

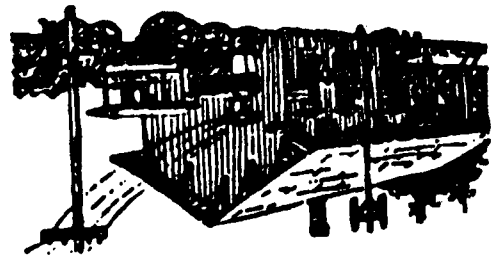
January 1997 through December 1999

WILSON HISTORY

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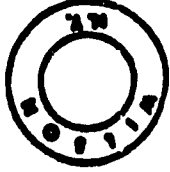
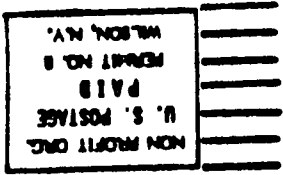
Hazel Benzino 4-97
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(Coleman Printing)
January 1997 VOL. 26 NO. 1

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor
NEWSLETTER

WILSON HISTORICAL SOCIETY
WILSON, NEW YORK 14172-9763



Jan 1997

GROWTH OF THE CAR MUSEUM:

The Wilson Historical Society, which was organized in 1972, received its early start and momentum because of the interest and support of its first President, the late Dr. John Argue of Wilson.

In addition to his fascination with history, the doctor was an avid collector of antique, classic, and sportscars and, not too widely known, passed his test to be a motor car racing driver in May, 1974, at Mossburg, Ontario, Canada.

When he turned the 1912 Depot over to the Wilson Historical Society in 1972, several of his cars, trucks, and spare parts were stored there. Recognizing the society's need for more space, he cleaned out the freight room so the society could start renovating it into a meeting room and exhibit area.

In 1977, Dr. Argue gave the 1904 "Covert" which he had just acquired from the Ford Museum at Dearborn, Michigan, over to the museum. This car had special meaning to the doctor as it had been built in his boyhood town of Lockport, NY.

The "Covert" Runabout automobile was manufactured from 1904-07 by Byron F. Covert at his Richmond Avenue Plant in Lockport, and it was the first chainless car built in America. It had a De Deon-type, one cylinder gasoline engine with combination air and water cooling. It was able to develop 6½ h.p.

While Mr. Covert was making his car in Lockport, the Niagara Automobile was also being built in Wilson by the Wilson Auto Manufacturing Company. Stanley Dwight was the owner and manager, and George Brooks and George and Joe Whiteside built the bodies and made the gears and clutches for the rear axles. The "Niagara" sold for \$850--about \$200 more than Covert Chainless.

The "Covert" is unique in that it is probably the last known car of its kind in the United States and possibly the world. It was once owned by the noted opera singer, James Melton, and was later exhibited at the Ford Museum from 1939 until 1977.

The car wasn't exactly in mint condition when Dr. Argue acquired it since the two rear fenders were gone, the lamps were missing, and a Ford steering wheel had been substituted in place of the original. The tires were also in need of replacing. Under the new "Adopt-a-Car" plan, Don Burrows plans to prefabricate and replace the rear fenders on "his" car.

After the "Covert" was acquired, it was apparent that more cars would be donated, so plans were developed to erect a new cement block building to put them in. Since carrying insurance is pretty expensive, it was felt that a new fireproof building would negate the need to insure.

In October, 1978, recommendations of the Planning Board were approved, and a 40x60 concrete building with steel roof was started. Ed Hastings supervised the project and, thanks to him, the building was erected at a cost far less than projected. He not only arranged to get building materials at reduced cost, but also donated the time he spent constructing it.

The new facility was quickly filled to capacity, and there was no longer any doubt but what the antique cars would soon become one of the museum's main attractions.

It now seemed reasonable that if we were to continue accepting old cars, consideration of a new, larger building must be explored. In addition to the cars donated by Dr. Argue, cars were also given to the museum by Mrs. James Oldham; Nancy Kent; George Linnabery; Norman Thilk; Howard Klaiber; Harry Blanchette; Leo Klees; Harold Argue; Lynette Eldridge; Beatrice Mensch; Jean Argue; and Floyd Clark.

It was decided to go ahead with a building and with the help from about 3 dozen volunteers, funds raised by the society, and grants from the state and town of Wilson, ground was again broken for a new, larger block building just north of the first one.

Unfortunately, Dr. Argue did not live to see the new building completed. He passed away on September 29, 1986, and was sadly missed when the new building was dedicated in his memory, October 11, 1987.

Today, the Dr. John F. Argue Memorial Building stands as a reminder of all he did to help build a remarkable museum complex in the town of Wilson.

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TALENTED MUSICIANS:

Kyle Mittlefehldt and Robert Hull, junior members, were among several Wilson students selected to perform in this year's All State Musical Festival at Fredonia State University.

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BON MOT: A small town is a place where the only time you have to stand in line is when you shake hands with the Minister after Church.

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SCHOOLHOUSE PROJECT:

Some progress has been made in the schoolhouse project, The roof has been re-shingled by Mike White Roofing, doors and windows are shut, and the old cast iron stove from the waiting room has been welded by Don Burrows. With the help of Darrell Smith, they took the stove to Ken Wendt's in Sanborn who installed a propane burner in it. This will make it possible to heat the building this winter so that inside repairs or painting may be done.

With the exception of the Randall Road Schoolhouse, most of the rural schools were sold and built into homes. The Randall Road school, however, was used as a Community Centre for many years and, when it was abandoned several years ago, a group of interested citizens decided to form a committee and see if the building could be moved to the museum grounds and preserved for posterity.

Arrangements were made for the Town of Wilson to accept the schoolhouse from the Wilson Central Schooldistrict, then the committee raised funds to move it. Foremost among these was \$12,500 grant from the State through the offices of Assemblyman Joseph Pillittere.

The Historical Society provided the funds necessary to build a foundation and, in the fall of 1996, the schoolhouse was moved to its new home on the museum grounds.

Some of the schoolhouse supporters who gave cash gifts for its renovation, not yet reported, were Pfeiffer's Foods Co, Mr. and Mrs. Harry Figura, Leah Bigalow, J. Paul Harold, Mr. and Mrs. John C. Moore, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Salisbury, Lydia Southard, Mrs. James Schotz, (in memory of Winnie Fischer) the Tri-town Clan 4-H Club, and the Wilson Teachers Association.

Furbishing donated include a desk from Dorothy Linnabery in memory of former teacher, Hazel Salisbury; One desk from the estate of Hazel Salisbury; One desk from Pricilla Baker; 34 State American Flag from Janet Sporleder in memory of Andrea Sporleder; Schoolbooks from the Salisbury Estate; and Fund Raisers from the Brady family.

The Community Committee, chaired by Jean Figura, is commended for the excellent work they have done in bringing the schoolhouse to the museum grounds. A Historical Society Schoolhouse Comm., chaired by Wanda Burrows, will work with Jean to complete the project.

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RECENT ACQUISITIONS:

From Fund Raisers, Schoolhouse Committee: Schoolhouse Clock (ca.1860); Map Case containing Five Maps; World Globe and Stand, (ca. 1920)

Estate of Ruth Evans: Memorial Card for Levi Sweet who died May 2, 1891. Lists Clergyman, Bearers, and Jerome Cooper, Undertaker. Given by Walter Evans.

Argue Estate, Anne Faery: 18 Photos of 1986 Fair at Museum; Photo of 1979 "Quilters"; Two photos of 4th grade visitors from Thomas Marks School.

Don Croop: Photos of Thomas Marks 2nd graders visit to Museum in 1996; 12 photos of arrival and placement of Randall Rd. Schoolhouse; 2 photos of new Storage Building.

Marilyn Allgeier: Photos of Tugwell Cottage Two photos of Sunset Island; and 1957 Photo of members of Wilson Chapter #268-OES.

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FROM THE MAILBAG:

Esther Landy Leppich notes that her mother, Frances Marks Landy, was born in 1900 at Geneva, NY, and her brother, Edward Marks, was born in 1903.

Her father, Roy Landy, owned a fruit farm at 425 Lake Street, and was a village trustee and member of the School Board for many years. Her grandfather, Thomas Marks, Sr., operated the Marks Nursery on Maple Road.

She writes that she enjoys receiving the Newsletter, and was pleased to learn that her sister, Harriet Nolan, was the first member to "Adopt-a-Car" in the Dr. John Argue Building.

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ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

Art Schnoor, Chairman of the Nominating Committee, is grateful that most of the society's officers are willing to serve again in 1997. Nominations were presented by him at the November meeting, and nominees were elected to office at the December 16th meeting as follows:

Donald Burrows, President; Gary Fitch, Vice-President; Norman MacAskill, 2nd Vice-President; Richard Schmidle, Recording Secretary; Wanda Burrows, Corresponding Secretary; and James Waldron, Treasurer.

Three trustees were re-elected to serve until December 31, 1999; Anne Faery, Art Schnoor, and Darrell Smith.

Area Chairmen elected were: Lois Jennings, Acquisitions and Memorials; Celeste Crawford, Library and Genealogical; Virginia Strablow, Sunday Hostesses; Janet Sporleder, Historical Sites; Norrie Desso, Refreshments; Miles Linnabery, Programs; Judy King, Constitution and By-Laws; Don Croop, Publications; Sally Smith, Ways & Means; and Anne A Faery, Membership.

Officers appointed by the Board of Directors will be approved at the January Board Meeting.

Art Schnoor has suggested that next year any officer who feels he or she can not hold office for the following year, should please notify the Nominating Comm. Chrm., 3 months before their term of office expires.

* * * * *

CEMETERY WREATHS:

The Cemetery Advisory Board has again provided Memorial Wreaths for the Greenwood Cemetery. The wreaths, which cost \$25 each, are placed by the graves of loved ones in early December, and removed in the Spring. The wreaths, with their pretty red bows, brighten up the cemetery during the drab winter months.

* * * * *

GREAT PERFORMANCE:

Sandy Stimson, who performed beautifully on the oboe at a recent Wilson Free Library musical at the Wilson Museum, also played with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra several times during the month of December.

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SOUNDINGS: There's a lot to be said about patience. In time, even an egg will walk.

* * * * *

NEW LIFE MEMBERS:

Ellsworth McKelvey joined the Life Membership Class of the Wilson Historical Society in November, 1966. He was born September 23, 1916, at Niagara Falls, NY, the son of Elzie C and Nellie G. McKelvey.

He received his education at the Niagara Falls High School and the Bowman Technical School at Lancaster, Pa. He married Bess A. McKelvey, and they had two children, Joanne L. and Eric S. McKelvey. Bess passed away August 31, 1995.

Ellsworth attends the Grace Lutheran Church of Niagara Falls, and during World War II, served with the 299 Engineers BN of the U.S. Army.

Prior to his wife's death, he was in charge of the 1903 Caboose; built shelving in the museum's library; and cleaned and painted the 2-wheel Hose Cart in the "Carriage Room".

Ellsworth says that he would like to become active again in the "care and repair" activities at the museum.

* * * * *

We also welcome Elsie Gustin of Bradenton, Fl., who has become a Life Member of the Wilson Society through the courtesy of Lee Bickford of Niagara Falls.

Elsie was born in Germany on May 22, 1923, the daughter of Herman and Clara Lange. She was 6½ years old when she moved to Wilson with her parents.

She graduated from Wilson Central High School in 1941, and later married Mr. Gustin. There were no children, and he passed away about 3½ years ago.

Her father, Herman Lange, served with the German Army during World War I, and he passed away in 1972. Her mother, Clara is in a Nursing Home, and celebrated her 100th Birthday on December 18, 1996.

Elsie enjoys golfing at the Rolling Green Golf Club in Bradenton.

* * * * *

POLITICS AS USUAL:

The last election suggests that political candidates are always "open season" to their political opponents. Reminds us of a story we read about Rex Tugwell, who grew up in Wilson and later served on Pres. Roosevelt's Cabinet during the days of the "New Deal".

Rex was Assistant Secretary of Agriculture, and in a speech before the National Democratic Womens Club was reported to have said, "One of the oldest and quietest roads to contentment lies through the conventional trinity of "Wine, Women, and Song." That remark, plus the statement that, "American women should follow the example of Mrs. Roosevelt and serve lite wines in their homes." were read to the Rose City Park Methodist-Episcopal Church, and resulted in the congregation demanding that if the statements were true, Tugwell should be asked to resign.

Tugwell responded that he merely used the statements in a plea for temperance--asking women to use their influence to draw the country away from strong liquors, and use instead lite wines or beer.

* * * * *

ADOPT-A-CAR UPDATE:

Dan and Judy King will adopt the 1923 Chevrolet 1 Ton truck and the 1919 Ford T.T. truck. The 1919 Ford Truck was originally restored by Les Myers, and the 1923 Chevrolet truck was the last one built in that period with a four cylinder engine.

Wally and Chris Goodman have adopted the 1959 Convertible, and this beautiful car was donated to the museum by Mrs. James Oldham of Lockport.

