds. Implement plans after approval by Trustees.

Memorial: Committee shall consist of Chrm. Museum, Planning Chrm., and Treasurer who shall be Chairperson; shall provide contact and consultation point for would-be-donors and be responsible for receiving, reporting, and recording all memorials. Administration subject to Trustee approval. Additional members may be appointed by President.

Acquisitions: Consists of Museum Chr., Library Chrm., Antique Car Chrm., and member of Board of trustees. Will accept or decline items offered, issue transmission slips, record accessions in book, and refer to proper display area.

Housekeeping: Responsible for weekly cleaning of museum, replenishing supplies, and arranging furniture for monthly meetings.

Grounds: Keep up grounds and plantings surrounding museum; be responsible for seeing that grounds are mowed in summer and snow removed in winter.

Annual Fair: Chairman shall select Fair Committee personnel and supervise all areas of planning and conduct of the Fair.

Genealogical: Produce and distribute genealogical forms and family record sheets. All data to be kept in museum in permanent alphabetical file.

Tours: Arrange and organize historic or interesting tours on behalf of the society.

Publicity: Publicize meetings, special events, etc., in local papers, TV, and radio.

Caboose: Care, upkeep, and renovation of old railroad caboose.

Antique Cars: Committee to be responsible for care, upkeep and display of all cars owned or on loan to society; also for care and upkeep of Antique Car Museum and any activities therein subject to approval of Trustees.

Nominating: Shall present slate of officers and trustees at May meeting to be voted on at annual meeting in June. Shall also assist President in selecting Committee Chairmen as needed.

Refreshments: Provide minimum of 3 persons to provide and serve light refreshments after monthly meetings. Society will provide coffee, tea, cream, sugar, and cups.

Sunday Hosts: Two greeters shall be provided for Sunday afternoons from 2:00 to 4:00PM.

Study Group: Photograph and preserve architectural styles in town.

Photographer: Photograph current events and mount pictures in Museum Albums.

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DIAMOND JUBILEE QUILT STARTED:

The Wilson Society is making progress on a project to submit a square of material for the Niagara Historical Society "Diamond Jubilee Quilt", which, when completed, is expected to include squares from all the historical societies in Niagara County. Wilson's contribution will feature the Wilson Museum which will be designed by Carol C. Smith and then appliqued on a 14" square by Florence Schultz. The quilting project is under the supervision of Mrs. Ruth McKernon of Newfane, and actual quilting is scheduled to begin by July 1st.

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MAY HOSTESSES:

May will be a busy month at the museum, and Margaret Wilson has arranged for the following members to serve as Sunday afternoon greeters: May 2nd, Fay Schotz and Celeste Crawford; May 9th, Joe and Marguerite Gelser; May 16th, Tom and Kathy Fare; May 23rd, Mabel Wilson and Mabel Burrows; and May 30th, John and Jean Kress.

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EXCITEMENT AT THE MUSEUM:

There are more ways than one to get people out to the Museum, and Whit Barnum proved it one Sunday afternoon last month when sparks started a small fire as he ground rivets off the old windmill. He prudently called the Wilson Volunteer Fire Co, and when asked later how many visitors came to the museum that day replied laconically, "Well, we had about fifteen firemen there."

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ANTIQUA SHOW PLANNED:

The Town of Niagara Historical Society will hold an antique show and sale at their school-house grounds, Lockport Road, on June 6th. If it rains, the event will be held at St. Leo's Auditorium, Six Corners. There will be an admission charge.

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NEW MEMBERS:

We welcome several new members this month, William Scott of Houston, Texas; also Clifford Shoultz and Clark Stinson of Wilson, and a new Junior member, Chad Yerdon of Wilson.

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BON MOT:

Death and Taxes may be the only certainties in life, but nowhere is it written that we have to tax ourselves to death. --Nation's Business.

SAGA OF THE BARNUM FAMILY:

It was ca. 1650 that Thomas Barnum, the first Barnum to come to Colonial America, settled in Fairfield County, Conn., and was one of the founders of Danbury. Many of his descendants were prominent figures in their respective home communities throughout New England and New York, but perhaps the most famous was Phineas Taylor Barnum, better known as P. T. Barnum, whose "Greatest Show on Earth" brought fame and fortune to such personalities as "Tom Thumb", "Buffalo Bill", and Cambria's "Seven Sutherland Sisters." P.T. Barnum's grandfather, Ephraim Barnum, was a Captain in the Revolutionary War and great grandson of Thomas Barnum. Another of Thomas Barnum's great grandsons was Captain Richard Barnum, who also served in the War of the Revolution with the 16th Conn. Regiment. His namesake and grandson, Richard Barnum, brought the family name to Western New York.

A Cooper by trade, Richard Barnum was born ca. 1789 at Danbury, Conn., and in 1808, with his tools on his back, walked from Danbury to Monroe County, N.Y. He settled near Penfield where he and his wife, Electa Lloyd, had their first son, Frederick Foster Barnum. He was born Nov. 21, 1820, and at the age of two, moved with his parents to Brighton, the family homestead which would later be known as "Barnum's Terrace." David Lloyd Barnum, their second son, was born there July 30, 1825, and both he and his brother were educated in Brighton.

The Richard Barnums raised a family of five children in all, but our interest is directed to David and Frederick because both boys later moved to Wilson, New York. David learned the Cooper trade from his father and in 1853 opened an Iron Foundry in the village of Wilson. According to Ed Johnson, the foundry was located on the northeast corner of Chestnut and Wood Streets, and the business was listed in the 1869 Niagara County Directory as the "Barnum, Wilson, and Co., manufacturers of agricultural implements and castings." We might note here that a plow built there with the Barnum name on it was given to the Museum a few months ago when it was acquired by Helen Borngraeber.

David Lloyd Barnum married Elizabeth Dygert in 1851, and they had three sons, David C., a lawyer; Charles O., a book-keeper for the Buffalo Carriage Co.; and John E., ticket agent for the "Hojack" R.R. office in Rochester, N.Y. David L., and Elizabeth D. Barnum are both buried in Greenwood Cemetery.

Frederick Foster Barnum followed his brother to Wilson in 1862, and purchased a farm on lot no. 5, Townline Rd., south of the village. His son, James Lovett Barnum, married Alida Wollaber, and they also had a son which they named Frederick Foster Barnum after his grandfather.

Fred grew up and married Maude Crossman, and many local residents may still remember when he served as Highway Superintendent for the Town of Wilson from 1936 to 1947. He was elected Town Supervisor in 1947 and held that office until April 2, 1949 when he died.

Whitney E. Barnum succeeded his father as Town Supervisor in 1949 and served Wilson in that capacity for 22 years,--- longer than any other person to hold that office since the town was organized in 1818. Reuben Wilson, the 1st Supervisor, held office for 10 years; Roland R. Singer held the position for 7 years; and Victor Berlin was Supervisor for eleven years. Also, in 1976, he was appointed clerk of the Niagara County Legislature and retired from that position in December, 1981, to resume full time operation of his dairy farm on Maple Road, town of Wilson.

Whit married Verna Oldenburg and they had three children, Harlos, Whitney L., and Rebecca. In a second marriage to Lois M. Stedman, a daughter, Melanie Jane, was born. The Barnums now have eight grandchildren to continue the Barnum name in America through twelve generations.

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MUSEUM PROGRESS:

Some nice things are happening at the museum. Art Schnoor and Lois Jennings are planning to turn the "west shed" into a new agricultural display area. The inside dock will eventually house the former Wilson Postoffice counter which was saved from the disastrous Hub Hotel fire in January, 1980. A railing has been installed along the platform steps which was once used in the old Union School, and another long piece of the railing will be used to support farm implements along the wall. Siding has been purchased for the outside of the new addition, and as weather improves, will be installed. The railroad bike frame that Mike Radigan used to ride back and forth on the tracks from Burt to Wilson, has been repaired and painted, and Bob Rose has donated an old bike which will be attached to it for display purposes. A marker has been placed by the "Mountain Ash" which was donated by the Delphic Circle in memory of Dorothy Riseley Thilk, and thanks to Wilson Vol. Fire Co. No. 1, a new nylon rope has been attached to the flagpole.

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MAY MEETING:

Mrs. Janet Sporleder will be the society's guest speaker on May 17th when the regular monthly meeting convenes in the Patterson Room. Jan, a former teacher at Wilson High School, also served ten years on the School Board and held the position of Vice-President. She was a popular Troop Organizer for the Wilson Girl Scouts; Chairman of the society's Historical Sites Committee; and member of St. John's Episcopal Church of Wilson. The subject of her talk will be, "Political Rallies, Slogans, and Campaign Buttons."

Marietta Goodman reports that the refreshment committee for that evening will be Faye Pisello, Chrm., Mary Budde, and Helen Borngraeber.

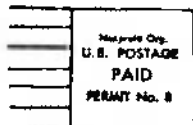
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IMPORTANT DATES:

- May 12th: Officers, Trustees, and Comm. Chairmen: Meet in museum, 8:00 PM.
- May 17th: Regular monthly meeting in Patterson Room, 7:30 PM.
- May 29-30: Clean up, Set-up, and make preparations for Fair.
- May 31st: "Country Fair". Open 6:00AM; Welcome public, 10:00AM. Participate and enjoy.

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FINAL WORD: Come good times or bad, there is always a market for things nobody needs.



Wilson Historical Society

WILSON, NEW YORK 14172

NEWSLETTER

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

JUNE 1982 Vol. 11 No. 6
(Coleman Press)

MORE ABOUT THE PIONEER NELSONS:

One of Wilson's early pioneers, Captain Benjamin Nelson, marched through Wilson with his men on the way to Canada during the War of 1812. He was impressed with the area and after the war returned to Wilson with his father, Pomphrey Nelson. Pomphrey had been a soldier in the American Revolution, and the sword that he used is on loan to the museum at Oriskany. It belongs to his descendant, Alice Nelson of Oriskany, whose roots reach back to the wilderness days of the Niagara Frontier.

A year after the war, Pomphrey and sons Benjamin and John, left their home at Lyons, N.Y. to come to Wilson where they purchased 50 acres of land on the Town Line Road. Later, with a Holland Land Company Grant, they added another 100 acres. After erecting a cabin, Captain Benjamin returned to Lyons and later married a 16 year old girl. The newlyweds returned to this area via the Old Erie Canal to Lockport from where they made their way through the dense wilderness to their cabin home near the present intersection of Nelson and Townline roads. The cabin was located where "much land had to be cleared, log roads built, wood burned, etc." When Pomphrey and Capt. Benjamin died, they were buried in an old section of the cemetery but no other members of the family appear to be interred near them.