The late Bob Rose was the first Antique Car Chairman from 1980 through 1985, and the late George Linnabery was Chairman from 1986 through 1987. Jim Pisello was chairman during 1988 and 1989, and Wally Goodman and Clark Stimson were co-chairmen from 1990 through 1996

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WORKERS NEEDED:

All standing committees need volunteers--your choice. Also needed is someone to take over the photograph albums and get them up to date. There are also areas to be repainted both inside and outside the museum buildings and, don't forget, keep an eye on the old schoolhouse--you may also be able to help out there. The museum will be as good as you make it.

* * * * *

REMEMBER THE YEAR 1931?

That was the year the "Star Spangled Banner" was selected over "America the Beautiful" as our National Anthem. It was also when "Scarface" Capone went to jail for income tax evasion.

The Empire State Building was completed to a height of 1,250 feet, and we had a chance to go up in what was then the world's tallest building. We took the "Express" elevator down and recall that our feet seemed to "hover" above the elevator floor until we reached ground level.

The "Great Depression" caused payrolls to drop about 40%, and secretaries were lucky if they earned 25¢ an Hour.

And, if you think modern dances are crazy, how about the "Shag", the "Lindy Hop", the "Susie Q", or the "Jitterbug"---they were all popular in 1931.

* * * * *

NEW MEMBERS:

We welcome William and Linda Richards of Plano, TX, (courtesy of Joyce Richards of Wilson); also new Junior Member, Bill Banagis of Wilson. Building fund contributions received from Gail and Tom Jeacock, Canada, also Janetta Fredericks, Gerry & Bernice Brown, and Lester Clark.

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MEETINGS:

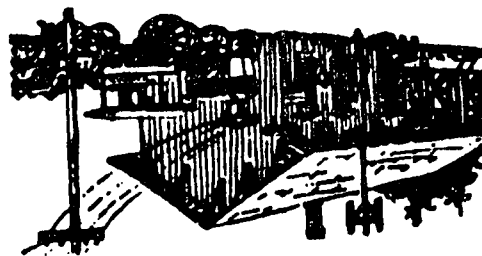
The Board of Directors will meet at the museum, Jan. 8th, 7:30 PM. Regular Meeting will be at the museum, Jan. 20th, 7:30 PM. Program will be announced.

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LAST WORD:

Recall it as often as you wish...a happy memory never wears out.

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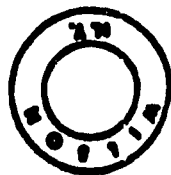
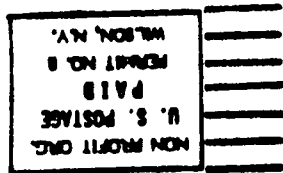
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February 1997 Vol. 26 No. 2

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

NEWSLETTER

Wilson Historical Society
Wilson, New York 14172-9763



Feb. 1997

EARLY DAYS AT "SUNSET ISLAND":

In 1908, the Wilson mainland west of the Boathouse was separated from Lake Ontario by Twelve Mile Creek and the peninsula known as "Sunset Island." At that time, the peninsula extended west from the mouth of the creek to the Foote Farm, (Roosevelt Beach area) Boaters or ice skaters could row or skate up the creek past Plumb's Bridge (Martins) and Quiett's Bridge (Moot's) to Bullhead Point and beyond.

According to the late Fay Campbell, the creek broke through the peninsula near Foote's farm in 1912, and left a small strip of land which was called "Crowie's Island" There were some trees on it, and Fay helped Crowie saw them down the following winter.

In the Spring, two more narrow strips of land on the peninsula washed into the lake, and the creek west of "Sunset Island" became part of Lake Ontario. "Sunset Island", however, was still a peninsula because it was joined to the mainland by a sandbar which closed off the area where the creek once joined the Wilson harbor or Bay.

It is believed that in the early 1800's the Island was a hunting ground for the Neuter and Tuscarora Indians, and this theory is based on the fact that hundreds of arrow heads were found there. Reference was also made to an old burial ground at the eastern end of the Island. The late Bess Crawford, who spent most of her life on the Island, wrote that there was no record of the persons buried there, but the burial site's location was well established.

Residential development of the Island started when George Moule bought the central and east portions, and cleared off many of the huge white oaks that were on it. In 1888, he engaged E.V.W. Dox of Wilson to survey the central section into 40' lots on both the lake and creek sides of the Island. He named it "Maple Grove Park", and built a cottage along the creek. His nephew, Miles Vosburg, and his new bride lived in it thus becoming the first permanent residents.

In 1899, "Jake" Miller of Pittsburg bought two lots from his friend, Moule, and from that day on, development of the Island became an obsession with him. He gradually took over Maple Grove Park by purchasing lot after lot which he then re-sold to others. In order to keep "his" Island the way he wanted it, however, he placed restrictions on purchasers, and old property deeds show that lot owners were prohibited from selling liquor, or raising pigs or chickens.

Miller retired from his electrical business in Pittsburg in 1905, and moved to Wilson permanently. He immediately set about improving the Island by installing acetylene gas, and building a power plant to provide residents with electricity. Later he erected a water tower and pumping station so water could be piped into each cottage.

Improvements also included an octagon shaped dance hall where week end dances were held, and a "Park Theater" where movies were shown on Saturday nights. Other attractions were a bowling alley, pool room, baseball field, and tennis courts.

His biggest venture was a new hotel which he later sold to a Mr. Walters, who resold it to William Wright of Pittsburg. Wright named it the Pittsburg Hotel, and he operated it successfully until 1913 when it burned to the ground in a spectacular fire. It was never rebuilt.

When the Millers died, the Island's residents formed their own governing body which was named "The Sunset Beach Colony, Inc." A womens auxiliary was also formed to arrange for dances, or other entertainment.

A local musical group from Wilson played for some of the early dances, and the musicians were Clare Coe, Sax; Stanley Giles, Trumpet; "Putty" Johnson, Drums; Jennie Meril, Pianor; and Harold Albright, Banjo.

From 1930 through 1934, another musical group played at the Island under the direction of Marjorie (Crossman) Hurlburt. Members of that group were, Larry Pease, Sax; Harry Hamblin, Trumpet; Ron Hamblin, Piano; "Willie" Rockwood, Drums; Richard Loomis, Sax; and Pete Burmaster, Bass.

The band called themselves the "Indigoers", and their theme song was a hit of the times, "Mood Indigo".

Today, although much of the Island's north shore has eroded into the lake, it still remains a protective buffer between Lake Ontario and the Wilson mainland.

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CONTRIBUTIONS:

Contributions to the Building Funds have been received recently from Ted and Melva Bull; John and Barbara (Gale) Cowan; Joe and Marguerite Geiser; W. R. Reese; Garry Pettit, and Robert and Althea Eastman,

* * * * *

SOUNDINGS:

Marriage is a good thing. If it weren't for marriage, husbands and wives would have to quarrel with strangers.

1977 QUILT READY;

Betty Stimson has announced that the quilt for the 1997 Memorial Day Fair on May 26th, will be a "Carolina Lily".

Other prizes to be drawn that day will include an Afghan, Woodcarving, Wilson Sketchbook, and Wilson Historical Society Recipe Book.

All members of the society should receive a book of tickets enclosed with this letter and, since the quilt-drawing is a very important part of the society's fund-raising efforts, it is sincerely hoped that you will support this effort as you have in the past.

Please return your ticket stubs and donations to Betty Stimson, Box 162, Wilson, NY, 14172.

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COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES:

The Tabor Bridge and Wilson Landing historical markers have been freshly painted, thanks to Janet Sporleder, Chrm. of the Historical Sites Committee. The society is also grateful to the town of Wilson's Highway Department who remove and replace the signs when necessary.

The Randall Road Schoolhouse bell and frame have been welded by Don Burrows who said the bell must have been rung a lot because the "clapper", which was once round, is now flattened on both sides where it came in contact with the bell.

Sally Smith, Chrm. of the Ways & Means Comm., with an assist from Sara Berry, sorted out and re-arranged booklets, t-shirts, and other souvenirs in the museum.

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FROM THE MAILBAG:

In past years, youngsters from both the United States and Canada have occasionally made inquiries about the Wilson Museum, but it was quite a surprise when one was received from Argentina, South America.

The letter was written in English by Wilson Ramon Lopez, an eleven year old boy living in the small town of Ascension, Argentina.

He noted that he "loved cars--especially the old ones, and requested information, photos, or anything else that might be useful for a school research project."

Since the Wilson Historical Society tries to "aim to please", we sent young Lopez some of the items he wanted. We hope they help him get an "A" on his research project.

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SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT:

In the Oct. Newsletter we were in error on the growth and location of the Marks Nursery. Mr. Marks brought it to our attention and we are glad to set the record straight because we, like Tom, believe that the recording of history should be accurate.

Thomas Marks arrived in Wilson in 1910, and purchased part of the Arthur Pease farm on Maple Road. He and his wife had two children, Francis and Edward, and the family lived on Lake Street during negotiations and building of their house on Maple Road.

When Thomas Marks daughter, Francis, married Roy Landy, he helped them obtain a farm on Lake Street known as the "Tugwell Place" which they farmed for many years. The farm is now owned by the Mawhineys.

Edward worked with his father, Thomas, on the Maple Road fruit farm and nursery, and when young Thomas E. became old enough, he also helped out and went to market with his grandfather.

When Thomas E. was able to get his driver's license, he took over the marketing of fruit and would start out 3 or 4 days a week at 3a.m. and drive to the large Farmers Market at Clinton & Bailey in Buffalo where he sold the produce from the farm.

In 1952, Thomas E. Marks purchased land on the Lake Road, Route 18, (where the nursery buildings now stand) from Walter and Jane Moxham, parents of Atty. Walter Moxham of Wilson.

In 1968, after several years of farming and planning, he got the necessary permits from the Town of Wilson to build, erect a sign, and open a business, and in the Spring of 1969, the Thomas Marks Nursery opened for business at 4402 East Lake Road.

Since then, under the direction of Thomas E. Marks, the Nursery has grown into a sizable business with one of the largest assortment of plants anywhere.

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STAR OVER WILSON:

We drove around several communities during the Holiday Season and concluded that decorations in Wilson were as pretty as any in neighboring towns. We were especially attracted to a large star suspended from a crane near the harbor--a beautiful creation by Don Sinclair, Jr.

On Christmas Eve Day, an unusual sight caught our eye while driving along the lower Ridge at Cambria. Thousands of white sea gulls were brilliantly silhouetted against dark black clouds over Lake Ontario.

Other special Christmas "treats" were a live Manger Scene enacted in front of Exley U.M. Church and a beautiful candle light service at the church on Christmas Eve.

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WILSON'S "APPLE DROP":

It was the year 1988 when Floyd Clark found a large aluminum ball in a scrap yard, and decided it would be fitting if Wilson had its own New Year's Eve "Apple Drop"--after all, isn't Wilson surrounded by dozens of well-kept apple orchards?

So Floyd had the ten foot ball painted red and decorated with lights, and on New Year's Eve, Wilson's "Little Apple" had its first drop to usher in a New Year.

The successful event has attracted hundreds of persons each year, and this year's celebration started with music from 10:20 to Midnight.

The Wilson event did not go unnoticed because for the past three years, Floyd has also been dropping a "Ball" for the Niagara Falls Festival of Lights Committee.

Local Wilson businessmen and Vol. Fire Co. #1 also cooperate to make sure the New Year arrives safely in Wilson.

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BON MOT: One of your greatest possessions is the 24 hours directly ahead of you.

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NEW LIFE MEMBER:

Elton R. Kropp of Wilson has been given a Life Membership in the Wilson Historical Society by action of the Board of Directors. Elton has not only made sure that the museum grounds are kept in A-1 condition, but has also been most accomodating and always on call whenever the need arises.

Elton was born in Buffalo, June 2, 1923, the son of Herman and Ella Guillaume Kropp, and attended Buffalo School #48; Wilson Dist. #5; Wilson High School, and Aero Tech at Glendale, CA.

In his marriage to June M. Zastrow they had three children; Susan Holls of Allen Park, MI; Russell Kropp of Sumpter, S.C.; and Patricia K. Marotta of Lockport, New York.

The Kropp family has resided in the town of Wilson since 1889, and Elton is a retiree of Harrison Radiator, member of UAW 686 Retirees, and the Retirees Auto Travel Club.

He is also a member of the Niagara County Historical Society, the Niagara County Genealogical Society, and the Historical Society of North German States in Western New York.

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RECENT ACQUISITIONS:

Class of 1945, Wilson High School via Ruth Moore, Ransomville, NY: Brochure of Members of Class of 1945, and a framed picture of Class Members who attended their 50th reunion on 11/96.

Mrs. Melva Upton, Newfane: Newspaper Clippings; 2 Scrapbooks; 4 Magazines; 3 Photo Copies of Children-Dist. 4, "Nursery Land ABC"- Raphael Tuck Publ.; Sheet Music; Wilson High School Commencement Program (1934)-St. Peters (1954); Photocopies of Concordia Lutheran Church activities; Photo of Reunion at Maple Road School.

Ruth Stevens Kramer, Ransomville: Framed Copy of "Declaration of Independance" for Schoolhouse--used by Edith Freeman Stevens when she taught. (Ruth and daughter, Edith, both attended Dist. #8 Schoolhouse.

Helen and Durwood Bendt: Books used by Nellie Smalling Bendt, Durwood Bendt, and others. Thirty two copies, 1860 through 1931.

Mrs. Josephine Connor: Book, "Drake's Radio Cyclopeda" (1928)

Donald Wiltse: Protractor for Schoolhouse.

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BEST WISHES:

Bea Hicks of S. SanFrancisco notes that "Jim", (Lt. Col. Floyd Hicks) celebrated his 90th Birthday recently. Son Scott attended from Los Angeles; daughter Claudia flew in from Phoenix, AZ; Granddaughter Laura and husband , Michael Dixon, drove from Glendale, AZ; and Marion Winger and Agnes Shanahan of Wilson were also present for the special occasion.

* * * * *

JANUARY BOARD MEETING:

The Board of Directors met on January 8th, and approved the appointments of the following members: Dorothy Maxfield, Curator; Dan King, Finance Chrm/Storage Barn Chrm'; Eleanor Myers, Barnum Building; Ed Allgeier, Fittro Shop; Elton Kropp, Grounds; Gary Fitch, Construction; Hoyt & Norrie Desso, Depot; Art Schnoor, Nominating Comm/Planning Comm. Chrm; Wally Goodman and Bill Rose, Co-Chairmen, Dr. Argue Building; Darrell Smith, Caboose; and Micky Hunter, Carriage Room/Shelter.

1997 members of the Fair Committee will be Lois Barnum, Chrm., Gary Fitch, Ron Zauner, Nettie Stimson, and Darrell Smith.

* * * * *

CONGRATULATIONS:

Happy Birthday to Vergil (Singer) Scott, who celebrates her 70th birthday on Feb. 18, 1997. Vergil, who lives in Austin, Texas, joined the society in 1980, and became a Life Member in 1988.

In recognition of her mother's birthday, Laura and husband, George Monaghan, have made a substantial contribution to the Wilson Historical Society. Laura says, "My mother has always expressed fond memories of her childhood in Wilson, and has a sincere appreciation for the cause of the Wilson Historical Society."

* * * * *

FEBRUARY CALENDAR:

Feb. 12, 1997: Board of Director Meeting, 7:30 pm, at the museum.

Feb. 17, 1997: Regular Meeting. Program to be announced.

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NEW MEMBERS:

Please welcome Larry and Lisa Bulmer of Wilson, also, Marilyn Rogenmoser of Middleport, NY.

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ADOPT-A-CAR UPDATE:

Larry and Lisa Bulmer have decided to adopt the 1927 Reo Wolverine Coupe, and the 1957 Lincoln Mark II, The Reo has a 50 h.p. six cylinder engine, 4 wheel hydraulic brakes and strap shock absorbers. Dr. Argue acquired it from Bessie Erion Swift of Mt. Morris, and all the parts were in baskets when he restored it.

As of this Newsletter, thirteen of our members have adopted 10 of the cars in the Dr. John F. Argue Memorial Car Building.

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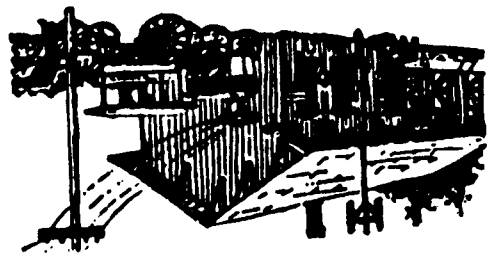
REMEMBER FEBRUARY 1932?

That was when Amelia Earhart became the first woman to make a solo transatlantic flight from Newfoundland to Ireland in 15 hours; Franklin Delano Roosevelt was elected to the first of his four terms as President; Radio City Music Hall in New York City opened with a seating capacity of 6,200; and the popular song credited to the Great Depression was, "Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?"

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FINAL THOUGHT: Nothing confuses a man more than to drive behind a woman who does everything right.

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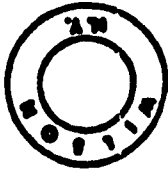
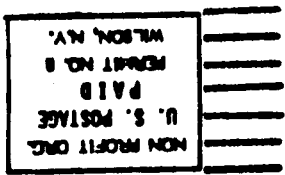


March 1997 Vol. 26 No. 3
(Coleman Printing)

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

NEWSLETTER

Wilson Historical Society
Wilson, New York 14172-9763



March 1997

WILSON IN THE 20TH CENTURY:

The late Fay Campbell entered this world when the horse and buggy were beginning to make way for that new fangled invention, the "horseless carriage". In fact, when he was six years old, he got the thrill of his life when Stanley Dwight gave him a ride in his new creation, the Wilson Automobile.

He recalled that the machine was built by Dwight's new Wilson Automobile Manufacturing Co., and appeared to look like a buggy seat on a platform supported by four wheels. It was steered by a handle attached to a bar extending from the front axle.

A few years later, when Fay was ten years old, he, Willie Bell, Eddie Fillingham, and Earl Armstrong, decided to build their own "auto" from a Democrat Wagon. They steered it with a couple of ropes and pushed it back of the golf course where they rolled it down a steep hill. Unfortunately, Fay broke his leg when he got it caught in one of the wheels, and Dr. Draper put his leg in a cast and he had to lie in bed a month until it healed.

Fay's grandparents owned the property that would later be known as the Foote Farm and, at that time it was connected to "Sunset Island" by a narrow peninsula--sometimes known as the sheep path because sheep were driven over it to the "Island" where they could graze in comparative safety.

There used to be a lot of ice-skating parties on Twelve Mile Creek, and Fay recalled that he saw as many as 200 couples on the Creek at one time. He believed that two of the best young skating couples were Floyd and Margaret Wilson and Lou and Bessie Crawford, and since the peninsula separated the Creek from the Lake, skaters could go up the Creek beyond Plumb's Bridge.

Harwood later bought the Foote Farm, and Roosevelt Beach was born when he developed the property into 20 foot lots for cottages. Since the lots were small, sewage was inadequate and later became a problem.

The Campbell home was about a mile west of the village on route 18 and, as Roosevelt Beach developed, the Campbells found a good market for their chickens, eggs, fruit, and other produce. Fay, who was the oldest of the "Campbell Kids", quit high school at the end of his 2nd year to help his father who was crippled up with rheumatism.

During the winter months he found other things to do and, at age eighteen, worked in the Taggart & Stevens Warehouse near the depot. That was the year the 1912 station was remodeled, and he remembered seeing the bricklayers lay the walks around the depot.

Taggart sometimes had his workers nail covers on apple barrels at the Coomer Road siding, and the apple-filled barrels had to be piled three high. Since Fay was of slight build, it was hard for him to do it, and he believed it was one of the hardest jobs he ever had.

Some of the gravel that was used to build local highways was dug by hand along the north shore of "Sunset Island". As a result, large holes were formed as men used shovels and dynamite to break up the gravel. The gravel was shoveled into wagons, but could only be brought to the mainland when 12 Mile Creek was frozen over.

Sometimes, the heavy wagons with their teams would break through the ice, and other teams had to be used to pull them out. Merrit Swick was one of the drivers that broke through the ice quite often. It didn't seem to bother him too much--he'd just go home, get his team of mules, then pull his horses and wagon onto dry land.

Another custom of those early days was to visit the barber on Saturday night. Few people bothered to shave themselves so the five or six barbers in Wilson were always kept busy. He said you still had to wait your turn because there was always a line-up.

There were also no organized sporting events at the school so basket ball games were played in the hall back of the Johnson/Middleton Drugstore. Roller skating was also enjoyed there, and Fay recalled that he used to peddle bills all day for the Wilson "Star" to earn a quarter for skating.

During World War I, he belonged to the Home Guard, and there were 108 men in his outfit. They were commanded by Jules Weaver, Captain, "Butch" Bigalow, 1st Lieut., Mark Wilson, 2nd Lieut., and Harry Holden, 3rd Lieut., and they drilled all winter long. Their grey uniforms, leggings, and hats, were furnished by the government.

It was around 1925 when Fay decided to go into the grocery business. He remembered the time well because it was when the first water lines were being laid in the village. He could never forget the time when "Bookie" Wilson drove his truck into one of the open trenches, and it took three days to get it out.

Fay's younger sister, Dora Wakeman, recalled that the store was on Young Street at the site of the present Laundromat and Health Club, and believes that the old building behind the

(continued on page 2)

Wilson in the 20th century: (Cont'd)

laundromat was once the ice house used in connection with the grocery store.

Fay sold Blue Ribbon Hot Dogs, and it was about 1926 when he entered a "Blue Ribbon Float" in the Fireman Fielday Parade and won first prize.

One day a Hobo came to the store looking for work, and Fay asked him if he could cut meat. The hobo said that he could because his father once owned a butcher store in Chicago. Fay told him to get cleaned up, which he did, and he soon became a very good employee at the store.

In the early days of the Great Depression, the Wilson State Bank closed "freezing" everyone's assets. Fay took a Civil Service exam and became a substitute for mail carrier, William Kruske. They divided up the route and Fay's portion was nine miles long. After meeting the mail train in the morning and making his rounds, it was often dark when he returned home with his horse and buggy.

He gave up his mail route, (which was taken over by "Speedy McClellan) and decided to go into the gladiola business. He started out by planting one million bulbs on 40 acres of land, part of which is now the site of the Thomas Marks School. Bulbs had to be planted by hand starting June 28th through July 10th, and much of his help came from youngsters who were out of school for the summer. He figured that in his best year he harvested 12-15 dozen "glads" a day, but after seven years in the business he decided that fighting disease and the weather wasn't worth the effort.

Fay was easy going, friendly, and well-liked, and to many persons it seemed he had been a part of Wilson as long as anyone could remember. During the 1950's he was fondly known by his daughter's friends as "Uncle Fay", and the girls liked to pick fruit on the Campbell farm, although most of it was harvested by professional pickers.

He said the girls were so noisy they were better than scare crows, so he'd have them pick in the center of the orchard so the birds would stay away from the cherries. "Cindy" Albright and Priscella Berry picked fruit to earn money to attend the Watson Homestead Methodist Camp at Painted Post, NY., while others included Marcia Wakeman, Caroline Campbell, and Linda Campbell

When Fay reached the age of 88, he was still an active bowler with the retirees league at Townline Bowl, and his average was better than many of his younger competitors.

When his life ended on November 23, 1987, one could say that a shining ray of light had disappeared from the Wilson scene.

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RECENT ACQUISITIONS:

Paul Harold of Chatham, Va., has donated the book, "The Village Blacksmith", by Aldren A. Watson; also copies of the "Tin Lizzie", "Old Ways Working Wood", and four copies of old Car Journals.

Anthony French, Morehead City, NC: Twenty-one photos of Wilson and friends of Helen French.

Charles Wilson: Thirty Books for the Randall Road Schoolhouse.

Clifford Collins, Ransomville: Discriptive Brochure of members of Wilson Class of 1945.

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MUSEUM SCHEDULE:

All Board of Director meetings are held on the 2nd Wednesday evening of each month, January through December, 7:30 Pm. in the Patterson Room.

All regular monthly meetings are held on the third Monday evening of each month excluding the months of July and August, 7:30 Pm. in Patterson Room. Also, the month of June when the annual dinner meeting is held in the Barnum Building at 6:00 Pm.

The Museum is open to visitors Sunday afternoons from 2-4Pm. from April through December. School groups and other organizations may arrange to visit the museum by appointment. Reservations may be made by calling Lucille Upton, Chrm. 751-6883.

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QUILT TICKETS:

Don't forget to send your quilt donation stubs back to Betty Stimson--the word is out that the "Carolina Lily" is beautiful. A book of tickets was sent out with the February Newsletter, but if you didn't receive one Betty has more. Ticket stubs and donations may be mailed or given to Betty Stimson Box 162, Wilson, NY 14172.

If you would like to see the quilt, stop in at the town hall--it will be on display there until after the village election on March 18th.

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MARCH PROGRAM:

A program that should be of great interest to everyone is planned for the March 17th meeting of the Wilson Historical Society.

Charles "Chuck" Horton, who has an exceptionally fine collection of postcards of the Wilson area, will show some of them at the March meeting by use of the society's opaque projector.

Norrie Desso arranges for refreshments to be served following meetings.

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MEMBERSHIP ROLL:

You will note that the 1997 Membership Roll for the Wilson Historical Society is included with this Newsletter. We wish to thank Anne Faery for all her good work in keeping addresses up to date, addressing newsletters, and mailing them out each month. Many address changes must be made each year when many of our "sun birds" head south--then north again.

Also, when Anne receives special donations for the Life Membership and Building funds, she always takes the time to write a personal note of thanks to the giver. Dedicated chairpersons like Anne are what keeps the Historical Society "ticking".

A few of our members forgot to renew their dues for 1997, but as of this issue of the Newsletter we have 480 adult members, 18 junior members, for a total of 498.

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BON MOT:

No time is ever wasted that makes two people better friends.

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BOY SCOUTS SUPPORT SCHOOLHOUSE PROJECT:

Thanks to Chris Schultz and eleven Boy Scouts from Troop 67, Wilson, twenty-five school desks that were donated for the Randall Road Schoolhouse have been refurbished and are ready for installation.

The Boy Scouts became involved in this community service project when Chris, a long time member of the Wilson Historical Society, expressed the desire to renovate the desks to meet a requirement for becoming an Eagle Scout.