Alice Nelson's great grandmother, Harriet Greager (Nelson), married David Nelson, son of Benjamin, and Harriet was very knowledgeable about the poisonous wild herbs in the area and their antidotes. Alice recalls that one time as a young girl she got a boil on her wrist, and her "great granny" Nelson bound a plantain leaf around it "which drew it out and cleaned it up as clean as a whistle." She also learned that joint weed generally grew near poison ivy, and whenever Alice was infected by the poisonous vine, her "great granny" would "get some of the joint weed, break it, and put the goo inside on the poison ivy." She claimed the "poison ivy would go right down while you were looking at it."

Alice's paternal grandmother was Odelia Schott, who died on the Nelson farm in 1931. Odelia Schott married Delos Nelson in 1871, and when he died in 1911 he was proprietor of a harness shop on Young Street.

In her biographical notes, Alice mentions two of our historical society members with ties to the Nelson family, Karl Schott Wright, and Mabel Wilson, a relative of Mary Nelson, John Nelson's second wife. Karl Wright and Alice Nelson are descendants of Florenz Schott who was born in Alsace Lorraine in 1811, and died in Wilson in 1872. A sword which he used while a soldier in the French-German War, was used by an ancestor in the Napoleonic Wars. Of some interest is the fact that this sword, with the fleur de lis of Napoleon engraved upon it, was passed down to Alice who later gave it to Karl Wright.

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NEW LIFE MEMBER:

Frank E. Radigan of Lockport is the latest member to join the Life Membership Class of the Wilson Historical Society. He was born and raised in Lockport and became a prominent and well known businessman upon taking over control of the Wilson Lumber Company in 1934--a business that had been operated by his father, Mike Radigan, since ca. 1906. Mr. Radigan sold it in 1965 and is spending his retirement at the home of his late parents in Lockport.

The membership roll continues to grow, and the society is pleased to welcome the following new members: Kathleen Phillips, Rochester; Jamie Covey, New Mexico; also, Edward and Gertrude Marks; Ed Johnson; Rose McDermott; Elizabeth Cornell; and Timothy Kraatz; all from Wilson. Three month old Jason Eastman, son of Mr. and Mrs. Mark Eastman of Hilton, a descendent of John Eastman who came to Wilson in 1810 with Reuben Wilson, cops top honors for being our youngest new junior member. Summer Kraatz, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Timothy Kraatz of Wilson, runs a close second at age 10 months. It is also a pleasure to welcome a 3rd junior member, Bryan McDermott, son of Rose McDermott of Wilson.

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HOSTESSES FOR JUNE:

Margaret Wilson has announced that the following members have agreed to serve as greeters at the museum: June 6th, Waldo and Leona Beutel; June 13th, Edgar and Eloise Culverwell; June 20th, Dorothy Lort and Ruth Phillips; and June 27th, Helen Horton and Phyllis Hurst.

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CAN YOU TOP THIS?

Paul Williams, owner of the Randall Road Mobile Park, has a couple of educated kitties. He has placed a door bell button on the ground by his front door which the cats have learned to press on when they wish to come inside the house.

OLD LETTERS EMPHASIZE CHANGING TIMES:

Old letters reveal how things were in the "good old days," and some that we acquired from Charles Boyer tend to prove the point. They belonged to the family of William H. Wilson of East Wilson and were written in the latter part of the 19th century.

One discloses that Mr. Wilson rented 53 acres of land to Henry Schnoor for two years, (or for as much longer as they could agree) at \$100 per year. The rentor was obligated to pay all taxes on the property as long as they didn't include any assessments to build a new schoolhouse. Any repairs on the property had to be made by Mr. Schnoor with Mr. Wilson standing the cost for all materials. Mr. Wilson reserved the right to saw all his firewood with the condition he "didn't make any waste." Rent was payable in two installments with \$50 due in December, and \$50 in March. The agreement was signed April 1, 1898.

Another letter mentioned the hard times in 1897 and noted the low price for produce that year. Wheat sold for 40¢ a bushel, oats brought 10¢ a bu., and corn was 20¢ a bushel. A further notation complained, "The times are the hardest for money that we have ever had. Everybody is hard up for money. Don't know what we will do another year for wheat is our money crop. Crop land has fell here ten and fifteen dollars an acre and high priced land more than that."

On August 25, 1892, Mr. Wilson made some purchases at the Owen Brothers Clothing store at 68-70 Main Street, Lockport, in the Breyfogle Block. A bill made out by W. S. Pound, Mgr., shows that Mr. Wilson spent \$12 for a new suit, \$8 for a coat, and \$1.50 for a hat.

Lamira Campbell, William Wilson's daughter, wrote her father on December 25, 1893, and the tone of her letter suggests that family concerns were no different then than today. She wrote, "I would like to bring all the boys after school was out and let you train them for a month or two. I would enjoy nothing better but I don't know how long you could stand our five noisy boys....I am surprised you can still be so cheerful. The idea, you sitting up nights to dry apples. The Bible says A Merry Heart doeth good like a medicine. I wish I had one. I always have my troubles before they come and sometimes they do not come at all. What is the secret of your good spirits? Is it trust in God? I want to know."

John S. Wilson, formerly of Harbor St., Wilson, mentions the Amana Society and writes, "Back in 1850 about 300 Germans who believed in a certain form of religion (which they called Inspirationalist) landed in Erie Co. N.Y. and in 1854 nearly all of them migrated to Iowa Co., Iowa, where they own everything in common and work on the co-operative plan. They aim to produce among themselves everything they use. They are a very successful and wealthy community. When they left Erie Co., a few did not go with them to Iowa." (Anyone who has visited the Amana Colony today might agree that Mr. Wilson knew what he was talking about.)

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IN MEMORIAM:

The society mourns the loss of one of its active members, Kenneth J. Tracey, 52, who died at Inter Community Hospital, Newfane, after a long illness. He is survived by his wife, Dorothy Sweet Tracey, and two sons, James of Youngstown and John of Newfane; also two daughters, Mrs. William (Jane) Snyder of Rochester, and Judy Tracey of Buffalo. He also leaves a granddaughter, Traci Lynne Snyder, and a sister, Mrs. Beatrice Myers of Wilson.

Kenneth retired from Continental Can, N. Tonawanda, in 1979 because of ill health. He was a member of the North Ridge United Methodist Church and Exempt Firemen of Wilson Vol. Fire Co. No. one. Interment was at North Ridge Cemetery with Rev. Alfred Gross officiating.

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PROGRESS AT THE MUSEUM:

As the vacationing sun once again returns to Wilson, we note a quickening pace about the museum as some of our members start to engage in various activities. Burt and Elwin have tackled the long-pending job of fixing up the caboose, and with Bob Rose assisting, the damaged platform has been repaired. The seemingly hopeless task was performed by "torching off" the old rusted bolts and reattaching the iron railings to a new 6x6 inch beam. Before the heavy timber could be lifted into place, about eight 7/8ths inch holes had to be drilled and thanks to Elwin's calculations, every hole was perfectly aligned. Burt Jennings has a reputation for getting things done, but we have to admit, this is the first time we ever saw anyone re-thread burned off bolts with a nut instead of a thread cutter. Incidentally, a good supply of large bolts were supplied free by Charlie and Dale Schlyer.

Beautiful "Hojack" Park has been rolled down thanks to Whit Barnum who brought his tractor and roller to the museum and rolled the entire area.

Art Schnoor, busy as usual, has covered the dock storage area and agricultural display shed with new siding.

Eleanor Myers had set up an exceptionally interesting "Old Kitchen" display, and many of the items on exhibit will conjure up memories of childhood days spent in Grandma's Kitchen. Others who helped or contributed old items for the exhibit were Faye Pisello, Elwin and Garnet Upton, Lois Jennings, Grace Singer, Joe Higgins, John Myers, Al Hibbard of "Hunting Man's Restaurant", and Nettie Stimson of the Wilson Barn Shop.

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MEMORIALS ACQUIRED:

A custom-made oak lectern, a memorial gift from Paul and Lorraine Pasko in memory of Doris and Maitland Smith, has been acquired for use in the Patterson Room. Mr. Pasko is the son of Rev. Judson Pasko who served as pastor of the 1st Baptist Church of Wilson through 1915-18. The lectern was built by Fenton Cole and finished by Burt Jennings.

Memorials made in the name of the late Dorothy Riseley Thilk were used to purchase a replica of an 18th Century Cartographers' Cabinet which has been placed in the museum library.

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BOON MOT:

Asking "Who ought to be boss?" is like asking "Who ought to be the tenor in the quartet?" Obviously, the man who can sing tenor. --Henry Ford

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POTTERY EXPERT:

Carl Ludwig Mehwaldt operated a pottery works in Berholtz across from the site of "Das House", the German Heritage Museum operated by the Historical Society of North German Settlements in Western New York. For about forty years, Mehwaldt made pottery for local distribution from the red coarse clay which he found in neighboring fields. Today, examples of his artistic work are scarce because redware was relatively soft and porous and after being baked in a kiln, shattered easily.

Some of the things made by Mehwaldt included miniature tea sets, small toy animals, mixing bowls, bread trays, ink stands, and butter crocks. Most of his work was unsigned although he sometimes scratched an "M" on a few special pieces. Though very rare, a few examples of his work may yet be seen at the German Heritage Museum at Bergholtz, the Buffalo and Erie County Historical Museum, and the State Historical Society Museum in Albany.

Interest in Carl Mehwaldt, the Potter, is heightened by the fact that two of his descendants are members of the Wilson Society, Winifred Fischer, and her daughter, Shirley Fischer Novak. Winnie also has several pieces of the pottery made by her great great grandfather.

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RECENT ACQUISITIONS:

Herbert Kahler, Newfane, has donated a Broad Hatchet and Fisher-Price Donald Duck pull toy made about 1930.

Millie Croop has donated an assortment of Collars and Cuffs including 1 pique collar and cuff set and a square collar with cuffs of cutwork linen.

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NEW PLAQUE DONATED:

A black walnut plaque containing the names of all Town of Wilson Historians has been given to the Wilson Museum by Whitney Barnum, a trustee of the Society. The plaque was finished from a tree that grew in the local area.

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AN ALARMING INCIDENT:

Doc Argue has learned there are better places to puff on a pipe than under a smoke detector. On a recent trip, he stopped to see his nephew, Steve Argue, who is interning at the Logansport Hospital in Indian a. While visiting with Steve in the hospital waiting room, smoke from Doc's pipe set off a fire alarm, and before long the hospital swarmed with firemen carrying fire extinguishers. We venture to say that Doc's face may have been as red as the fire trucks.

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THUMBNAIL SKETCH:

Gretchen Wright, daughter of Karl and Gwen Wright, graduated from Wilson Central School in 1953 where she was a member of the Honor Society, Senior Chorus, Science Club, Latin Club, and Sigma Cappa Nu. She furthered her education at Skidmore College where she graduated as a Music Major. She married Walter Zeh and resided at Greenfield Center and had three sons, Karl, a graduate of Plattsburg College; Arthur, who is attending Albany State College; and Stanley, a student at Fulton-Montgomery Community College. Gretchen has been organist for the United Methodist Church at Saratoga Springs for 25 years, and is also in the legal aid profession.