His project was approved by the Iroquois Council, B.S.A., and Chris and eleven other Scouts pitched in and completed the job in a little over forty hours of hard work. The results were beautiful, and the highly polished desks with iron work repainted, are being kept in the Storage Barn until needed.

In addition to Chris, the following Boy Scouts, (representing some of Wilson's finest young men) included Devin Branch; Tim Danner; Arthur Dietz; Robert Eiler; Ben Graham; Jeff Hayes; David Hoover; Bryan Jablonski; Pete Koszelak; Chris Rademacher; and Harry Schlyer.

The Scouts got a big assist from Dale Schlyer who permitted them to use the Schlyer Machinery Co. Building on Lake Street to re-finish the school desks. Also helping to move the desks back and forth from the museum were Dick and Sue Schultz. It may also be noted that Sue provided some great Brownies and other refreshments--a fine inducement for active young men.

Progress on the schoolhouse has also been made with the help from workers in Niagara County Sheriff Thomas Beilne's Work Program who have been doing the time-consuming job of removing the material that covered the school's hard wood floor and pulling out hundreds of nails.

They also have been doing some general cleanup of the area with help from Ed Hastings, Harry Figura, Ed Allgeier, and Don Burrows. Don has also completed construction of a picket fence for in front of the school, and painted the new wide door for the handicapped.

Wilson High School teachers, John Davis and Tom Geise and their students, are making plaques for each of the reconditioned school desks showing the donor's name and the name of the Scout who refurbished it.

Members of the Wilson Teachers Association have agreed to help move the furnishings into the school when it is ready, and will help set the school up for classes.

A Grant has been received from the Niagara Council of the Arts to purchase toys, games, and costuming, and Mrs. Marion (Ralph) Love, a former teacher at the W. H. Stevenson School in Ransomville, is making aprons, bonnets, and vests for the children to wear when they attend classes at the school.

Other special donations are a schoolmaster's desk donated by Mr. and Mrs. Matt Henschell, and a Teacher's Chair donated by Mrs. Marion Allgeier.

The Community Committee chaired by Jean Figura, initiated the drive to move the Randall Rd. Schoolhouse to the Museum Grounds. They also decided, early on, that the building would be used as a "working" schoolhouse where teachers might bring their classes for a day to experience first hand what it was like to attend a rural schoolhouse in the 1800's.

As many persons know, the country schoolhouse was once the backbone of America's rural educational system, but when consolidations began, rural youngsters were bussed to large Central School Districts. By 1955, all District Schools in the Wilson area were absorbed into the Wilson Central School District--all that is, except the Randall Road School which was used for many years as a Community Centre.

Some of the teachers who once taught in Wilson's rural schools were, Laura Eick; Helen Stevens; Dorothy Lort; Dora Wakeman; Eloise Culverwell; Lydia Southard; Ernestine Walpole; Blanche Wilson; Dorothy Halstead; Hazel Salisbury; Beatrice Salisbury; Alice Carter; and Bessie Crawford.

A ribbon cutting ceremony and dedication of the old Randall Road School is scheduled for Sunday, May 18, 1997 at two o'clock. Rev. Ronald Haefer, Pastor of St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Wilson will be Master of Ceremonies.

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WILSON COMMEMORATIVE AFGHAN:

The Ways & Means Committee of the Wilson Historical Society will be offering a new item for sale this year--100% Cotton Afghans exclusively designed by the Riddle Co. of Burlington, NC.

The afghans feature Wilson sites and memories such as the Wilson Town Seal; Wilson Historical Society Depot; Wilson Volunteer Fire Co. #1; Luther Wilson House; Wilson Central High School; and a picturesque scene of Lake Ontario.

The afghans are approximately 47"x 62" in size, and sell for \$30.00 each plus postage and handling if shipped out of town. Colors available are Navy Blue, Turquoise, and Mauve, and the committee suggests that they would be perfect for gift-giving, or just to keep Wilson memories close to you.

For further information, or to place an order, write or call Sally Smith, Chrm., 4559 Chestnut Road, Wilson, 14172 or phone 751-0102.

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MUSEUM ACTIVITIES:

The cooler and stove acquired from the South Wilson Fire Co., have been put in place and are ready for wiring. The crawlspace above the Carriage Room has been cleaned out and the new furnace for the Argue Building will be installed there soon with volunteer help. The work so far has been done by Don Burrows, Gary Fitch, Dan King, Kevin King, and Darrell Smith.

The town would like to sponsor a Musical Program at the museum grounds on August 10th, and the Historical Society has agreed to sponsor an ice cream social in conjunction with it.

Ed Allgeier reported that the roof on the Fittro Shop is leaking badly, and if the building is to be saved, something must be done with the roof soon. Lois Barnum reported that two fair meetings have been held at her home, and things appear to be shaping up well. With the mounting costs of the museum's upkeep, every effort must be made to have a successful fair this year..

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FINAL THOUGHT: Answers that sound good aren't always good sound answers.



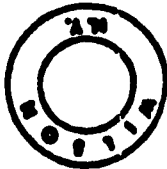
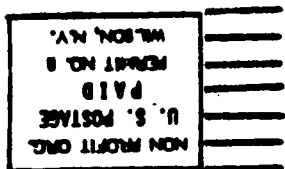
(Coleman Printing)

April 1977 Vol. 26 No. 4

DONALD W. CROOK, Editor

NEWSLETTER

Wilson Historical Society
WILSON, NEW YORK 14172-9763



April 1977

CHURCH EVOLUTION IN WILSON:

The former Presbyterian Church was the first religious group to organize in the town of Wilson, and was started at the home of John Holmes on January 18, 1819. Rev. David M. Smith, pastor of the Lewiston Church officiated, and made John and his son, Daniel, ruling elders.

The first regular pastor was called in 1823, and meetings were held principally in the schoolhouse at Ide and Townline roads. In 1834, Reuben Wilson donated land for a church where the Catholic Church now stands, and the church was erected in the winter of 1834-35.

This edifice was destroyed in 1894 when the adjoining Ontario Hotel burned down, however, the church was rebuilt with brick and stone and continued to operate until July 25, 1930, when the congregation was dissolved and the building was sold to the Catholic Church.

The Methodist-Episcopal Society in Wilson was first formed as a Class with the Lewiston Circuit on July 8, 1826. The following year a meeting was held to organize the church, and on January 2, 1836, the church was incorporated as "The First Society of the Methodist-Episcopal Church in the Town of Wilson."

A frame building was started in 1837, and the Rev. Dr. De Puy was appointed to the Charge. The frame church was used until about 1883 when it was sold and moved one lot north where it was used for a farm implement shop and "Albright Opera House."

In 1884, the present Exley Methodist-Episcopal Church was erected with funds donated principally by the Thomas Exley family, and the building was dedicated August 18, 1885.

In 1968 the Methodist Church united with the Evangelical United Brethren Church, and the Wilson Church is now known as the Exley United Methodist Church, with Rev. Sue Kaiser, pastor.

Another of Wilson's oldest churches is the First Baptist which was started at the home of Russell Robinson on Maple Road. Meetings were also held in District #4 schoolhouse where Rev. Amos Reed of Newfane sometimes preached.

The group operated as a branch of the Newfane Baptist Church until October, 1839, when delegates from Porter, Yates, Lockport, and Newfane, assembled at the schoolhouse and recognized the Wilson Branch as a regular Baptist Church.

On April 21, 1838, the church convened in the cobblestone schoolhouse where the Wilson House Restaurant stands today, and with Rev. J. Halliday, pastor, held the first meeting of the 1st Baptist Church in the village of Wilson.

A beautiful frame church was later built on Pettit Street and dedicated May 13, 1880. and the congregation grew rapidly in both service and attendance, however, misfortune struck on July 3, 1917, when a fire of undetermined origin destroyed the church.

In 1919-20 the present 1st Baptist Church was built and dedicated on July 27, 1926, and during construction services were held in the Presbyterian Church on Lake Street.

In May, 1972, the church joined the new American Baptist Association of the Niagara Frontier. Rev. Jeffrey Durham is the current pastor. Services are Sunday morning at 10:00 A.M.

The history of the Concordia Lutheran Church on Beebe Road dates back to July 17, 1876, when William Schmidt and August Lampe presided over a meeting to organize the "German Evangelical Lutheran St. Peters Church in the Town of Wilson."

An edifice was then erected on land donated by Ralph and Sarah Stockwell, and was dedicated at a service held on December 3, 1876. In 1880, St. Peters called its first resident pastor, Rev. G. Rademacher, who served for eight years. In 1918, the services, which had been conducted in German, were changed over to English

Rev. Carl Oldach was installed as Pastor in 1930, and a Parish House built next to the church. In 1947 the congregation voted to make the church independent and acquired the name, "The Concordia Evangelical Lutheran Church of East Wilson."

In 1976, Concordia celebrated its 100th anniversary, and today, the present pastor is Rev. Wayne Jagow., with services Sundays at 9:30 A.M.

The Roman Catholic Church was first introduced into Wilson in 1910 when Msgr. James Lanigan visited Wilson and celebrated Mass in the Stedman Cottage on Harbor Street, and the Higgins Cottage on Ontario Street, formerly known as the "Old Glass Front."

In 1920 a small frame church was built in the village on Lake Street, and used until 1931 when the building could no longer accommodate the fast growing congregation. The former Presbyterian Church was then purchased and later dedicated as "Our Lady of the Rosary, R.C. Church.

Rev. Father John L. Leising is the current pastor. Mass, 4:00 P.M., Saturday, 10:00AM Sun. St. John's Episcopal Mission was organized in Wilson in 1929, and the first meeting was held in the Wilsonian Club, (Wilson House). The first church building was purchased from the

Church Evolution in Wilson (Contd)

Catholic Church who sold it to St. Johns when they moved to the former Presbyterian Church.

St. Johns was dedicated in 1930, and the first service was conducted by Rev. Henry Swicker. Members immediately began to raise funds to pay for the building and by 1934 the deed to the property was officially presented to the Diocese of Western New York.

In 1953-54 the congregation erected a Parish Hall, and the interior of the church was renovated and redeccorated.

In 1980 St. Johns celebrated its 50th Anniversary and, to the present day, continues to be one of the active congregations in Wilson. Priest, Rev. Alison Martin is the current pastor, and services are held at 10:00 AM on Sundays.

St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church on Young Street is one of Wilson's youngest churches, and was started in 1936 with Rev. Ellbert Gleasner, pastor. Early meetings were held in rooms over the drugstore; the old fire hall; and the Masonic Rooms.

In 1938 the present church was erected at the corner of Young and McChesney Streets, and dedication services were held on April 23, 1939. By 1955 the bank mortgage was paid off, and a parsonage and building fund were established. The basement and kitchen were completed with all work done by the congregation and Rev. Renkopf.

In the 1930's the congregation expanded to a point where support of a full time pastor was possible, and from that time on the church continued to grow and reach out to the community.

The current pastor is Rev. Ronald Haefer, and Worship Service is at 10:00 AM Sundays.

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NEW LIFE MEMBER:

It is a pleasure to announce that Janet Miller Sporleder has recently joined the Life Membership Class of the Wilson Historical Society.

Janet was born in Kansas City, MO, on Nov. 18, 1925, the daughter of Thomas A. and Janet (Devlin) Miller. She obtained her B.S. at Buffalo State Teacher's College, and completed graduate work at the University of Colorado.

In her marriage to Andrae Buckley Sporleder they had two children, Lisa S.(Stephens) and Andra Jeffrey Sporleder.

Janet attends St. John's Episcopal Church in Wilson, and is also a member of the History Club; Friends of the Library; and Delphic Circle. She is also a Committeeman and member of the Republican Club. In college she became a member of Delta Sigma Epsilon, and Honorary societies, "Alpha" and "Phi Upsilon Omicron."

Perhaps Jan's greatest service to the community was her many years as a member of the Wilson Central School Board

She joined the Wilson Hist. Soc. in 1972, and in 1979 accepted the office of Chrm. of the Historical Sites Committee--a position which she currently holds. Most of the historic markers in town were put in place through her efforts, and she has worked with and chaired the committee that puts on the Society's annual dinner in June.

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FROM THE MAILBAG:

John Goodrich of Columbus Heights, MN, wishes to thank his many friends who remembered him with cards at Christmas. John was a former fruit agent with the Niagara County Extension Service, and active in the historical society. The barnwood that covers the walls in the museum's Patterson Room is from barn that stood on his former farm home on East Lake Road.

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Dick Schmidle belongs to a Mens' Club in Leesburg, FL, and recently wrote that he and a friend mixed up enough pancake dough in one large bowl to feed about 160 people. Since everyone had about three--that was a lot of dough.

On St. Patrick's Day the club put on a corned beef and cabbage dinner, and he led a group of "Irish" singers for entertainment. He said it was fun--even though two of the "Irish" singers were named Kowalski and Spewak.

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IN MEMORIAM:

Hazel Benzino, 86, died Feb. 16, 1997, after a brief illness. She was born in Spokane, WA, but lived most of her life in Wilson. She worked as a press welder at the Carborundum in Niagara Falls, and retired in 1974 after 25 years service.