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MEMORIALS:

An oak lectern has been acquired as a Memorial from Lorraine and Paul Pasko in memory of Doris and Maitland Smith, former residents of Wilson. Mr. Pasko is the son of Rev. Judson Pasko who served as pastor of the 1st Baptist Church of Wilson through 1915-18. The lectern was designed and built by Fenton Cole and finished by Burt Jennings.

Memorials donated by friends of the late Dorothy Think were used to purchase a replica of an 18th Century Cartographers' Cabinet which has been placed in the museum library.

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RECENT GUESTS:

The Wilson Lakemen 4H Club visited the museum on April 12th accompanied by their leader, Mrs. Linda Davis. The youngsters appeared interested in all the exhibits and spent about two hours examining everything in the museum, antique car building, and caboose.

Dr. and Mrs. Harvey Slocum dropped by on May 7th while touring scenes of earlier years. Dr. Slocum purchased the Patterson home at 400 Lake Street where he hung out his "shingle" and practised his profession. He was delighted to see his old "shingle" mounted on the wall beneath his photo, and remarked that he had wondered for a long time what became of it.

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PROGRAM FOR JUNE:

On June 21st, a 125 pound pig will be roasted over the fire and be the center of attraction at the society's "Political Rally Dinner" with Barbara Mosher, Jan Sporleder, Bea Rockwood, and Dorothy Linnabery sharing responsibility for the happy occasion. Members will be asked to either cook, furnish, or pay \$3.50 per person for their dinners. (Prices adjusted for children)

The menu will consist of Roast Pork; Potato Salad; Dorothy Lort's "Cookbook" Coleslaw; Ernie Walpole's "Cookbook" Applesauce; Fancy Tall Layer Cake; and Root Beer, Coffee, and Tea. Everyone must furnish their own table service with reservations required and limited to 120. Don Sinclair will furnish the roasting device and also assist.

The dinner will be held outside, but will be in the Transportation Building if weather is bad. It is suggested that everyone enter into the spirit of the occasion and wear "fun" campaign buttons, slogans, hat bands, sashes, pennants, etc.

Following the dinner, the annual business meeting will be held with committee reports and election of officers. Contact the above persons for reservations or more information.

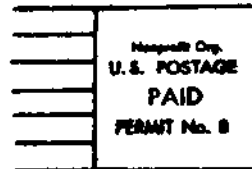
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ATTEND THE "COUNTRY FAIR" on May 31st. Plan to furnish & help. A successful fair depends on YOU

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PROGRESS IS WONDERFUL--thirty years ago only hobos cooked their meals outside. --Sunshine

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Wilson Historical Society

WILSON, NEW YORK 14172

NEWSLETTER

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

JULY-AUGUST 1982 Vol.11 No.7
(Coleman Press)

THE RAINS CAME ON MEMORIAL DAY:

But not in Wilson, proving once again "Someone up there must like us." In the early morning hours heavy fog rolled over the "Country Fair" grounds sometimes making it impossible to see the dealers in "Hojack Park", however, soon after the 10:00AM opening the sun broke out and spread its warm rays over Wilson for the rest of the day. In the meantime, heavy showers were falling over Lewiston with more reported in East Wilson but miraculously avoided the fair grounds.

One of the largest crowds to date attended the 9th annual event and hundreds of cars lined Lake Street from Tabor's Bridge to the Ide Road. In addition, all parking lots were filled at Jack Perry's Auction Barn, Ontario Orchards, the Farm and Garden Center, and Pfeiffer's.

"Chuck" Campbell, capably assisted by Nettie Stimson, Ralph Dinse, Rod Toessiessen, and John Clevely, did a commendable job marking out the dealer area, and many were heard to remark how pleased they were with this year's set-up.

Lois Jennings was complimented for the fine museum display by the chairman of a well-known Canadian museum who said he had attended our fairs since they started, and considered the work done by our volunteers as remarkable. He stated we were fortunate, because sometimes many groups that depend on foundation or government grants often find themselves in the position of having to pay for everything that is done. Featured this year were an early kitchen display assembled by Eleanor Myers, an agricultural exhibit of old tools and equipment, and a collection of old school memorabilia arranged by Dora Wakeman. In addition, a genealogical table set up by Celeste Crawford enabled guests to fill out family record sheets to be added to those already on file in the museum library.

All fair chairmen, both old and new hands, did their job so well everything went off without a hitch. A "tip of the hat" to Sue Toennissen and all others who helped make this year's fair a huge success.

Since the annual fair provides the funds necessary to operate during the coming year, our treasurer thought you might like a resume of this year's big event:

ACTIVITY	DEBIT	CREDIT	BALANCE
Advertising	\$411.42	\$435.00	\$ 23.58
Balloons	12.39	62.70	50.31
Beverages	25.67	242.51	216.84
Candy	125.24	402.47	277.23
Pie and Coffee-Bar-B_Q	11.00	226.45	215.45
Coffee & Donuts	60.00	197.73	137.73
Dealers	52.62	1050.00	997.38
Donations		59.00	59.00
Fish Pond	21.78	57.19	35.41
Flea Market		187.98	187.98
Food Barn	218.05	645.40	427.35
Funnel Cakes	22.71	149.00	126.29
Hot Dogs	699.22	1361.90	662.68
Lemonade & Popcorn	63.43	234.90	171.47
Membership		67.00	67.00
Miscellaneous	17.20		(17.20)
Plants		170.50	170.50
Quilt	103.29	2140.00	2036.71
Ways & Means	203.25	508.50	305.25
Ice Cream		42.00	42.00
T-Shirts (Jr. Members)	142.20		(142.20)
TOTALS	2189.47	8240.23	6050.76

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THOSE ANTIQUE CARS:

The Fair wouldn't be quite the same without Doc Argue and those antique cars. Possibly few of our members realize the effort expended to get them ready for showing. We're sure Chairman Bob Rose knows, and thanks to members of the "Little League" and St. John's Youth group, his task of getting them washed and ready was made easier. The young people did a fine job. On the day of the Fair, young Thomas Beatty of Buffalo, worked all day polishing the upholstery on the cars. Doc was so pleased he gave Tom a Junior membership in the society.

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DON MOT: Frequent naps keep you from getting old, especially if you take one while driving.

QUILT WON BY LOCKPORT LADY:

Betty Steblein, Beattie Avenue, Lockport, was winner of this year's drawing for the "Big Dahlia" quilt; J. Munnikysen, Lake Street, received the "Wind Chimes"; Jack Perry of Wilson won the Raggedy Ann Doll; and D. Vigrass, Ewings Rd., Newfane, was awarded the "Cookbook".

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FREEZER DESIRED:

A small chest type freezer would be helpful in storing food items--especially around Fair time. If you know of anyone who might donate one or make it available at reasonable cost, please contact Art Schnoor.

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IN MEMORIAM:

Paul Reid, 70, died at his Maple Road home, May 23rd, after a long illness. He is survived by his wife, the former Clotilda Kiener, and his mother, Florence Beyer of Kay Biscayne, Fla. He worked for the Markle Electric Co. of Buffalo and the Ransomville Bus Lines. He was also a member of Ontario Lodge, F&AM No. 376 of Wilson, and a member of the Wilson Hist. Society since 1974. A Memorial Service was held at Exley United Methodist Church with Rev. Rae Brothers officiating.

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WINDMILL PROGRESS:

The windmill is still in the process of being erected with completion delayed until needed parts are acquired. Windmills are thought to have originated in Persia more than 1,000 years ago. They were later adapted and improved by the Chinese and eventually spread throughout Europe. Earlier models were used to grind grain and pump water, and today, energy studies have shown the windmill as a possible solution for supplying cheap sources of electrical power. When completed, the museum windmill will be a working model.

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UPDATE ON DIAMOND JUBILEE QUILT:

Joe Higgins is doing the applique work on the "square" which the Wilson society will furnish for the Niagara County Historical Society "Diamond Jubilee Quilt". Joe has cut out various pieces of colored cloth to duplicate the design of the Wilson Museum sketched by Carol C. Smith. After the pieces are applied on the 14" square of material, Florence Schultz will complete the stitching. The quilt project is headed up by Ruth McKernan of Newfane.

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RECENT ACQUISITIONS:

Roy Heidenfeldt has donated a variety of old tools including two barn augers; two corner chisels; hand-made Trammel (1890) made by his father; three wood clamps; hand wrought hay hook; pipe pliers; tethering ring for horses (ca. 1890); steel monkey wrench; foundry spoon; and 3x5 flag from first Red Feather Drive. Also on loan, an unused Faibanks-Morse gasoline engine (ca.1918); and a high pressure pump once used on a horse drawn spray rig owned by Henry Donner.

James DeLange, Newfane: Telephone book, early 1900's; and collection of newspapers about World War I and the assassination of Pres. John F. Kennedy.

Mrs. Henry Mullett: Two feather hats, 3 straw hats, and 2 net hair coverings.

Stephen Sacca, Lockport: 1967 Imperial LaBaron Ldr Chrysler.

Gnostic Guild: Box of programs and records, also 5 "Wilson Crest" yearbooks.

Cynthia Wilson: Evening dress, and black turquoise brocade (1958).

Herbert Kahler, Newfane: Pudding steamer; Date box; Mud chains; Training yoke for oxen; and handmade cabbage cutter.

Beatrice Rockwood: Black satin beaded fissue.

Melva Bull, Newfane: Large linen luncheon cloth with Scotch prayer crocheted around it.

Mabel Wilson: Two photographs of Lulu Wilson, great granddaughter of Reuben Wilson; and Helen Knowles who donated her home on Young St. to the Wilson Vol. Fire Co. No. 1.

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MUSEUM GREETERS FOR JULY-AUGUST:

In presenting this list of hostesses for July and August we are sorry to have to announce that Margaret Wilson has decided to give up the position of Hostess Chairman. We will miss her monthly calls as she has done a wonderful job over the past two years. Marietta Goodman will replace Mrs. Wilson, and we're sure she'll continue the good work.

July 4th, Leonard and Marion Tabor; July 11, Donna Pettit and Mary Hoople; July 18th, William and Maxine Jones; July 25th, Clarence and Lucy Monroe.

Aug. 1st, "Chuck" and Marion Campbell; Aug. 8th, Ron and Bernice Swick; Aug 16th, Howard Hunter and daughter, Kalene; Aug. 22nd, Archie and Zilpha Petty; and Aug. 29th, Flossie Lortz and Marie Getman.

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GRADUATE HONORED:

Mark Wiltse, son of Mr. and Mrs. Donald Wiltse, received recognition Friday, June 4th, at Class Night as recipient of the Wilson Historical Society award to the outstanding student in American History. He was presented with a check for twenty five dollars.

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RECENT NEW MEMBERS:

We are pleased to welcome, on behalf of the Wilson Historical Society, the latest new members in the society: Cindy Albright Townsend, Lewiston; Merton and Lillian Evans, Ransomville; also Raymond and Lorine Allgeier, Donald and Ruth Weaver, David Secor, and Mary Clevely, all from Wilson. Also Mrs. Frances Cone of Pavilion.

New Junior members include, Thomas Beatty of Buffalo; Maren and Bradley Robinson, Lockport, and Brett Sippel of Wilson.

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CHANGING TIMES: Today, when a little old lady sits at a spinning wheel...she's at Las Vegas.

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SOCIETY ACTIVITIES FOR JULY-AUGUST:

Trustees will meet at the museum, July 14th, at 8:00 PM.

Eleanor Myers, Tour Chrm., is arranging for a bus tour to Mumford, Saturday, July 24th, to visit the Genesee Country Museum. Eleanor must have reservations by July 12th in order to determine if we can reserve a bus. Admission is \$5.00 and bus fare would be approximately the same. Will leave Wilson museum at 8:00AM and return about 6:00PM. Picnic tables are on the grounds, also a snack bar. A covered wagon is available for those who do not care to walk.

"Flea Market" will be held on museum grounds Sunday, August 1st, for benefit of members who helped with the annual "Country Fair". Betty Stimson is in charge of the event which will be held from 11:00 to 5:00PM.

Gwen Heidenfeldt will chair the Annual Picnic to be held in the museum, Sunday, August 8th at 12:30 Noon. Everyone is asked to bring a generous dish to pass, and meat and beverages will be furnished. Bring table service for your family. As in past years, members of the "over eighty set" will be invited as guests of honor. Entertainment is planned.

Trustees will meet at the museum, August 11th, at 8:00PM.

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CARS TO BE EXHIBITED:

Bob Rose, Chrm. of the Transportation Building, has announced that the building will be open to visitors Sunday afternoons from 2-4PM from July 4th through August 29th.

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OFFICERS ELECTED:

The following officers were elcted at the June meeting and will serve until June, 1983: Dr. John Argue, Pres., Arthur Schnoor, 1st Vice-Pres., Norm MacAskill, 2nd Vice-Pres., Judy Zauner, Rec. Sec., Flossie Lortz, Cor. Sec., and Millie Croop, Treas.

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Three trustees were elected to serve until June, 1985 as follows: Helen Borngraeber, Karl S. Wright, and Elwin Upton.

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Six new committee chairmen take office this year including, Nettie Stimson, 1983 "Country Fair"; Faye Pisello, Library; Whitney Barnum, Nominations; Ruth Phillips, Refreshments; Marietta Goodman, Sunday Hostesses; and Winifred Fischer, "Ways & Means".

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The Wilson Society has functioned well because of its committees who "get the job done". This year several chairmen who performed exceptionally well decided to step aside and take a well earned rest. We extend our sincere thanks to Sue Toenniessen, Dorothy Lort, Marietta Goodman, Margaret Wilson, Bill and Peg Fritton, and Ed and Eloise Culverwell.

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IN MEMORIAM:

Genevieve E. Keers, 83, was found dead at her Harbor St. home, Tuesday, June 8th, following a long illness. She was a lifelong resident and daughter of Timothy and Flora Hurlburt Wilson. She is survived by her daughter, Mrs. Paul (Ann) Nelson, Westchester, Pa.; two brothers, Walter Wilson of Wilson, and Stewart M. Wilson of Rochester; also several nieces and nephews. She was a retired teacher of the Newfane Central School and a member of Exley United Methodist Church, N.Y. State Teachers Association, and Wilson Historical Society. The society extends sincere condolences to all members of her family.

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SUCCESSFUL PIG ROAST:

We understand the pig roast at the June meeting was a happy occasion, in spite of showers, with about 90 in attendance. Dorothy Linnabery has provided a good mix of educational as well as fun programs throughout the year making us wonder, "what's coming up next?".

Those of you who heard George Bray at a recent meeting might wish to attend the pre-revolutionary war encampment at Fort Niagara July 10th and 11th. Colorful French, British, Indian, and Colonial costumes will be worn by both men and women with "attacks" on the Fort scheduled each day at 2:00PM. This could be an interesting follow up to Col. Bray's talk in Wilson.

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CLASS REUNION:

Eleven members of the Class of 1932, Wilson High School, attended their 50th reunion at the Village Tavern, Olcott, on June 5th. Assembled with their husbands and wives were Whitney Barnum, President; Helen Stevens, Vice-President and Salutatorian; Ronald Swick, Secretary; Nellie Blake Rohr; Donald Canfield; James Canfield; Kenneth Gifford; Eloise Smith Culverwell; Dorothy Swick Halstead; Marjorie Swick Sweet; and Mary Van Wagoner Allstein, Junior Class Advisor. Deceased members of the class are Verna Albright, Dorothy Haner (Treasuer-Valedictorian), Virgil Bowersox, Herbert Swick, and Ronald Teague.

Members unable to attend were: Ruth Allgeier Pasel, Ida Mae Patterson Fesmire, Navarre Foster, Nina Truesdale Nichols, Donald Hayden, Maurice Upton, and Senior Class Advisor, Mae Snyder Wilson.

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CABOOSE LOOKS GREAT:

While on a recent trip to South Dakota we heard many reports of rainy weather in New York, so we hardly expected Burt Jennings would have the caboose painted when we returned home. Millie was so attracted by the new paint job she almost drove off the road looking at it when she passed the museum. Burt probably didn't know her favorite color is red.

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FINAL REMINDER:

If you are one of the few who have not renewed your membership dues, you will find a star next to the address label on this Newsletter. This indicates that no more letters can be mailed until your dues are paid.

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FOSSIL DEPOSITS yield fine oil. Which proves there's no fuel like an old fuel.

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"CHOW-CHOW":

It was way back in 1924 when Ontario Lodge #376, F&AM, of Wilson, presented the "Musical Extravaganza", "Chow-Chow" at the former Gem Theater. The names of the cast and other members of the musical bring back memories of another day when the present older generation was then kicking up their heels as the younger generation. How good is your memory?

The Ballet was composed of Esther Campbell, Donna Giles, Mildred Gnage, Frances Crossman, Ida Mae Secor, and Helen Ward.

Show Girls were Irene Sherman, Emily Dennis, Elizabeth Johnson, Clarice Pettit, Winifred Dulin, Grace Brown, Dorothy Riseley, Catherine Shunnaham, Alberta Faery, Penelope Ward, and Genevieve Duxbury.

Debutants were Edith Wilson, Nina Mt. Pleasant, Drusulla Ward, Annabelle Duxbury, Alice Nelson, Florence Partington, Eleanor Carter, and Marian Smithson.

Gentlemen of the Chorus were Fred Fenster, Meredith Wolf, Douglas Grant, Howard Thurba, Clifford Wilson, Norman Thilk, Laurence Pease, Kenneth Langdon, Wesley Wilson, and Ralph Piggins.

The Cast of "Chow-Chow" was composed of Lydia Berlin, Mrs. J. Wolfron, Marjorie Moore, Mrs. Harry Clark, Dorothy Riseley, Merle Wilson, Mrs. Daniel Carter, Mrs. Henry Stockwell, Mary Bailey, and Milburn Campbell.

Was it really 60 years ago?

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THUMBNAIL SKETCH:

Ernestine Dietrick Walpole, daughter of Ida Israel and Frank Dietrick, is a retired elementary school teacher at Wilson Central School. She married Stuart Walpole, a retired rocket technician from Buffalo, and they had one son, Randy Stuart Walpole, a Pharmacist for Revco Drugs in Richmond, Va.

Ernestine's ancestral roots go back to Grammw, Germany, where her g.g.g.grandfather, Johann Jacob Stoffer Drewes was born in 1754. Her mother, Ida Israel, was the daughter of Charles and Ernestine (Lehsten) Israel of the Brayley Road, Wilson.

Ernie's son, Randy, has an interesting historical background. His g.grandfather, Thomas Walpole, served on the battleships Brandywine and Stepping-stone during the Civil War, and he later became the 1st paid volunteer fireman in the City of Buffalo.

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NEW MEMBERS:

We welcome our latest new members, Russell and Dorothy Urtel of Lockport; Helen Ward of Middleport; and Miss Judy Barnum of Barker. The society now has a total of 630 paid members.

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1984 ATTENDANCE:

Although the museum was closed on Sunday afternoons during January, February, and March, hostesses welcomed 721 visitors in 1984. This does not include an estimated 2,000 people who toured the museum during the annual "Country Fair".

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PROGRAM FOR FEBRUARY:

Elwin Upton will be the guest speaker at the regular meeting Monday evening, February 17th at 7:30 PM. The topic for his discussion will be "Building Doll Housing and Furnishings." A native of Wilson, Elwin has made an interesting hobby of his craft, and the meeting should hold special interest for everyone.

Margaret Wilson has announced that refreshments will be served after the program by Rena Rohring, Chrm., Marion Pettit, and Margaret Moyer.

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CALENDAR:

- Feb. 7th: Fair Comm. Meeting, home of Lois Barnum, Chrm., 2804 Maple Rd., 7:00PM.
- Feb. 13th: Trustee Meeting, Medical Associates Office, 400 Lake St., 8:00PM
- Feb. 18th: Regular Monthly Meeting, Museum, 7:30PM.

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"COUNTRY FAIR" UPDATE:

Lois Barnum, Gen. Chrm., has called for a meeting of all "Country Fair" Chrm., at her home on Maple Rd., Thursday, Feb. 7th, at 7:00PM. This will be an important planning session, and she hopes everyone will make a special effort to attend.

The recent drive to get free 30-cup percolators from Maxwell House brings to mind the World War II song, "We did it before and we can do it again." Spearheaded by Nettie Stimson, an additional 150 plastic tops were rounded up in time to meet the Dec. 31st deadline. Now the society will have two new percolators--thanks to Maxwell House.

Recent injuries have not prevented Florence Schultz from announcing that a new "Log Cabin Quilt" will be completed for the Memorial Day Fair. Like the three musketeers, Florence, Betty, and Beryl, have consistently been the nucleus for a successful quilting project over the past 12 years. Other prizes to be awarded will include a crocheted doll by Betty Stimson, a woven loom place mat by Winnie Fischer, a battery-operated pencil sharpener, knife set, and Wilson Historical Society Recipe Book.

The request for used refrigerators in last month's newsletter brought instant results. Three were offered by Dorothy Tracey, Anna Mae Nevins, and Nettie Stimson. As our Junior Members might say, "Cool, man".

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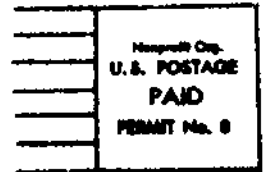
HAPPY BIRTHDAY:

On Feb. 18, 1879, Ida Rohring Erion was born on the Brayley Rd., Wilson. She will celebrate her 106th birthday this month at the Newfane Nursing Facility where she resides. The Wilson Hist. Soc. wishes its oldest honorary member a pleasant and memorable birthday.