She was a member of the Lockport and Ransomville Senior Citizen Clubs and liked to play "Bingo". She joined the Wilson His. Soc. in 1984 and became a Life Member in 1986. During the 1940's she helped with Girl Scout Troop #1 of Wilson.

She is survived by a daughter, Myrtle (Harold) Fisher of Hollywood, FL, also 5 grandchildren and 6 great-grandchildren.

Burial was in Greenwood Cemetery, Wilson, with Rev. Jeffrey Durham, 1st Baptist Church.

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Eunice (Fitch) Morris, 88, of Philadelphia, PA, died Jan. 20, 1997. She was born in Wilson, the daughter of Ray and Mabelle Fitch, and graduated from Wilson High School as Vice-Pres. of the Class of 1928. She received a degree in Art Education at Fredonia State Teachers College, and taught in the Massena and Boliver, NY School Districts.

She was predeceased by her husband, Russell, and two brothers, Lowell and Dudley Fitch. She is survived by two sisters, Naomi Donovan of Boca Raton, FL., and Maxine (James) Gnage of St. Petersburg, FL, also a brother, Russell (Dorothy) Fitch of Ransomville, NY.

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DID YOU KNOW.....THAT ON May 24, 1899, Jacob German, a Cab Driver in New York City, was the first person ever arrested and jailed for traveling at the "Break Neck" speed of 12 m.p.h.

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SOUNDINGS:

A speaker who doesn't strike oil in ten minutes should stop boring.

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1997 FAIR PLANS OUTLINED:

The Wilson His. Soc. Fair Comm. composed of Lois Barnum, Gary Fitch, Nettie Stimson, Darrell Smith and Ron Zauner, are making plans for this year's Memorial Day Fair to be held 9AM to 5PM at the museum grounds on Rt. 425, Wilson, May 26, 1997.

The Committee is being assisted by these area chairmen: Shirley Hunter & Shirley Linnenbank, Chicken Bar-B-Que; Dorothy Knight, Beef on Weck; Pam Groff, Homemade Pies; Sara Berry, Beverages, (Barnum Bldg.); Linda & Joe Moran, Sno Cones; Bob & Mary Savigny, Pepsi; Melinda Hutchison, Cotton Candy; Dick & Sue Schultz, Lemonade & Popcorn; Carol Smith, Coffee & Donuts; Nettie Stimson, Vendors, (754-7815); Marge Williams, Publicity; Gary Fitch, Tickets; Richard Schmidle, Ways and Means; Betty Stimson, Quilt Tickets; Dorothy Maxfield, Museum; Eleanor Myers, Special Displays; Bill Loeschke, Vendor Parking; Nettie Stimson, Entertainment; Don Burrows, Shuttle Busses; Dan King, Parking; Bill Rose & Wally Goodman, Antique Cars; Lois Barnum & Nettie Stimson, Supplies; and Edward Hastings, Clean-up.

This year's event will also feature 250 to 300 Vendors; Large Antique Car Show; "Niagara Experience Players"; Dave Rucks "Hill Brother Singers"; Jim Waldron at the Piano; and the Wilson High School Band.

There will be Kite-Flying demonstrations by "The Great Lakes Flying Society", and at Noon members of Wilson's Martin F. Jennings American Legion Post #836 will honor the servicemen and women who gave their lives for our Country.

You will also be able to meet "Good Neighbor Dave" Marmon, former radio commentator, who will be making announcements from the New York Central 1903 Caboose. Last, but not least, there will be a drawing at 4:00 PM for the society's beautiful Carolina Lily Quilt.

Delicious foods will include Chiavetta's Chicken Bar-B-Que; Beef on Weck; Hot Dogs; Homemade Pies; Cotton Candy; Sno Cones; Coffee & Donuts; Popcorn; Beverages; and Pizza supplied by the Wilson School Music Parents.

Children will be able to get Free Balloons; and enjoy Pony Rides; a Petting Zoo; and the popular "Moonwalk Bouncer".

All this, plus Free Shuttle Bus Service and Free Parking should add up to a very pleasant way to celebrate Memorial Day--providing you do it in Wilson, NY.

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NEW MEMBERS/PERSONALS:

We welcome Sally Scott Magruder of Larkspur, CA, a direct descendent of Luther Wilson through his son, George. Sally's father, the late Frank Scott, played piano with Lawrence Welk from 1956 to 1971, and did arrangements for the TV Show and produced 37 Albums.

Also, Suzanne Ward of Marion, AR, through the courtesy of Helen Ward of Middleport, NY.

We thank Anne & Bill Teiper of Albany, NY & John and Mary Margaret Young of Springfield, MA, for their Building Fund donation in memory of George & Lena Brooks, who lived on W. Young St.

Our apologies to Elsie Gustin of FL., Life Member, whos name was inadvertently left off of the Membership Roll for 1997.

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BOARD REPORTS:

Don Burrows, Pres., reported that the Wilson Fire Co. is donating its 1961 International Tanker to the museum, and it is now in the new Storage Barn. He also said that the Town of Wilson has given the historical society \$3,700 for the year 1997.

Ed Allgeier said that the Fittro Barn roof must be replaced because it leaks badly, and submitted four bids. Motion made by Gary Fitch, seconded by Norm MacAskill, to accept bid by Roberts Roofing for \$4,570. Motion approved.

Roger Mawhiney was contacted about putting dirt around storage barn & Schoolhouse and grading it so that it can be seeded this Spring. Cost would be approximately \$1600. Motion made by Anne Faery to have work done; seconded by Bill Rose and approved.

It was reported that Mike White ran into unexpected difficulties when he put the roof on the schoolhouse, causing additional expense. Dan King moved that Mike be paid \$870 requested, seconded by Bill Rose, and approved.

Art Schnoor reported Overhead Door of Lockport will install new door on Car Building for \$825. Door is needed to seal building tightly before heating unit is installed. Motion made by Art to purchase door, seconded by Don Croop, and approved.

Wilson Central School has offered plaques with lists of persons who served or were killed in World War I & II. Motion made by Lois Barnum to accept plaques, seconded by Don Croop.

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SUNDAY HOSTESSES:

The museum reopens for visitors in April. Virginia Strablow, Chrm., has announced that the following members will serve as museum attendants on Sundays: April 6th, Bruce and Bonnie Muck; and Lois Barnum will open museum; April 13th, Ed and Mary Webster, and Wally Goodman will open up; April 20th, Ruth Weaver and Janice Zahno, and Carole Schnoor will open up; and April 27th, Robert and Anne Botzer, Gary Fitch opening up.

* * * * *

1997 FEDERATION CONGRESS:

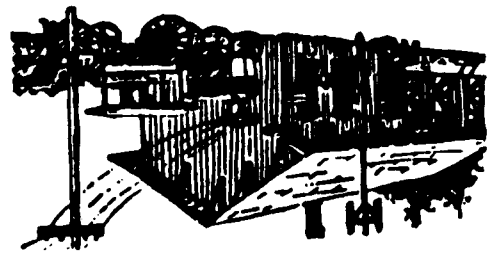
The Niag. Co. Federation of Hist. Societies will meet April 19, 1997 at the Niag. County Historical Museum, 215 Niagara St., Lockport. Registration is at 9AM and Eunice Hernberger, Pres. will welcome guests at 9:30 AM.

Speakers will be: 9:45AM, Susan Diachun, Niag. Park Reservation, on "Geology of the Falls; 10:30AM, Dr. Ann Morton, Curator, Wayne Co. Hist. Soc, on "Education Programs for Small Museums; 1:15PM, Christopher Bench, Curator, Strong Museum, "Why Would They Want That?"; and at 2:00PM, Sterling Mason, Collector, Spencerport, and William Abel, Collector, will speak on Tuco Puzzles.

Lunch break at Wagner's Restaurant, 11:15AM to 1:15PM. Choice of Beef on Weck, salad; Chicken Ala King; or Crab Salad with fruit. Reservations in by April 12th. Checks payable to Niag. Co. Federation Hist. Societies. Mail to Barb Hathaway, 7030 Colonial Dr., Niag. Falls, 14305.

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FINAL THOUGHT: Trust is the tie that holds friendships together.



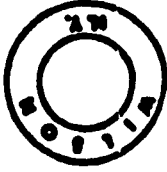
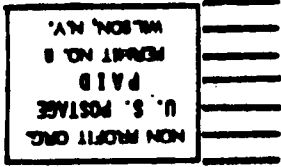
Coleman Printing

May 1997 Vol. 26 No. 5

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

NEWSLETTER

Wilson Historical Society
Wilson, New York 14172-9763



May 1997

SECRETS OF 1843 DIARY REVEALED:

Thomas Leonard was a teacher at the District #7 Schoolhouse on Chestnut Road, town of Wilson, from 1843-1844. Before coming to Wilson, he was a part time carpenter and winter-time schoolteacher, and previously taught in 1842-43 at the Shawnee School.

The District #7 Schoolhouse was in its last stages of being completed and, as its teacher, his pay would be \$15 per month including board and room.

During his year in the "Marsh Settlement" he kept a diary which characterizes him as being a devout man--sometimes a sanctimonious one, and thoroughly convinced that drinking was evil, tobacco was evil, and dancing was sinful.

In fact, on December 14, 1843, Mr. Leonard noted that "The young folks had a gathering at the house of an Irishman across the way, and they had a fiddler with whose music they kept time in the dance until about 1 o'clock. Three or four of my scholars were present, and I felt a little rebuked in thinking that my daily walks and conversation did not show forth my hatred to sin"

He found that his scholars wanted to learn "but were very backward. Some, from 15 to 20 years old, can not do a sum in simple arithmetic." He also wrote that he often felt discouraged "When I see the ignorance I have to contend with. It is the most backward school I have ever been in in all my life."

At the start of the New Year in 1844, Mr. Leonard found himself having difficulty coping with unruly students, so he went "to a neighboring swamp and cut himself a couple of whips and brought them to the school. I trimmed one of the whips and layed it in sight. I had expected I would have to use it, but was able to pass the day very pleasantly.'

"January 15th was the appointed day for County and Town inspectors to visit my school, and Dr. McChesney came about 1½ o'clock, and Mr. Mills came about 2½ o'clock. Five or six inhabitants also attended including trustees R. Woodcock and Mr. Bull.

"That evening we went to Halseys and I asked Mr. Mills and Dr. McChesney their opinions in regard to the school. Dr. McChesney said that there were few schools ahead in arithmetic and grammar, and none ahead in order.

"It was customary for rural district schoolteachers to get their room and board from the local trustees or other inhabitants, so I roomed with Mr. Woodcock and Mr. Bull, among others. At Mr. Woodcock's I lodged in an upper room where from the rafters were suspended several 'broad-sides' of pork, (nearly as they came from the hog) except being salted, I suppose. The floor was nearly covered with corn, etc., but I had a good bed and slept soundly.

"The days I spent boarding at father Bulls were pleasantly spent, and seldom have I found a more obliging family where I felt right at home. Besides the four boys who attended school, there were two young women in the family.....I appreciate the good life and I shared there in abundance.

"On January 24, 1844, I was called to decide an argument two large boys had about "seats". I had Eugene Pollard stay after school, and punished him by giving him three blows on each hand with a ferule.

"I forgot to mention that I kept William Streeter one hour after school last night. He admitted he had done wrong and promised to do better in the future. I also had to cuff the ears of Miss Matilda Adams rather severely toward the end of the school day.

"I ordered some of the scholars to leave their seats and take others, and had some of the boys sit on the girls' side, etc. Mr. Henry Woodcock, a young man of 20 years old said 'if he had to set there he would not come to school.' He was as good as his word, and on January 26th he dropped out. I explained the matter to his parents.

"On February 1st there was a 'wood bee' at the Halsey's which the large boys attended. I retained Charles Halsey after school and punished him by giving him three blows with a ferule. His offense was that I asked him a question during recitation in arithmetic and he answered 'I don't know---no, I don't care.'

Went to Stockwell's on Friday, Feb. 16th, and learned that they had about 40 or 50 present at last night's chivaree. The loafers were collected about the house and made musick on various instruments, viz.,, squackers, tin horns, bugles, etc.

"I started for Lockport at 9½ o'clock where I spent the remainder of the day with Miss Eliza Hixon. The confinements of a schoolteacher, in whatever district he is placed, is confinement, but confinement in a district school in the 'Marsh Settlement' is bordering on the superlative. I returned to Wilson on foot and spent the next evening at the Stockwell's--

(Continued on page 2)

Secrets of 1843 Diary Revealed

mostly hearing of them talk about the wedding and its accomplishments.

"Heard a lesson from Brother Buck who talked plainly of those professors of religion who continue drinking intoxicating liquors, or go to countenanced dancing parties. To all he said, I responded 'Amen!'.

"On Saturday, March 2nd, I started for Lockport after breakfast, as bad as the going is on foot. The idea of spending a Sabbath in District #7 in the town of Wilson, is not very pleasant, therefore I am willing to endure a little--yeah, much mud to get away.