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THE JANUARY MEETING was cancelled by the Blizzard of '85.

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Wilson Historical Society

WILSON, NEW YORK 14172

NEWSLETTER

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

SEPTEMBER 1982 Vol. 11 No. 8

(Coleman Press)

THE OLD PAVILION:

Sandra Tatman, Architectural Librarian for the Philadelphia "Athenaeum", recently requested confirmation that a pavilion and boatlanding once existed on the "Tuscarora River" near Wilson. According to her, Harrison Albright, a Philadelphia Architect, is credited in the "Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builder's Guide, September 24, 1890", as having designed the structures, however, she could find no mention of a "Tuscarora" river in an Atlas.

Lake Island Park was opened in 1889 along the West Branch of the 12 Mile Creek--so named because the mouth of the river is 12 miles east of Fort Niagara. The opening celebration included a Parade of Boats from which Luther Wilson, in a gaily decorated barge, poured water into the creek and re-christened it the "Tuscarora River". The name, suggested by Jake Miller, derived from the fact the source of its headwaters originated in the Tuscarora Indian Reserve.

The park lands were acquired in the late 1800's by W. N. Harris and Dr. T. C. Walton., and one of the first developments was a 40x70 foot pavilion which was first named the "Garden Opera House". For many years it was popularly known as the "Pavilion" and several old photos show scenes taken by it including one of the Island Park Band. A color lithograph print in the Wilson Museum shows the pavilion and other harbor scenes as painted from the artist's memory.

Bessie Crawford, born in 1888, has been spending the summer on "Sunset Island, her Wilson home for over seventy years. She recalls that her parents took her to the park when it was opened in 1889 where she was awarded first prize for being the prettiest baby present. As a young girl she attended many dances at the Pavilion and remembers the building well. She said there was a railing all around the structure which had openings on three sides. A band stand was built in on the south side, also a small building with porch roof from whence popcorn, soft drinks, and candy were dispensed. On the north, steps extended across the front and led to the river where a pretentious boatlanding was constructed. The pavilion, refreshment stand, and landing dock were all lighted by kerosene lamps with reflectors. The old pavilion was architectually beautiful, and for many years, a center of attraction for the thousands of visitors who came to Wilson.

The well-known "Tuscarora Club" was built around the original pavilion, and the Tuscarora Park Association was set up in 1922. Roads and lots were laid out by the Harris Architectural firm of Buffalo including a 9 Hole golf course. Art Ness, a member of the Wilson Hist. Society, managed the Association for 28 years, and when it was dissolved the Town of Wilson assumed maintenance and care of the roads. In 1979 the "T" Club was burned down in a controlled fire by members of the Wilson and Olcott Volunteer Fire Companies. The home of Floyd and Mary Clark now stands on the site.

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COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN PLEASE NOTE:

The trustees wish to re-iterate that committee chairmen are urged to attend all trustee meetings which are held on Wednesday evenings prior to regular monthly meetings, Policies and procedures are discussed at the trustee meetings and your input and suggestions are needed if the society is to function effectively.

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PROMINENT SON:

Thomas K. Singer, son of Grace Singer and the late Harold Singer of Wilson, has been elected president of the Kaiser Aluminum International Corporation. Tom graduated from Wilson Central School in 1950 and the University of Pennsylvania in 1954. The Singers have five children and both Tom and his wife, Jacqueline, are Life Members of the Wilson Hist. Society.

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VOLUNTEERS IMPORTANT:

According to a recent poll, nearly 70 million American adults donate time and energy to help out in their local communities. This includes services to hospitals, fire companies, the handicapped, recreational programs, historical societies, churches, senior citizens, etc. The only pay received by volunteers is the personal satisfaction they get from their accomplishments and of being of service to others. (Think of the money we'd save if we could have volunteers running the government.)

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BON MOT:

Congressmen should be paid on a commission basis--a percentage on what they save the taxpayers.

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RECENT ACQUISITIONS:

Nettie Stimson: Lockport Red Stamps Book; Two old Wilson Matchbooks; "Let's dine out for dinner in Western NY-1949"; "True Marriage Guide (1896); Telephone directories, '36, '37, '50, '51 Greta Durfy Grossman, Fla: Hand carved "Loon" made by Walter Wilson from 1870 Wilson Pier. Dr. John Argue: Two Railroad Lanterns marked NYCentral, also large R.R. Oiling Can. Leona Beutel: Wilson Owls, '29, '31, & 1930; also Wilson "Jack-O-Lantern", Vol. 1 Donald Sievert, Ransomville: Peach Grader and Platform Scales that belonged to H. Kruger. Roland Harding: Barrel Hoop in good condition. Herb Kahler, Newfane: Suaerkraut Tamper made by William Kahler.

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MUSEUM HOSTESSES FOR SEPTEMBER:

Marietta Goodman, Chrm., has announced that Sunday afternoon greeters will be as follows: Sept. 5th, Jean Hayes and Larry Halstead; Sept. 12th, Dora and Wirt Wakeman; Sept. 19th, Ruth and Bob Thomas; and Sept. 26th, Sue and Dick Schultz.

* * * * *

DEDICATION PLANNED PRIOR TO REGULAR MEETING:

Jan Sporleder, Historical Sites Chrm., has announced that a short ceremony to dedicate the new Randall Rd. Cemetery Marker will precede the regular meeting, Monday, Sept. 20, at 7 PM. Abandoned many years ago, the Wilson Hist. Society managed to identify some of those interred and place their names on the marker. Among them is Asa Randall after whom the road was named.

Following the ceremony, the regular meeting will feature the "History of Clocks", and will be presented by "Chuck" Horton, guest speaker.

Ruth Phillips, Refreshment Chrm., feels it might be nice to "activate" some of the men, so in Sept. the committee will consist of Esther and Harold Albright, Nancy and Bernie Kent, and Bernie and "Chuck" Messersmith.

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MUSEUM EXHIBITS PLANNED:

The Sept.-Oct. exhibit will include a display of old clocks and time pieces. The museum committee will meet Aug. 30, at 10 AM to set up the display and would appreciate help from the membership. If you have pieces to display please submit them to either Lois Jennings, museum Chrm., or Eleanor Myers before or on that date. A special holiday exhibit is planned for Nov. and Dec., but the museum will be closed to visitors on Sunday afternoons during the winter months of January, February, and March. This action was approved by the trustees at the Aug. 11th meeting because of weather conditions and the desire to conserve fuel costs.

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IT COULD BE WORSE:

1982 has been a good year to complain about the weather, which reminds us that things are never so bad they couldn't be worse. Some of Wilson's pioneers must have been pretty discouraged when, having hardly had time to adjust to the ravages of the War of 1812, were faced with the infamous "year without a summer" in 1816.

Old clippings reveal that January and February were so mild that year people allowed their wood fires to go out except for cooking meals. In March and April as the days grew longer the air became colder, and in May snow or sleet was reported on 17 days. In June there was frost or snow on every day but three, and it was recorded as the coldest month ever experienced in this latitude. On July 4th a quarter of an inch of ice was reported on lakes and streams in New England, and then to everyone's surprise August was even worse. An item in the "Elizabeth Pioneer" stated that "ice formed nearly an inch thick and killed every green thing in the United States.

In 1817, corn that had been saved from the 1915 harvest was sold for \$10 a bushel and was only used for seed. It was reported that thousands of people would have perished in 1816 had it not been for the abundance of wild game.

It was believed that the eruption of Mt. Tamboro in the Dutch East Indies spread ash all over the world and was the cause for the unusually cold weather. If true, recent eruptions of Mt. Helens and others in Mexico and Indo China may have contributed to the cold wet spring of '82, however nothing experienced this year could be compared to what Wilson's pioneers must have gone through in the year 1816.

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RECENT NEW MEMBERS:

The society welcomes ten new members who joined during the past summer, Mary Swann Allgeier of Florida; Gerald Rodney, Illinois; Mary Bartz, Java Village; Mr. & Mrs. John Cianchetti, Ransomville; and Gregory and Dena Mandeville, Wilson.

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VISITORS IMPRESSED:

A busload of senior citizens from the Town of Niagara, accompanied by Marvin Hinchbarger and Terry Lasher, visited the museum on August 9th where they enjoyed a bag lunch and coffee. They seemed delighted with the kitchen displays which many said brought back memories of by-gone years. Some plan to return with relatives and friends. Millie Croop served as hostess.

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EXCELLENT JOB:

Photo Chrm, Edna Robinson, has assembled about three albums of pictures taken of current society activities. All are tastefully mounted and identified, and the album covers are being attractively lettered by her son, Gary.

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WINS TROPHY:

Doc Argue drove away with 3rd prize at a recent National Showing of antique Pierce Arrow cars held in Niagara Falls recently. Entrees were driven in from as far away as the State of Washington which says a lot for the quality and endurance of the luxury cars which were once assembled at a plant on Elmwood Avenue, Buffalo, N.Y.

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IF ALL the world's economists were laid end to end they wouldn't reach a conclusion. (Farmer's Almanac)

POTTERY EXPERT:

Carl Ludwig Mehwaldt operated a pottery works in Berholtz across from the site of "Das House", the German Heritage Museum operated by the Historical Society of North German Settlements in Western New York. For about forty years, Mehwaldt made pottery for local distribution from the red coarse clay which he found in neighboring fields. Today, examples of his artistic work are scarce because redware was relatively soft and porous and after being baked in a kiln, shattered easily.

Some of the things made by Mehwaldt included miniature tea sets, small toy animals, mixing bowls, bread trays, ink stands, and butter crocks. Most of his work was unsigned although he sometimes scratched an "M" on a few special pieces. Though very rare, a few examples of his work may yet be seen at the German Heritage Museum at Bergholtz, the Buffalo and Erie County Historical Museum, and the State Historical Society Museum in Albany.

Interest in Carl Mehwaldt, the Potter, is heightened by the fact that two of his descendents are members of the Wilson Society, Winifred Fischer, and her daughter, Shirley Fischer Novak. Winnie also has several pieces of the pottery made by her great great grandfather.

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RECENT ACQUISITIONS:

Herbert Kahler, Newfane, has donated a Broad Hatchet and Fisher-Price Donald Duck pull toy made about 1930.

Millie Croop has donated an assortment of Collars and Cuffs including 1 pique collar and cuff set and a square collar with cuffs of cutwork linen.

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NEW PLAQUE DONATED:

A black walnut plaque containing the names of all Town of Wilson Historians has been given to the Wilson Museum by Whitney Barnum, a trustee of the Society. The plaque was finished from a tree that grew in the local area.

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AN ALARMING INCIDENT:

Doc Argue has learned there are better places to puff on a pipe than under a smoke detector. On a recent trip, he stopped to see his nephew, Steve Argue, who is interning at the Logansport Hospital in Indian a. While visiting with Steve in the hospital waiting room, smoke from Doc's pipe set off a fire alarm, and before long the hospital swarmed with firemen carrying fire extinguishers. We venture to say that Doc's face may have been as red as the fire trucks.

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THUMBNAIL SKETCH:

Gretchen Wright, daughter of Karl and Gwen Wright, graduated from Wilson Central School in 1953 where she was a member of the Honor Society, Senior Chorus, Science Club, Latin Club, and Sigma Cappa Nu. She furthered her education at Skidmore College where she graduated as a Music Major. She married Walter Zeh and resided at Greenfield Center and had three sons, Karl, a graduate of Plattsburg College; Arthur, who is attending Albany State College; and Stanley, a student at Fulton-Montgomery Community College. Gretchen has been organist for the United Methodist Church at Saratoga Springs for 25 years, and is also in the legal aid profession.

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MEMORIALS:

An oak lectern has been acquired as a Memorial from Lorraine and Paul Pasko in memory of Doris and Maitland Smith, former residents of Wilson. Mr. Pasko is the son of Rev. Judson Pasko who served as pastor of the 1st Baptist Church of Wilson through 1915-18. The lectern was designed and built by Fenton Cole and finished by Burt Jennings.

Memorials donated by friends of the late Dorothy Thilk were used to purchase a replica of an 18th Century Cartographers' Cabinet which has been placed in the museum library.

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RECENT GUESTS:

The Wilson Lakemen 4H Club visited the museum on April 12th accompanied by their leader, Mrs. Linda Davis. The youngsters appeared interested in all the exhibits and spent about two hours examining everything in the museum, antique car building, and caboose.

Dr. and Mrs. Harvey Slocum dropped by on May 7th while touring scenes of earlier years. Dr. Slocum purchased the Patterson home at 400 Lake Street where he hung out his "shingle" and practised his profession. He was delighted to see his old "shingle" mounted on the wall beneath his photo, and remarked that he had wondered for a long time what became of it.

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PROGRAM FOR JUNE:

On June 21st, a 125 pound pig will be roasted over the fire and be the center of attraction at the society's "Political Rally Dinner" with Barbara Mosher, Jan Sporleder, Bea Rockwood, and Dorothy Linnabery sharing responsibility for the happy occasion. Members will be asked to either cook, furnish, or pay \$3.50 per person for their dinners. (Prices adjusted for children).

The menu will consist of Roast Pork; Potato Salad; Dorothy Lort's "Cookbook" Coleslaw; Ernie Walpole's "Cookbook" Applesauce; Fancy Tall Layer Cake; and Root Beer, Coffee, and Tea. Everyone must furnish their own table service with reservations required and limited to 120. Don Sinclair will furnish the roasting device and also assist.

The dinner will be held outside, but will be in the Transportation Building if weather is bad. It is suggested that everyone enter into the spirit of the occasion and wear "fun" campaign buttons, slogans, hat bands, sashes, permants, etc.

Following the dinner, the annual business meeting will be held with committee reports and election of officers. Contact the above persons for reservations or more information.

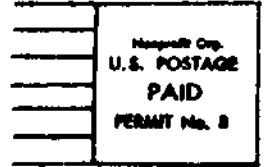
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ATTEND THE "COUNTRY FAIR" on May 31st. Plan to furnish & help. A successful fair depends on YOU

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PROGRESS IS WONDERFUL--thirty years ago only hobos cooked their meals outside. --Sunshine

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Wilson Historical Society

WILSON, NEW YORK 14172

NEWSLETTER

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

OCTOBER 1982 Vol.11 No. 9

(Coleman Press)

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WILSON, NEW YORK 14172

PROMINENT POLITICAL LEADER:

A modest white frame house on north Lake Street was once the home of one of the most influential senators to serve in the State legislature, Earl W. Brydges. Earl was born in Niagara Falls, May 25, 1905, and was educated in the public and parochial schools as well as the University of Buffalo Law School and Niagara University. In 1926, after graduating from college, he practised law and became a senior member of the firm of Orr, Brydges, Orr and Dowd.

He married the former Eleanor C. Mahoney, also of Niagara Falls, and they made their home on north Lake St., Wilson, where they raised their seven children, Mary Lynn, Jerauld, Earl W., Jr., Dennis, Thomas, William, and Margaret.

Mr. Brydges was very active in community affairs and served for many years on the Wilson School Board. In 1941 he helped organize the Wilson Lion's Club and became its 1st President. He and his family were active members of Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Church, and his wife, Eleanor, served several years as Committee Chairman for local Girl Scout Troop No. 1.

Earl's political life began on March 15, 1948 with a Republican Primary 'kickoff' dinner held at the old Hub Hotel on Young Street. He was elected to the State Senate in the fall by a close margin, but in following elections became one of the biggest 'vote-getters' in Niagara County. His sky-rocketing career saw him in the position of majority leader of the Senate in 1966 and one of the most influential legislative leaders in the state.

Senator Brydges received wide acclaim as a "great champion of education", and in 1958 the N.Y.S. Teachers Association presented him with the Alfred E. Smith Award for "classic leadership in the best interests of education." The Earl W. Brydges Library in Niagara Falls and Lewiston Art Park stand out as fitting memorials to him; however many other familiar landmarks in Niagara County were built during his leadership in the State Senate. Notable examples are the Robert Moses Parkway, Niagara Expressway, LaSalle Arterial, Niagara Falls Convention Center, Niagara County Community College, Schoellkopf Museum, and the Joseph Davis and Wilson State Parks.

Earl Brydges died on Easter Sunday, March 30, 1975, but his engaging personality and the impact he had on his community and state will long be remembered.

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THE ROARIN' TWENTIES:

The year 1922, following World War 1, was the year when the younger generation was beginning to experience great changes in the social and economic life of America. It was a period of rebellion and new fads punctuated by "flaming youth", the "Charleston", short skirts, bobbed hair, ouija boards, and mahjong. The "Red Path Chautauqua" brought culture to local communities, and the Super Heterodyne Radio was America's newest toy.

1922 was also the year Wilson High School graduated eleven of its finest young men and women into this changing new world. Seven of them met recently at the Sheraton Inn in Lockport to observe the 60th reunion of their class, and no doubt many happy memories were shared from their former school days. Attending were Jean MacGregor Blechinger, Hazel Demming Salisbury, Russell Hurlburt, Arline Carter, Marion Shaw Utley, Helen Pease Sayer, and Lydia Berlin Southard. Deceased members of the class are William VanKoughnet, Harold Mudge, Carol Thompson, and Mabel Perry Bradley.

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NONAGENARIAN BIDS FAREWELL:

Bessie DeNeau Crawford, a lifelong resident of Wilson, will close the door on her "Sunset Island" home for the last time this October. Bessie plans to spend the winter in St. Petersburg, Fla., and will join her daughter, Cleo, in California next spring.

The daughter of Joseph and Ellen VanBuren Deneau, Bessie's early childhood was spent at their Pettit St. home where she attended the cobblestone elementary school and graduated from Wilson High in 1906. She attended the Teacher's Training Class and taught in vicinity schools until 1915 when she married Luther Reuben Crawford. When Lou passed away in 1966, Bessie continued to maintain her home on the island.

Her thorough knowledge of the island's early history was the basis for the society's recent publication, "The Story of Sunset Island", and Bessie graciously consented to autograph two dozen copies of the booklet which will be available next spring at a planned event.

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BON MOT:

Life is for one generation; a good name is forever.

--Japanese proverb

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TAGGART & STEVENS:

It would be interesting to know how many 'old timers' still live in Wilson who remember the old Taggart and Stevens Store that was located across the road from the present depot-museum. The store might well have been designated a forerunner of our present one-stop shopping centers since it carried a good supply of general merchandise, hardware, tools, and Birdsell wagons along with a variety of assorted fruits and vegetables. It also had a restaurant that featured "Tip Top" bread and Morse's Ice Cream, and a meat market specializing in home cured hams & bacon.

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IN MEMORIAM:

Louis J. Schorb, 87, died at Clearwater, Florida, September 13, 1982. He is survived by his wife, Amanda Schorb, and several nieces and nephews. Before he retired to Florida, Mr. Schorb was the owner of Wilson's Posey Gardens in Wilson. He joined the Wilson Historical Society in 1976 and contributed many valuable artifacts to the museum collection. He was a member of the Holy Name Society of Cecelia's R. C. Church at Clearwater, Florida.

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WAYS & MEANS COMMITTEE ACTIVE:

Winnie Fischer, Chrm., reports that over eighty dollars was realized from the society's booth set up at the Schnoor Corners Flea Market on Labor Day.

She also wishes to give advance notice that an election day BAKE SALE will be held at the Town Hall on November 3rd, starting at 10:00 AM. Please keep the date in mind--especially if you plan to furnish baked goods. As in past years, donations from out-of-town members will be gratefully accepted. You may mail your contributions to Millie Croop, treas.

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WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS:

It is a pleasure to welcome the following new members: Ralph Young and Danny Young from Wilson; Ralph and Naomi Beutel Tompkins, Vero Beach, Fla.; and Earl, Jr. and Martha Brydges, Lewiston; also junior members, Diane Young, Courtney Brydges, Jason Brydges, Kristen Brydges, and Earl W. Brydges, III.

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THE MAILBAG:

Mary Cornell, Lancaster, Cal., writes that temperatures were so hot this summer on the high desert that water from the cold water tap was nearly as hot as water drawn from the hot water tap.....Commander Tommy Upton, Norfolk, Va., reports that he and his wife, Karen, along with children Dana and Betheny, had a real good time when they visited the museum in July.

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TRUSTEE GETS RECOGNITION:

Karl Wright has received a Certificate of Recognition from the N.Y.S. Agriculture Dept. which identifies him as a Nominee for the New York Century Farm Award. Karl's 1838 farm has had "continual family ownership and operation".for over 100 years and has demonstrated the "principles of soundness and vitality which are the foundations of N.Y. States agricultural greatness." As far as may be determined, the only other residence in the town of Wilson that meets these qualifications is the Lawrence Pease farm on the Wilson-Burt Road.

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RECENT ACQUISITIONS:

Ida Erion, beloved centenarian member of the society, has presented two walking stick canes to the museum. The canes were owned by Richard Patterson and given to Seymour Erion by him.

Janet Sporleder: Round Linen Cloth with wide band of lace (ca. 1900); Child's shoes, and wood Nesting Egg.

R. J. Dirling of Newfane: Advertising Blotter for Wilson Nurseries, Thomas Marks & Co.

Thelma Patterson, Ransomville: Picture of Dist #3 Schoolhouse taken in 1915.

Betty Stimson: 1949-50 Telephone Book.