"March 9th is the last day of my school. I had the usual no. of scholars in the A.M., in addition to 4 or 6 more in the P.M., also Mr. Halsey, Mr. Bates, Mis Farnham, and Miss Bull were present. I closed school by delivering to them an address that covered a sheet of foolscap." (Note: The above item is compiled from 14 pages of extracts from the 1843-44 Diary of Thomas Leonard. The interesting material was provided to us through the courtesy of Dr. Warren Button, a member of the Wilson Historical Society, and former Professor of History at the University of Buffalo.)

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INTERESTING HOBBY:

Although the human race goes back many thousands of years, some people couldn't tell you who their great-grandparents are. Others enjoy tracing their family trees back several generations or more, sometimes finding unexpected surprises--even 'skeletons' in the closet.

Some even discover they are descended from famous personalities such as Kings or Presidents--and that's when genealogical research becomes interesting.

Members of the Pettit family in Wilson can, for instance, trace their ancestry back to King Charlemagne of France (842 AD), and records compiled by Gary Pettit and Doug Farley are well documentd through the ancestral line of Elizabeth Oliver, wife of Samuel Pettit.

Some of the members of the Pettit family descended from Sam and Elizabeth Oliver Pettit are: William O. and Nancy (Newman) Pettit; Silas and Isabel (Bickford) Pettit; Earl and Rubie (Jarvis) Pettit; Sidney and Donna (Reed) Pettit; and Gary, Carol (Dave) Chase; and Rodney Pettit.

* * * * *

ONDERDONK FAMILY RESEARCHED:

Mr. W. R. Reese of Williamsburg, Va., has sent the society some interesting research material that he compiled on the Onderdonk family in early Wilson. Folowing are some notes that he enclosed with it:

"The Newsletter has brought back many special memories...of my years in District School #6 on Randall Road, and in particular the inspiration that Miss Demmin,(the late Mrs. Hazel Salisbury) gave me. Also, the years at the old high school under Principal Blemaster were very special to me.

"I remember Thomas Marks ,Sr., who established the Marks Nursery in Wilson in 1910. His stall at the Farmers' Market on Bailey Avenue was next to my father's stall from the Randall Road Greenhouses during the 1930's., and I had many a pleasant chat with him.

"When I graduated from Buffalo State in 1938, (at his suggestion) I applied for a job as a math teacher in the new high school but I was only 19 at the time, so an older more experienced person was hired.

"Rex Tugwell and his father often visited our Randall Road Greenhouses, and No, we didn't talk politics.

"Our recent research on the Onderdonk family connection to the house where I was born on Randall Road has fascinated me."

* * * * *

CHRISTIAN LADY:

Miss Helen Stevens, a charter member of the Wilson Historical Society, was chosen by members of Exley United Methodist Church to be this year's laity honoree at the 4th annual Laity Banquet of the United Methodist Church.

Helen was in her teens when she joined the Exley Methodist Church on Easter Sunday, April 28, 1928. She recalls that she was a member of a large Sunday School Class, and the Epworth League. During her many years in the church she served as a teacher and Superintendent of the Sunday School. She also sang in the choir and was church organist for a number of years.

After Miss Stevens retired as an elementary teacher in the Wilson School District, she became active in the United Methodist Women and served as secretary of the group for many years.

Helen stands out as a perfect example of what a God-loving Christian person should be.

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"YES, VIRGINIA":

Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus, and yes, Virginia, there will be FUNNEL CAKES at this year's Memorial Day Fair. Now, before you start wondering if your Newsletter Editor has "flipped his lid", we hasten to explain that when we listed the food items available at the fair in last month's Newsletter, we somehow overlooked Sally Smith's delicious "funnel cakes".

So yes, Virginia, as you may have already guessed, the Wilson Historical Society's Newsletter isn't always 100% right all the time, but we think we're right now when we say that one of our fair's hottest selling items, the "Dutch Country" Funnel Cakes, will again be available this month at the Memorial Day Fair on May 26th.

* * * * *

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY OBSERVED:

Congratulations to Edward and Marilyn Allgeier, who celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary on April 3, 1997. Marilyn and Ed are Life Members of the Wilson His. Soc., and Ed is Chairman of the Fittro Shop where the society's collection of small farm tools is displayed.

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Janeta Fredericks of Wilson, has made a generous contribution to the Wilson Historical Soc. in honor of the Allgeier's 50th Wedding Anniversary.

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FAIR UPDATE:

Apparently pumpkin pies aren't as popular in the Spring as they are in the Fall, so please keep this in mind when you bake pies for the fair this year. It would be appreciated if you would bake rhubarb, apple, or berry pies. Cup cakes are acceptable but please, no cakes. If you have questions, please call Pam Groff, Chrm., at 751-6123. Please bring your baked goods to the Barnum Building, Sunday afternoon, May 25th.

Thanks are in order to Beth Waldron who made up our fair posters on her computer. Beth also does a great job keeping track of finances on the day of the fair.

We thank Gail Walder for lining up persons to fill out the various fair concessions--it takes a lot of phone calls and we thank everyone for their cooperation.

If you haven't seen the society's Carolina Lily quilt, stop in at the Rainbow Connection on Young Street. Betty Stimson says that it will be there until fair time.

The schoolhouse might not have been completed by May 18th without the splendid cooperation of Sheriff Thomas Belein's work crews who did a fine job on the renovation project.

* * * * *

MUSEUM GREETERS:

Virginia Strablow, Chrm., has submitted the following list of persons who will serve as greeters at the museum, Sunday afternoons from 2 to 4PM:

May 4th, Sara Berry and Don Croop, open museum, Don Croop; May 11th, Joyce and George Banigas, open museum, Celeste Crawford; May 18th, Lisa and Larry Bulmer, open museum, Darrell Smith; May 25th, June and Elton Kropp, open museum, Elton Kropp; June 1st, Shirley and Walter Evans, open museum, Ollie Clark.

* * * * *

MAY CALENDAR:

- May 14th: Board of Director Meeting, Museum, 7:30 PM.
- May 18th: Rededication of the Randall Road Schoolhouse, Sunday, 2:00PM, Museum Grounds.
- May 19th: Regular Meeting, 7:30 PM, Patterson Room, Wilson Museum.
- May 24th-25th: Fair Preparation Days at the Wilson Museum.
- May 26th: MEMORIAL DAY FAIR, Museum Grounds, 9-5PM.

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LEGION WILL HONOR VETS:

Members of Wilson's Martin F. Jennings American Legion Post #836 will hold its regular morning ceremony at Greenwood Cemetery on May 26th, and will assemble again at Noon by the Veterans Monument on the Museum Grounds. Commander John Demmin will officiate.

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IN MEMORIAM:

It was brought to our attention that Judith Gale Sweeney of Anascortes, WA., passed away a few months ago. Judith joined the Wilson His. Soc. in 1987, and became a Life Member in 1988.

She was the youngest daughter of Ashley and Ruth Gale of Wilson, and was born in Lockport on February 18, 1929. She graduated from Wilson High School in 1947; the Lake Erie College in 1951; and received a Master's Degree in Social work in 1955 at the University of Pennsylvania. She later became the Assistant Executive Director of the Childrens' Bureau in Los Angeles, CA.

She married M. Patrick Sweeney, a chemical engineer, and they had one son, David Ashley, who was born August 8, 1964.

The Wilson Historical Society extends its belated condolences to the surviving members of Judith's family.

* * * * *

DID YOU KNOW...that in 1942 over one million copies of Glenn Miller's "Chattanooga Choo Choo" were sold, and RCA sprayed a copy gold, making it the first Gold Record.

* * * * *

BON MOT: Spring is when Mother Nature begins to liquidate its frozen assets.



School District

Number 8

Randall Road

You are cordially invited

to attend

The Rededication of the Relocated

District No. 8 Schoolhouse

on Sunday, May 18, 1997

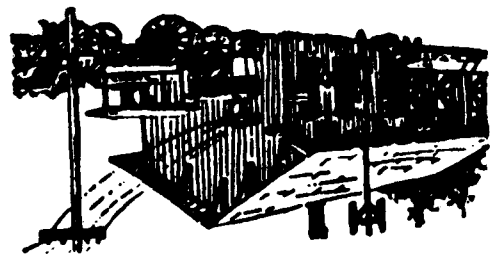
at 2:00 o'clock

at the

Wilson Historical Society Grounds

645 Lake Street

Wilson, New York



Wilson, NY 14172
P O Box 977
Donald Croop

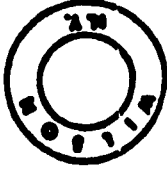
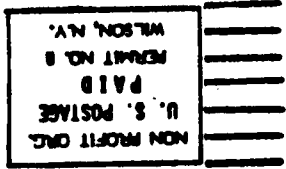
(Coleman Printing)

June 1997 Vol. 26 No. 6

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

NEWSLETTER

Wilson Historical Society
Wilson, New York 14172-9763



June 1997

MISSION ACCOMPLISHED:

Over 250 persons assembled at the museum grounds on Sun., May 18th, for the re-dedication of the Randall Road Schoolhouse.

Rev. Ronald Haefer, Pastor of St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church of Wilson was master of ceremonies, and he introduced the following dignitaries who spoke briefly on various aspects of the schoolhouse project: Jean Figura, Chrm., Steering Comm.; Richard Zipp, Supt. of the Wilson Schools; Sen. George B. Maziarz; Assemblyman Joeseeph Pillittere; Mayor Jerry Dean; Supervisor Walter Evans; Donald Burrows, Pres. Wilson His. Soc; Wanda Burrows, Chrm. Wilson His. Soc. Schoolhouse Comm., and Karen Raccuia, Principal of Thomas Marks School.

Following the program the schoolhouse was opened to visitors with everyone present expressing favorable comments about what they saw. Guests were then able to go to the Barnum Bldg. where they were served cookies and lemonade by Pam Groff, Sally Smith, and Sara Berry. The Barnum Bldg. looked very cheerful with new kitchen tile put down by Carl Bodie and freshly painted walls by Darrell and Sally Smith.

In addition to the professional work done like putting in the foundation; moving the school; re-placing the roof, and painting it inside and out, there were several voluntary efforts made without which the project might not have been completed.

Perhaps foremost among these were the fund-raising projects promoted by the Steering Comm; re-finishing of the school desks by members of Boy Scout troop No. 67; removal of the old flooring and scraping the building inside and out by members of Niag. Co. Sheriff Tom Bellein's work crews; placing the bell tower on the roof; installing heater pipe, propane gas lines; and the wonderful response from teachers of Wilson Central School who installed all the desks and furnishings in the school.

Teachers and friends who pitched in to help out were: Marty Miller, Ken Voltz, Kathy Kraatz, Mary Palacios, Dave Stewart, Diane Wilding, Johanna Andritz, Rebecca Foster, Linda Mahl, Susan Cruickshank, Mindy Schultz, Ed Goodnight, Bonnie Muck, and Karen Raccuia, Principal.

The Steering Comm. applied for and received grants from the Council on Arts which allowed the committee funds to purchase books, furnishings, and clothing for use in the school. A grant received from the State Parks and Historical Preservations Dep't. was used toward the cost of moving the schoolhouse to its present location. This grant was received through the offices of Assemblyman Joeseeph Pillittere.

Early in the project, the Historical Soc. agreed to be responsible for building the foundation on which the building would be set. On August 6, 1996, the school was moved by Farley Riggers of Lockport and placed on its new foundation. Since that time, renovation projects and fund-raising prepared the school for it May 18, 1997 Dedication.

Members of the Steering Comm were: Jean Figura, Chrm.; Wanda Burrows, Sec.y; Janet Sporer, Cor. Secy; Ed and Marilyn Allgeier, Ways & Means; also, the late Hazel Salisbury, Nina Mowell, Ellen Hibbard, Don Burrows, Don Croop, Patricia Rice, Denise Orzel, Martin Miller, Carol Fenn, and Richard Schmidle.

It is the policy of the Wilson His. Soc. to have a chairman and committee responsible for each of the buildings on the museum grounds. With addition of the schoolhouse to the museum complex, the committee selected to look after the schoolhouse is currently composed of Wanda Burrows, Chrm., Don Croop, Lois Jeanings, and Richard Schmidle.

We also wish to thank the following members who devoted much time and labor to complete the Schoolhouse project: Don Burrows, Darrell Smith, Ed Allgeier, Dan King, Donald K. Burrows, Gary Fitch, Hoyt Desso, and Ed Hastings.

* * * * *

BOARD REPORTS:

The society will put an entry in the Fireman Field Day Parade this Fall.

Motion was made and passed to allow Gary Fitch arrange for seeding the new acreage.

The Garden Club was given permission to use the Patterson Room on Dec. 11, 1997.

Delta Gamma Gamma was given permission to use the Patterson Room on December 1, 1997.

The April 7th report by the treasurer shows that 88 persons donated to the building fund for a total of \$4,453.00.

Darrell Smith and Don Burrows repaired several frozen pipes from this "Spring". A special thank you to the Pfeiffer Company who notified us that water was spraying behind the Barnum Bldg

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BON MOT:

Life is like a tennis game---you can't win without serving.