Ralph and Naomi Tompkins, Verona Beach, Fla.: Sound Mirror-Magnetic Recorder with Microphone and acoustic devices. (ca. 1940)

Norma Ward: Dressmaking Dummy.

Marian Robinson, Lockport: Wilson High School "Wise Owl".

Merle Wiltse: 1935 Girl Scout Program; tie clasp; 1929 Palmer Method Lesson Book; 1935 Luray Cavern Folio Booklet with interesting facts about Presidents from Washington to Herbert Hoover; Negatives of the Stone family; and 1933 Child's game sheet.

Donated at Flea Market, Donor unknown: Razor Blade Sharpener and old Monkey Wrench.

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MUSEUM GREETERS FOR OCTOBER:

Marietta Goodman, Chrm., has announced that hostesses for the coming month will be as follows: Oct. 3rd, Betty Stimson and Nancy Berryman; Oct. 10th, Alice and Arthur Davonport; Oct. 17th, Kaline, Kimberly, and Howard Hunter; Oct. 24th, Emma Louand Dick Reppentine; and Oct. 31st, Ernestine and Stuart Walpole. (Stop by on the 31st and wish Stuart a Happy Birthday.)

Now, with longer nights and colder days approaching, all hostesses should be sure to read the instructions on the visitor's desk and make an extra effort to insure that all lights are turned off, heat turned down, and doors locked when last person leaves premises.

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MUSEUM EXHIBITS:

A very interesting collection of old clocks and timepieces are on display through October, thanks to the museum committee and Norm and Martha MacAskill who arranged it.

The November-December exhibit will be built around "Games and Toys", and members are asked to begin getting them together now so they will be available to the museum committee when they meet November 1st at 10:00 AM. The game and toy display will be dismantled on January 3rd, and no monthly exhibits will be planned for the months of January, February, and March when the museum will be closed to Sunday afternoon visitors.

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SIGN ON BUILDING IN YORK, PA: The man who knows everything has a lot to learn.

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EARLY DAYS REMEMBERED:

Ed Johnson has lived in Wilson for about eighty five years and recalls that there have been a lot of changes in his lifetime. In his younger days there were no paved roads and the ones they had "were usually a mess", but he believes the trees and buildings were much prettier then than they are today.

He was raised on Lake Street near the railroad depot and used to play around the John Miller Cooperage. He attended the old red brick Union School that stood where the Town Hall is now, and received his religious training in the beautiful 1st Baptist frame church which later burned and was replaced by the present building.

The church fire was one of many and it was believed that all of them were set. In those early days the fire apparatus consisted of a push-cart and the fires had to be fought by "bucket brigades". Needless to say, more structures were lost than saved. Ed was about 14 yrs. old when the Sutherland Hotel burned down, and it was located where Hibbard's Custard Stand is. Another spectacular blaze was the Tower House Hotel which was on the site of the present St. Faul's Lutheran Church.

Ed remembers that the Lake Island Park was always crowded, especially on the days when the Pioneer and Farmers Picnics were held. He enjoyed watching the ball games and prowling around the old Pavilion, and also attended many of the performances in the Albright Opera House. One show that he especially liked was when a Glass Blower came to town.

Ed worked at many things during his lifetime, and as a youngster learned the Cooper trade. In later years he was well known for his hand-dug wells and even dabbled in the worm business. He believes that hand dug wells were much better than drilled wells. The ones he dug were about 4' in diameter and 12' or more in depth. He would generally dig down until water started to run into the hole and would stop digging when the flow became too great. He would generally engage a Dowser to help him find the best spot to dig. A Dowser uses a forked branch which will twist down at a spot where a good flow of water may be expected. Few persons have the capability to find water in this manner. Ed never had a well cave in on him, but admits that he had several "close squeaks". Many early wells were lined with rocks--he used 4' tile on his.

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CEMETERY MARKER DEDICATED:

It is a sad indication of the times that, either through neglect or abandonment, many of the former burial grounds in Niagara County have disappeared. The site of one, however, will be remembered, thanks to the devoted perseverance of the late Dorothy Thilk.

Around the turn of the century, the Randall Rd. Cemetery was abandoned and allowed to grow over with weeds and brush. To eliminate the apparent eyesore, the adjoining property owner obtained permission to lay the stones flat and cover them over. Thus, for many years, its location was known to very few people.

Mrs. Thilk was determined that the pioneers that were buried there would not be forgotten, so she enlisted the aid of the Town of Wilson, the Wilson Historical Society, and Bill and Ethel Strassburg, and managed to make positive identification of eight of the persons interred there. It was impossible to locate any records of the 12 or 14 persons believed buried there.

Some of the first internments were made as early as 1834 and included Asa Randall after whom the road was named, his wife Mary Willson Randall, and son, Asa Randall. Other stones were located for Marion Parker, George Parker, Ermina Parker, Miron Morton, and Timothy Bachelder. Names and dates were placed on a marker, and on Monday evening, Sept. 20th, Jan Sporleder, Chrm. of the Historical Sites Committee, conducted a dedication service.

It may be noted that in addition to the Randall Rd Cemetery Site, ten other markers have been placed since 1972 at historic sites throughout the town. These include the "Billy Sherman" gravesite; the "Wilson Landing" site; "Port of Entry" by the boathouse; "Reuben Wilson Home" on Young St; "Collegiate Institute" by Town Hall; "Tabor Bridge" on Lake St; "Wright Homestead" on Daniel's Rd; "Log Cabin" on Chestnut Rd; "Lawrence Pease" farm on Wilson-Burt Rd; and the "Hojack Park" marker by the depot.

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QUILT TO BE UNVEILED:

The Niagara County Historical Society "Diamond Jubilee Quilt" will be unveiled at the annual dinner meeting of the society which will be held at the Farm and Home Center, Friday evening, October 22nd. Reservations for the dinner will be required.

Each historical society in the county will be identified on the quilt by a 14" square submitted by them. Wilson's contribution was designed by Carol C. Smith of Pekin, appliqued by Joe Higgins, and sewn by Florence Schultz. Betty Stimson and Florence Schultz joined with ladies from other societies to do the quilting. It is reported to be exceptionally beautiful.

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OCTOBER PROGRAM:

Russell Hurlburt, former owner of the Hurlburt Canning Co., will be guest speaker at the October meeting and the subject of his talk will be, "What fun we had when we were young".

Ruth Phillips, Chrm. of the Refreshment Comm., reports that refreshments will be served after the meeting by Marion Campbell, Chrm., "Chuck" Campbell, Mary Clark, and Helen French.

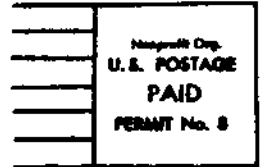
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DATES TO REMEMBER:

- October 6th: The Wilson Branch of Inter-Community Hospital at Newfane will hold their annual card party at the museum, Wed. evening, at 7:00 PM. There will be door prizes and refreshments. Donations, \$1.25
- October 8th: The Daughters of the American Revolution will hold a luncheon meeting at the museum, Friday, at 12:30 PM.
- October 13th: There will be a meeting of the officers, trustees, and committee chairmen Wednesday evening, at 8:00 PM.
- October 18th: The regular monthly meeting of the society will convene at the museum, Monday evening, at 7:30 PM. Russell Hurlburt will be guest speaker.

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WHEN YOUNG PEOPLE get married, they hope their parents will be good supports about it.



Wilson Historical Society
WILSON, NEW YORK 14172

NEWSLETTER

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

NOVEMBER 1982 Vol. 11 No. 10
(Coleman Press)

INTEREST IN GREENWOOD REVIVED:

The upkeep of Greenwood Cemetery got a boost recently when Harold Mosher, town supervisor, proposed that a volunteer Cemetery Advisory Board be appointed to work with the town board on matters related to the maintenance of the cemetery. The committee as stands will consist of Jean Figura, Jane Figura, Molly Martin, Ronald Martin, Ruth Wilson, Barbara Mosher or others who they may designate.

The first reference to any burial site in Wilson is mentioned in the "Illustrated History of Niagara County" which states, "The first depository for the dead near the village was made in 1812 on the east end of the peninsula northwest of the village." Other early pioneers were buried in a public cemetery at the point of the old Battery Hill on West Young street just south east of 12 Mile Creek. This cemetery was abandoned in 1846 when a two acre plot was set aside on the Nathaniel Davis farm across the road from the present depot-museum. In 1872, when grading work was started for the Lake Ontario Shore railroad, the route was surveyed to pass through the cemetery, so Eldert Dox, David Barnum, and Harvey Johnson were appointed Commissioners for Removal, and all persons interred were removed to Greenwood. A scrapbook donated by Gertrude Loomis and Russel Sage indicate that the Greenwood Cemetery came into existence October 28, 1850, and we quote: "At a meeting of the citizens of the Town of Wilson in the lower hall of the Seminary, Nathaniel Davis was called to the chair and A. Ransom was chosen secretary. A motion was made by H. B. Tabor accepting the offer of Luther Wilson to the citizens of the Town of Wilson of a certain parcel of land by forming ourselves into an association, to be called the Wilson Cemtery Association." The motion was carried and nine trustees were elected by ballot, Luther Wilson, Robert McChesney, Simon Sheldon, Morgan Johnson, Curtis Pettit, John Onderdonk, Nathaniel Davis, Hiram B. Tabor, and Enoch Pease. It was voted to hold meetings each year on the 4th Monday of October.

On December 11, 1855, the trustees appointed Alexander Pettit, Luther Wilson, and Luman Case to lay out the alley ways, clear some of the trees from the grounds, and erect a hearse house. Three years later on December 20, 1858, the trustees drew up a subscription to be circulated among the different churches for the purpose of raising money to erect a hearse house and acquire a suitable hearse. A total of \$382.25 was collected with 203 persons making donations ranging from 50¢ to five dollars. The hearse house was erected on the property line by the pedestrian gate, and the hearse could be hired by anyone who could provide a team of horses. Those who had donated toward its purchase could use it free, otherwise there was a charge of two dollars. The entire cemetery was enclosed with a white board fence, and an arch over the main entrance had the name Greenwood on it. There were two wooden gates that were opened only for funerals or holidays, and pedestrians walked through a double gate topped by a gable type arch with three spires.

The trustees kept firm control over the cemetery--sometimes to the extreme. For instance, on March 26, 1860, a rather remarkable motion was passed that required "All lots occupied and not paid for be cleared of the bodies buried on said lots unless lots be paid for by the first of October next."

Several committees were appointed to paint and repair fences and hearse house, trim trees and take charge of paths, driveways, and tools. When lots were sold an additional charge was made for a perpetual care fund which was used to pay the sextons \$2.00 a day. At one time Henry Hutchings and William Day dug the graves and mowed the entire cemetery with two manually operated lawnmowers; and mowed the banks along the hill twice each summer with scythes.