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MUSEUM HOSTS & HOSTESSES:

Virginia Strablow, Chrm., has submitted the following list of members who have agreed to serve as greeters at the museum, Sunday afternoons from 2-4PM:

June 1st, Walter and Shirley Evans-(open museum, Ollie Clark); June 8th, Joeseeph and Julie Dulkiewicz-(open museum, Elton Kropp); June 15th, Marion Campbell and Alice Davenport-(open museum, Dorothy Maxfield); June 22nd, Gregory and Dena Mandeville-(open museum, Hoyt Desso); June 29th, Ron and Judy Zauner-(open museum), Don Burrows; July 6th, Howard and Leona Hunter, (open museum), Richard Schmidle).

* * * * *

MEMBERS IN THE NEWS:

William McLaughlin, a Life Member of the Wilson His. Soc., resigned recently as Chairman of Lockport Savings Bank Board of Trustees on which he served for 27 years. Before retiring as a CPA with McLaughlin & Slate, certified Public Accountants, he made out all the annual IRS reports for the historical society.

* * * * *

Judy Zauner, former secretary of the Wilson His. Soc., was one of three adults honored by the United Way of Niagara Co. for their voluntary contributions, and the award ceremony was held at the Pendleton House in Lockport.

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"A FEW GOOD MEN":

The call is going out today for a great army of volunteers to solve America's problems--we understand where they are coming from.

Volunteerism has been a way of life in Wilson for many years, not only in the Historical Society but other groups as well like the Wilson Free Library; the Wilson and South Wilson Fire Companies; the Hospital Auxiliary; local Churches; and look what has recently been accomplished with the Randall Road Schoolhouse--to mention a few. In fact, we sometimes wonder how much would be done if it wasn't for volunteers.

It has been proven time and time again that when volunteers get behind a project in Wilson there is no limit to what can be accomplished. This was proven in the 1970's when the historical society was organized, and everyone pitched in to renovate the old 1912 Depot. Since then, four additional buildings have been erected or renovated with much of the work being done by volunteers. Now, many of those members have passed away; moved away; or reached an age where they can no longer keep up the pace of earlier years. Because of this, much of the work being accomplished today is being done by a handful of overworked members.

It doesn't have to be that way. We have many competent, capable members in the society who could make the society vibrant and active--all that has to be done is to convince them that being a volunteer can be fun--especially when you work together with others and get results.

Our organization was started by a bunch of "depression-raised kids" who didn't like to see money spent on anything they could do themselves.--and it was that great spirit of saving and cooperation that built the museum and made it what it is today.

Of course things have changed in 25 years--for that matter the whole country has, but that doesn't mean we have to spend all our time watching TV or playing with a computer.

One could say that we are in the same predicament as the United States Marines--all we need are a "Few Good Men--or Women"--but with one big exception, you don't have to sign up for a three year hitch. All we'd like to hope for is that you'd be willing to show up once-in-a-while when one of our building chairmen need a little help.

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RECENT ACQUISITIONS:

Diane Lane has donated a portrait of her mother, the late Hazel D. Salisbury to be hung in the Schoolhouse. Mrs. Salisbury was a former teacher at the school.

Mabel Burrows, Burt: Picture of Dist. #3 Schoolhouse that once stood on the Wilson-Burt Rd. in 1914. Students attending school at the time are in the picture.

James Harold, Arlington, VA; 7 issues of "Antique Automobiles" 1979-83; also "Tin Lizzie", (1955); also Geologic Surveys of Ransomville and Cambria.

Mark Smith, San Jose, CA: 3 copies of Certification of Wm. H. Smith of Battery M, NY Light Artillery--recorded for his Dedication by wife, Azuba, and children Nettie Capan Willey, and Effie Stacy; also Burt Van Horn Genealogy of Horain Horace Smith family in 1808.

Mrs. Phylis Brezing: White House Cookbook-1924; Marigold Cookbook, 1938; Modern Home Cookbook, 1924; "Niagra, Queen of Wonders-1916; and the "Work Play Book-1933.

Marion Smithson Tabor: 4 school books-1828-39. Marion was former teacher.

Julia and Joe Dulkuewicz: National Encyclopedia by Collier & Son-1932.

Gerald Treichler, Sanborn: Historical Records and of family of William J. Brado and Anna Maria Skinner. (Jacob Treichler was Postmaster of Maple Street postoffice in 1874.)

Marilyn Allgeier: 1 Swivel Chair (1850) for teachers desk in schoolhouse, caned seat & back.

Janet Sporleder: 8 Vol. "American Heritage" 1996-97.

Diane Albright, Hammonsport: Teaching materials for schoolhouse, Flashcards, Books, Playing Cards, and small wooden figurines.

Schoolhouse acquisitions not yet announced: Monetary Gifts from Don and Phyliss Gray; Mr. & Mrs. Wesley Churchill; Rick and Tina Elias; and Walter Ganshaw. Mary Lou Hurlburt Young, Two Schooldesks; Charles Wilson, Books; Joyce Richards, Vols. from 1840 School Dist. Library; Robin Hopacz, Books; Cynthia Lauer, Childrens Books; M. Kram, Rod for opening windows; Beatrice Rockwood, Photo of Townline School and Books; and Bill Rose, Books.

Grants from Council on Arts used to buy 24 "Games from Long Ago"; 24 "A Child's Day" and 24 "A One Room School". Also, 12 aprons, 12 vests, 12 bonnets, 24 hats, and the games "Jacks", "Checkerboards", and other toys. (Costumes for children to dress up in when visiting school.)

* * * * *

SOUNDINGS:

There'd be no hurrying to get someplace...no worrying about getting older...and no wishing we were better looking if clocks, calendars, and mirrors had never been invented.

* * * * *

PUPPETEERS NEED HELP:

The Puppeteer Branch of the Wilson Hospital Auxiliary is in need of volunteers to assemble and hand-sew the small dolls which are given to children confined in the Newfane Hospital. Doris MacBeth figured that she sewed 5 puppets, 6 days a week last winter to meet a quota of 60 puppets every two months.

The joy that these puppets bring to the little patients at the hospital is heart-warming and the Wilson auxiliary has been supplying them for about 20 years. If you like to sew and wish to be a part of this worthwhile project, call Mrs. Lois Jennings, 751-9783.

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FROM THE MAILBAG:

We received a nice letter from Mary "Polly" Brown of Washington, DC the widow of Phillip Brown, son of Sam Brown, who started the grocery store where Scheffler's stands today. It was later known as Miller and Browns, then Welker and Browns.

She enclosed a photo taken in 1942 showing 2 tons of scrap metal in front of the store collected for the war effort. Some of the items identified were a large 2-wheel coffee grinder, platform scales, and a "Flying Red Horse" Socony Gasoline Pump. The photo is enlarged from a 1 1/2 x 2 1/2 inch snapshot, and on the back of the original, (in Sam Browns handwriting) is this incscription, "Oct. 12, 1942. 2 tons of metal collected for the war, Welker & Browns."

* * * * *

Thelma Patterson writes that she has always followed the progress of the Randall Rd. Schoolhouse with great interest. She recalls that was where she, Stan, and others rehearsed plays that they put on in the Ransomville Grange Hall in the 1960's. They were directed by Mrs. Frank Fenn, and she remembers they were a lot of fun and everyone had a good time.

Thelma taught in Dist. #3 Schoolhouse from 1929 to 1932 which was located on what was then called the East Youngstown Road. The former school is now the home of the Ferringtons.

* * * * *

Ralph Seefeldt of Glens Falls, NY notes that when he lived in Wilson in 1928-38, his home was on the Fred Bigalow farm, and that his parents later lived there from 1942 to 1944. It is always nice to hear from members who read the historical society Newsletter.

* * * * *

CONSERVATION CLUB DERBY:

There will be a free fishing derby for children ages 3 to 14 on Saturday, June 14th, from 8 to 12 Noon. The Derby is sponsored by the Wilson Conservation Club, and fish must be taken to the townline pier for measurement by Noon. Tropheys and cash prizes will be awarded at Krueger Park at 2PM.

The one mile Fun Run and the 5K Salmon Run will be held Saturday, June 14th, at 4:30PM and 5:00 PM respectively. Races will start at Krueger Park, Rt. 18, and there is a \$5 pre entry and a \$7 post entry fee. The pre entry fee for the 5K run is \$8 and \$10 for the post entry fee. All fees include insurance and CYRK T-Shirts. Both male and female may compete in all races. Applications and entry fees may be mailed to P.O.Box 537, Wilson, NY 14172. You may also call 751-6704 for more information.

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IN MEMORIAM:

Ronald W. Hamblin, 81, died at Niagara Falls Medical Center on March 12, 1997 after a long illness. He was a native of Wilson, the son of William and Mabel Gephart Hamblin. He graduated from Wilson High School in 1934 and later attended Kelly Business Institute.

In the 1930's he played with the "Indigoers", well known Wilson Orchestra that played at the former Cataract House in the Falls as well as at "Sunset Island Beach" in Wilson. He also served in the U.S. Army Signal Corps during World War II. He worked for the Niagara Frontier Transit Association for 35 years, and was Station Supervisor of the Metro Div. when he retired.

He is survived by his wife, Winona Ward Hamblin of Wilson who he married in Niagara Falls, Dec. 12, 1942. He also leaves a son, William Hamblin of Clayton, CA; a brother, Harry Hamblin of Ohio; and two granddaughters. Burial was in the North Ridge Cemetery.

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A THANK YOU:

To Mrs. Dorothy Lort of Wilson who recently made a generous contribution to the general fund of the Wilson Historical Society. Your interest and support is appreciated.

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PICNIC:

Jan Sporleder reports that this year's annual "dinner" will be a Picnic to be held at the Barnum Bldg. at 6:00PM, Monday evening, June 16th. The cost will be \$3.00 per person.

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MEMORIAL:

In a fitting tribute to the late Winifred Helwig Fischer, a tree was planted on the museum grounds on May 3rd by members of the Tri-Ton 4-H Club as an Arbor Day Memorial to the former 4-H Leader and Environmentalist. Two of "Winnie's" daughters, Shirley Novak of Syracuse, and Sharon Fischer of Tonawanda attended and watched as Extension Agent, Joe Urso, and 4-H members backfilled the new tree. The tree was marked with a gold-lettered plaque. BY Shirley Harper, Club Leader, and Linda Staseleviage Ass't Leader read a letter in commemoration of "Winnie".

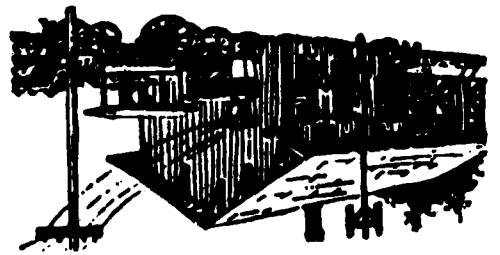
She was a charter member of the Wilson His/ Soc., and served as Chrm. of both the Refreshment and Ways & Means Committees. She was, however, best known for her weaving ability and was able to help Art Schnoor assemble the Donner Loom. Even after making a remarkable recovery from a massive stroke, she enjoyed showing and teaching children to operate her private loom at the society's Memorial Day Fairs.

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FINAL THOUGHT:

You know technology has passed you by when there is a power outage and nothing you own is blinking.

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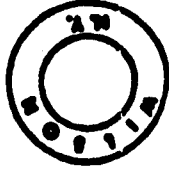
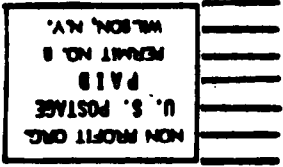
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JULY/AUGUST 1997 VOL 26 NO. 7

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

NEWSLETTER

WILSON, NEW YORK 14172-9763
Wilson Historical Society



July/Aug 1997

SCHOOLHOUSE MEMORIES:

Thelma Patterson recalled some of the good times she had when she and others used to rehearse for plays at the Randall Road Schoolhouse. She said most of them were put on at the Ransomville Grange Hall, but occasionally one would be performed at St. Peters on Church Street.

She remembered one rehearsal when Seward Moot, who played the part of a wealthy invalid, was given "medicine" by his "nurse", Lillian Evans. Actually, however, she gave him a spoon full of coffee grounds--which he was seen spitting out for some time after.

Another time, Thelma played the part, opposite her husband, of a flamboyant old maid. She was supposed to faint and Stan would yell, "Call an ambulance--call the firemen."

It seems that Jack Evans walked in when Stan started yelling. Jack hadn't seen the part they were rehearsing before, so he quickly ran across the road to Maloney's where he called the Wilson ambulance.

A short time later, with lights flashing and siren blowing, the ambulance pulled into the schoolhouse yard. You can picture the look on the firemen's faces when Bob LeVan told them it was just a play and everything was alright.

It was in that same play that Thelma, the old maid, had to chase Stan all around the stage saying, "You're kind of a cute little runt at that." Don Seefeldt, who was also in the play "cracked up" and said, "Is that how it all started with you, Stan?"

Hazel and Bob LeVan were prompters for the acting group which consisted of Lillian Evans; Gwen Heidenfeldt; Seward Moot; Don Seefeldt; Marvin Myers; Mrs. Frank Fenn; Jack Evans; Keith Moore; Stan Patterson; Thelma Patterson; and Carol Fenn.

In one play, Don Seefeldt played a part opposite one of the girls, and when he was unable to be there Stan took his place. During rehearsal, Stan told the girl, "Don't stand so close, you're steaming up my glasses." Thelma said that with all the ad libbing, it was a wonder anyone was able to remember their lines.