According to an item in the "Wilson Star" on January 25, 1952, the cemetery was reorganized in 1923. We quote: "In 1923, attempting to make a more workable organization, some residents (having no knowledge of the forgotten corporation), applied for and obtained a certificate of incorporation, July 2, 1923. The cemetery was reorganized at this time and it seemed all was well. Some \$7,000 was put into a trust fund which is still on deposit in a Lockport bank. Unfortunately, this trust fund cannot provide enough interest to maintain the graves." By the 1950's care of the cemetery had become very difficult and at the general election of 1957 residents voted to place the cemetery under the town's care.

The recent decision to appoint an Advisory Board may be a step in the right direction because it will help focus attention on problems related to the maintenance of the cemetery. Now Greenwood Cemetery may once again resume its place in the community as a suitable burial ground for the men and women who built the town, as well as for those who will join them.

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BON MOT:

It ain't the things you don't know what gets you into trouble; it's the things you know for sure what ain't so. ---Old Negro saying.

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BAKE SALE ON ELECTION DAY:
 The society's annual Bake Sale will be held at the Town Hall, Tuesday, November 2nd, starting at 10:00AM. Please try to get your culinary "goodies" to the hall by 9:30 AM, and it would help if you would price the items you furnish. For "pick-up", please notify Winnie Fischer, Chrm., either on Monday or before. (751-6552) Your cooperation appreciated.

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SAILS VERSUS STEAM:
 Marietta McClellan Goodman's grandfather, Samuel McClellan, came from Scotland to America in the early 1800's by sailing vessel, and the voyage took seven weeks and three days. When he embarked, his brother, William, bid him good bye at the dock. When Samuel arrived in New York, William was waiting there to greet him--he had taken a steamship.
 The McClellan Road is named after the family, and Marietta's father, Alexander, was born in the old McClellan home, the 1st house east of Beebe Rd. on the north side.
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NEW MEMBERS:
 Welcome George Gasior of Lockport and Lewis K. Brown of Binghamton, our latest new members.
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PERSONALS:
 Mark Wiltse is attending S.U.N.Y. at Cortland and wants to say "Hi" to all his friends. He says college life can be lonely sometimes, but mail from home and the "Newsletter" makes it a little better.....Paul J. Harold, former Brayley Rd. resident, is President of the Pittsylvania Historical Society at Chatham, Va. The society publishes an interesting newsletter named "The Quill Pen".....Mary Weiler likes her new home in Raleigh, N.C., and would enjoy seeing travelers from Wilson. Chris Kelman can give you directions.....Robert and Adrienne Gurski of Pensacola, Fla., are the proud parents of a son, Anthony Edmund, born Sept. 10th.
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BURT'S CABOOSE:
 Now that Burt Jennings has painted the caboose and got the stove hooked up, we wouldn't be surprised to find him cooking up a batch of hobo stew one of these days.
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RECENT ACQUISITIONS:
 Lydia Southard has donated a dress and blouse (ca. 1900), worn for the Wilson Centennial Celebration, also a black crepe dress and slip (1932); 7 old Christmas ornaments; Safari hat; 3 men's dress shirts; 2 collars; 2 black and white bow ties; and a pieced quilt made by her grandmother, Lydia Tower Hamblin.
 Mildred Lonsbery: Picture postcards of Canal Locks; Olcott Beach, East Cut on 12 Mile Creek, and Creekside; also Bartlet print of Canal Locks and miscellaneous newspaper clippings.
 William Eaton, Burt: Water pump (ca.1900) used for construction; Scale for weighing nuts and bolts; and hand pump for pumping water out of trenches.
 Casper Schultz, Ransomville: 1915 Split Bamboo Fishing Pole, spare tips, and case; also tin. case with dry and wet flies, and Spoke Pointer used for making wagon wheels.
 Mabel Wilson: Photographs of Dist. No. 6 schoolhouse, Randall Rd. and Townline Rds. Also 1929 program, "Zanders-Gump" presented by the Wilson Alumni Association.
 Charles Seaman: Framed Fractur (in German) Birth Certificate & Confirmation (1837-1851)
 Anna Mae Nevins: Victorian Piano Scarf.
 Janet Sporleder: White Coverlet (ca. 1900), and ladies straw hat (ca. 1950).
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MUSEUM HOSTESSES FOR NOVEMBER:
 Marietta Goodman, Chrm., has announced that Sunday afternoon greeters in November will be: Nov. 7th, Elwin and Garnet Upton; Nov. 14th, Stuart and Ernestine Walpole; Nov. 21st, Art and Kay Ness; and Nov. 28th, Ron and Judy Zauner.
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NOVEMBER MEETING:
 Our guest speaker will be Mrs. Jane Fiedler of Cambria who will speak on "Brick Kilns and making Bricks". Jane was at a previous meeting and spoke on the seven Sutherland sisters. Refreshments will be served by Marguerite Geiser, Chrm., Jean Hayes, and Helen French.
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DATES FOR YOUR CALENDAR:
 Nov. 1st: Museum Comm. meeting, Mon., 10 AM, at museum. Games and toys needed.
 Nov. 2nd: Bake Sale, Tues., 10 AM, at Town Hall. All Bake Sale items needed.
 Nov. 10th: Officers, Trustees, and Comm. Chrm., Wed., 8 PM, at museum.
 Nov. 15th: Monthly meeting, Mon., 7:30 PM, at museum. Guest speaker, Jane Fiedler.
 Nov. 18th: Niag. Co. Hist. Soc. meeting, Thurs., 8 PM, Niagara St. museum, Lockport. Dr. Argue, Pres. of Wilson society will be quest speaker.
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SEARCH FOR HYMNAL:
 Pearl Spears of Lockport is trying to locate a copy of an old hymnal that was used in the Wilson schools in the 1930's. Morning Chapel was considered to be an important part of the educational process at that time. She recalls that the hymnal was blue and about 7x11 inches with hard back cover. Perhaps a copy could be found for the museum library.
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DID YOU KNOW:
 That Fred Faery, Sr., his son and grandsons, opened the Wilson Baking Company on Young St. in October, 1921, and that it was located next to the Hamilton and Clark Furniture Store. That on March 11, 1921, Arthur Schnoor was on the school honor roll. He was in the 2nd grade and had a 90 average.
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THE BOTTOM LINE: A carpenter is known by his chips.
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VIEWPOINT:

The Wilson Historical Society has been the recipient of many contributions; its programs to preserve history are extensive; and it welcomes the support of everyone who believes that the past is our heritage to be recorded for future generations.

The society has no paid staff and all museum facilities are serviced mostly by volunteers. Business transactions and accounting procedures are all carried out by officers without compensation, and expenses for utilities, maintenance, renovation, and exhibits are paid from membership dues, bake sales, publications, souvenirs, and the annual "Country Fair".

Long range programs are planned which could involve substantial outlays and may require raising additional funds from other sources. We wish to note that our members can be involved in this planning.

The society has received many memorials to departed loved-ones, and 1/4 of our current and late members have insured it a permanent source of income by virtue of their participation as Life Members.

It may be observed that today more and more people are recognizing worthy non-profit organizations in their wills by making specific dollar or property bequests to them. We mention these options to remind our members and friends that the future expansion and preservation of the society can be fulfilled by your thoughtful and generous consideration. (Submitted by Karl S. Wright, trustee)

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THIRD GRADERS VISIT MUSEUM:

About 80 pupils from the third grades at Thomas Marks Elementary School visited the museum in late October accompanied by their teachers, Mrs. Mary Budde, Mrs. Larry Lash, and Mr. Michael Hauser. They were greeted by Burt and Lois Jennings and Don and Millie Croop who answered questions and pointed out special exhibits for the childrens' enjoyment. The young people later wrote thank you notes in which they listed some of the things that impressed them.

A newly acquired "Great Horned Owl" got the most attention and one student, Donny Johnson, noted that "It was the biggest owl I've ever seen." The Clock Display rated as the next biggest attraction with the Cannon Balls from Cannon Ball Hill figuring a close third. Other items that caught the youngsters eyes were Mike Radigans Railroad Bicycle; Civil War swords; old school desks; Reuben Wilson's picture; and the old time tools.

The society encourages local groups to visit the museum and share in the heritage of the village and town. Arrangements may be made by calling 751-9783 or 751-9827.

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BAKE SALE:

Winnie Fischer, Chrm. of the Ways & Means Comm., reports a splendid response to the recent Bake Sale which cleared about \$180 dollars. She wishes to thank everyone who furnished, also bake sale helpers, Lois Barnum, Shelley Andrews, Kay Ness, Ruth Phillips, Christine Goodman, Millie Croop, and Norm and Martha MacAskill. A special word of thanks to Joe and Bessie Vana of Youngstown, and Art and Eva Zortman of Vancouver who mailed in cash contributions.

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RARE BIRD:

The Great Horned Owl that was found near Chestnut Road by Tony LaRock and Eugene Empson, has been put on display in the Wilson Museum. The bird, once common in North America, is now a protected species and may only be kept in museums or schools providing a proper permit is first obtained from the Federal Fish and Wildlife Agency. Gail Walder obtained such a permit and had the owl mounted by a local taxidermist. It is now on loan from the Federal Agency and will allow youngsters as well as adults to get a close hand look at one of nature's largest owls that are generally heard more than they are seen.

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NEW LIFE MEMBERS:

Burt and Lois Jennings have been presented with Life Memberships in the Wilson Historical Society in recognition of their many years of devoted and dedicated service in promoting the attractive appearance of the museum.

Burt is a member of the Board of Trustees and has given countless hours of his time in painting, repairing, and helping out in everyway possible; and we can especially thank him for making the old railroad caboose such an attractive exhibit.

Lois, Museum Chairman, has devoted much of her time to improving the general appearance of the museum, and visitors have been deeply impressed by the variety of monthly exhibits which are a credit to her imagination and expertise. In addition, as Chairman of the Acquisitions Committee, she has kept an accurate record of all donations and provided adequate storage for those not on display. The good impression that the museum makes on the general public is most certainly due to her efforts, and the society is very fortunate to have a "curator" of her caliber who provides her services voluntarily.

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MUSEUM GREETERS FOR DECEMBER:

Dec. 5th, William and Maxine Jones; Dec. 12th, Esther and Harold Albright; Dec 19th, Floyd and Hazel Salisbury; and Dec. 26th, John and Jane Demmin.

The museum will be closed to Sunday afternoon visitors during the months of January, February, and March, and will re-open on Easter Sunday, April 3, 1983. Marietta Goodman, Chrm., wishes to thank all members who have served so willingly as greeters in the past.

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THEY'LL DO IT AGAIN:

Roy Cornell, Pres. of the Niagara County Historical Society, has announced that the annual dinner was a success, and it is planned to invite all county historical groups to participate again next year. With this in mind, the Farm and Home Center has already been reserved, and the event will be held October 21, 1983.

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BON MOT:

Just about the time you think you can make both ends meet; Somebody moves the ends.

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