Most of the plays were murder mysteries, and one was put on for a bowling banquet at St. Peters Lutheran Church. It was a fun night and the cast said and did things that weren't in the script.

Mrs. Fenn, for instance, played the part of a colored maid so she had to blacken her face. She wore white gloves, and during the play she put them on her face--then showed her black and white gloves to the audience--it "brought down the house."

Thelma also recalled that in the "Roaring Twenties" she attended Wilson High School, and used to visit the little hot dog stand on the corner across from Welker & Brown's Store. There she was able to buy two hot dogs and a bottle of soda for 25 cents. Thelma remarked, "Do that today if you can."

We thank Thelma for sharing some of her hilarious schoolhouse memories with us. Who knows, perhaps a few of our Newsletter readers may have seen some of those "Schoolhouse" plays.

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QUILT WINNER:

The quilt was won this year by Jean Nablo Kennedy of N. Tonawanda. The beautiful North Carolina Lily spread was quilted by Betty Stimson of Wilson.

The lovely white afghan knitted by Blanche Wilson of Chestnut Road was awarded as second prize to Don Croop of Wilson.

The third prize, an attractive wood carving by Bob Schearer of Wilson, was won by Karen Russell of Burt, New York.

The Wilson Sketchbook, a history of Wilson, was fourth prize and it was awarded to Elizabeth Scherer of Wilson.

The 5th prize, a Wilson Historical Society Recipe Book, was won by Virginia Klaiber of Williamsville, NY.

In a separate drawing, a Town of Wilson Afghan was awarded to Keeley Swick of Wilson. The historical society is grateful to those who donated prizes for the drawing, and also to the hundreds of people who made the drawing a success. Thank you.

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4th GRADERS DONATE TREE:

The 4th grade- at Thomas Marks School and their teacher, Johanna Andritz, took up a collection and purchased an Adams Crabapple tree from the Thomas Marks Nursery in Wilson. The cost of planting the tree in the schoolyard at the museum was donated by Thomas E. Marks.

* * * * *

BON MOT: Gardening is healthy exercise if you can straighten up afterwards.

FAIR HIGHLIGHTS:

Sunny skies and pleasant weather brought thousands of visitors to this year's Memorial Day Fair making it one of the best in 25 years. The well-planned event was supervised by Lois Barnum, Nettie Stimson, Darrell Smith, Gary Fitch, and Don Burrows. (Ron Zauner helped plan the event but was out of town on fair day.)

The 4½ acre "Hojack Park" was marked off on Saturday by Ernie Grenville, Don Wiltse, Bob Dinse, and Bob Schearer. Dealers arrived after midnight on Monday and Nettie Stimson and Bill Loeschke spent all night showing them where to set up. Bob Botzer joined them at 5AM, and Ernie Grenville, Bob Schearer, and Walter Holmes arrived at 6AM to give them a hand.

After the dealers were set, Bill Loeschke took charge of the parking along Rt. 425 and his helpers were Bob Botzer, Red Clark, Walter Holmes, James Carrigan, Howard Hunter, Bob Schearer, Ernie Grenville, and a group of officers from the Niagara County Emergency Services.

WLVL Radio, Lockport, was operating on the grounds by 6AM with John May and Bill Cameron at the mike. Anyone who tuned in WLVL that morning should agree they did a fine job plugging the fair. Good Neighbor Dave Marmon also accepted an invitation from the fair committee to spend the day making pertinent fair announcements by the old 1903 Caboose. Dave did a good job despite the fact all the museum speakers were not working properly.

By 9AM the fair grounds were "jumping", and Don Burrows, Pres., reported that our free shuttle bus service was bringing full loads of people to the grounds. In spite of this, cars were parked on both sides of the road and as far south as the Ide Road.

Publicizing the fair is, of course, very important, and Marge Williams did a good job. In addition to sending press releases to local papers, she also arranged for Lois Barnum, Barbara Mosher, Winnie Terry, and herself, to appear on the Inez Wallens show in Niagara Falls. Fair Posters were handed out, and Inez interviewed Marge about the fair. You may also have seen Gary Fitch and Dan King on Tom Jolls 5:30 weather report on Channel 7 TV News. Dan and Gary took the 1912 "Metz" with them to advertise the fair, and Gary was interviewed by Tom Jolls.

Perhaps the newest and best attraction this year was the Randall Road Schoolhouse which was dedicated on May 18th. The school is not only a credit to the museum, but also to the many persons who made the moving and renovation project possible. Schoolhouse Chrm., Wanda Burrows, greeted visitors most of the day while other attendants were Lois Jennings, Don Croop, Elizabeth Held, Helen Horton, Donna Fritton, and Gary Pettit. Incidentally, Wanda is looking for photographs of former rural school teachers in Wilson to place on the schoolhouse walls. If you have one you'd like to donate, please get in touch with Wanda.

The Ways & Means stand was operated by Dick Schmidle who took over for Sally Smith, Chrm., who was busy with the funnel cake concession. Helping Dick were Miles Linnabery, Kara Holden, Al Waite, AND Paul Holden. The adjoining quilt concession was attended by Betty Stimson, Betty Hausman, Lucille Upton, Peg Fritton, Norma Ward, Jeanne Schmidle, Sandra Holden, and Mary Ann Brogan.

Wally Goodman and Bill Rose did some nice re-arranging in the Dr. Argue Car Building, and all autos were shined up and looked great. A nice touch were the computerized identification signs made up by Bill for all the cars. A new case was filled with trophies dear to the late doctor's heart, and Bill said that more cases with antique car memorabilia will be added. Incidentally, all adopt-a-car models looked fine, and Wally and Bill deserve a pat-on-the-back for "car sitting" the entire day.

One of our more active junior members, Joshua Smith, organized a ball-toss game to raise money for the museum. Live gold fish were the prizes, and the game proved to be very popular and brought in a surprising amount of money. Like all chairmen, Joshua had his helpers including Michael, David, and Joshua Brady, Brandon Schessel, and Steve Fowler.

Doug and Julie Smith probably came the greatest distance to help with the fair. The Smiths live near York, Pa., and were happy to hand out free balloons to the hundreds of children who attended the fair. Working at the fair is a tradition with Doug who started helping around 1975 when he was about 14 years old.

Inside the Depot, Dorothy Maxfield, curator, rearranged a number of regular exhibits including an attractive photographic display in the Millie Croop room. Thanks to Hoyt Desso, the Elwin Upton Dollhouse now has a new base which permits it to be exhibited properly. Hoyt also re-finished and repaired a new case in the ticket office for the John Myers Memorial display. Dorothy also arranged to have the following people watch the depot during the fair: Norrie Desso, Joe and Marguerite Geiser, Ellsworth McKelvey, Neva Benedict, Edna Rose, Elsie Fitch, Jack Maxfield, Helen Horton, Virginia and Gordon Strablow, Dora Wakeman, June Kropp, Gerry Swann, and Judy and Ron Yaskow.

Anne Faery, Membership Chrm., also set up a table, and several new members were signed up including one new Life Member. Assisting Anne were Jeanne Schmidle, and Mary and Ed Webster.

Eleanor Myers, town historian, also had tables set up in the Patterson Room where visitors could sign a register if they ever attended a school in Wilson. Many also enjoyed checking over the complete collection of Wilson High School "Crests". Helping Eleanor were Lois Jennings, Lucille Upton, Janice Sporleder, and Marion Campbell.

All the food concessions did well and the Beef on Weck was especially good. Dorothy Knight was "Head Cook" and cook helpers were Sandra Holden, Karen Russell, Dena Mandeville, Margaret Seiner, Betty Szantor, Anne Rohring, Marge Craig, Emily McAvoy, Kathy Frerichs, Maxine and Bill Jones, and Carrie Dziomba.

Pam Groff was next in line with the homemade pie concession. Over 60 pies were served along with assorted cookies and cupcakes. Pam's workers were Amelia Bach, Esther Geise, Chris Goodman, Ellin Ellis, Sylvia McCuaig, and Bernice Robinson.

Last but not least was the "drink" stand chaired by Sara Berry. That was where you could pick up a cup of coffee, lemonade, or pepsi to go with your homemade pie or beef-on-weck. Sara's helpers were mostly "All in the Family" and consisted of Rev. Daniel and Neoma Berry, Carl and Judy Jennejahn, George Montgomery, and Sid Pettit--also Don Croop, off and on.

The famous Chiavetta Chicken Bar-B-Que was, as usual, well organized by Shirley Hunter and Shirley Linnenbank. Serving 1400 chicken dinners is no easy task--that's a lot of chicken, and it took a lot of good people to handle it. However, the "Shirley Team" lined up a good crew including Micky Hunter, Larry Andrews, Leona Hunter, Norma Aikers, Marion Campbell, Ruth Thomas, Judy Okoniewski, Anita Pearce, Jack Linnenbank, Jan and Richard Zipp, Esther Myers, Pauline Alvers, Shirley Evans, Jackie Rodgers, Sue Cruickshank, Winnie Terry, and Jack Terry.

For many years, Dick and Sue Schultz have operated the popular popcorn and lemonade stand, and this year was no exception. Dick and Sue were grateful for their helpers: Terry and Joyce Rohring, George and Sue Cruickshank, Kelli Jordan, Jamie Campbell, and Jen Puff, who kept things "poppin".

Kyle Andrews was in charge of the pepsi cannisters which were placed at several outlets, including the popcorn stand. Kyle did a great job because he made sure that a minimum of cannisters would be tapped near the mid afternoon which saved the society big "bucks".

Sally Smith's funnel cakes topped the 1,000 mark this year with 1085 actually sold. That was a 25 year record--no doubt due to the cute "Funnel Bunnies" who dispensed them. Several persons worked with Sally on Saturday to mix up the funnel batter which, incidentally, contained 30 dozen eggs. They were: Albina Murawski, Wanda Burrows, Laurie Evans, Michele Evans, Lorraine Brady, Susan Sobiegray, and Marianne Evans.

On Fair Day, the members and friends who helped serve funnel cakes to a never ending line of customers were: Sally Smith, Marianne Evans, and Lorraine Brady, who worked all day; Susan Sobiegray, Irene Murawski, Mary Kelkenberg, Chris Schnyder, and Linda Hoover, who worked most of the day; and Jane and John Demmin and Donna Pettit and Audrey Collesano who worked from 2 to 4PM. Even Nettie Stimson, who was up all night parking Dealers, spent an hour on the funnel cake detail. Lorraine Brady and Marianne Evans helped set up the funnel cake stand, and worked until 9PM Monday night helping Sally clean-up.

Our coffee lady, Judy Zauner, was out of town on fair day so Carol Smith took charge of the coffee and doughnut stand next to the depot. This stand opens at 5:00 AM to provide coffee and donuts to Vendors and other early risers. Carol's helpers included Gail Walder, Mary Miller, Judy Okoniewski, Greg Mandeville, Tim Cramb, Neva Benedict, Cheryl Brown, Helen Stevens, Shirley Evans, Tom Sharpe, Celeste Crawford, Sandra and Kara Holden, Maureen Bryer, Bonnie Muck, Phylis Brezing, Eadie Goodnight, Pat Rice, and Janice McDowell.

Dale Schlyer has been operating "Art's Hot Dogs" stand since Art was no longer able to do it. This year, "Debbie and Dale", (because of the rush), had to shut down for a short time until a new batch of "dogs" could be obtained from Lakeside. In spite of this they sold 360 pounds of hot dogs. "Debbie and Dale" had a great crew including the David Lester family, the Randy Ward family, Ed Allgeier, "Chuck" Messersmith, and a great bunch of young hard-working youths including Tara Barnum. (The late former Hist. Soc. Pres., Whit Barnum, would have been proud of his granddaughter.)

The new Cotton Candy machine worked extremely well and Melinda Hutchison was well pleased with the way it worked. The jumbo sized cones were in big demand. Melinda and Jack and her helpers, Don, Janet, Mark, and Tara Laurie, worked all day long.

Near the Cotton Candy was the Sno Cone and Pepsi truck operated by Joe and Linda Moran. Helping them were Mary and Bob Savigny, Jenna Andrews, Mary Clark, and Barbara Mosher. The Sno Cones and Cotton candy were very popular with the young people attending the fair.

At the entranceway to the fair grounds you may have noticed the beautiful plantings around the historical society Sign. They were provided and planted by Beutel Nurseries, S. Wilson.

Jerry Kadryna of Lakeside Market, Wilson, has long been known for his generosity and cooperation with local churches and other organizations. This year, the society purchased most of their supplies from Lakeside, which is also very convenient because Jerry will hold them at the store until needed. We especially wish to thank Jerry for paying the rental fee for the ice truck, and also for donating the ready-to-use lemonade drink used at the various stands.

Ticket sales are very important to the fair operation because tickets are used in place of cash to purchase food. Each food item is sold for a specified number of tickets which were available at several ticket booths. Gary Fitch was responsible for tickets and sales, and he selected qualified persons to help out as cashiers. Working with Gary were: Don Wiltse, Walter Evans, Barbara Mosher, Marilyn Allgeier, Norma Akers, Marge Williams, Bonnie Muck, Ronada Ortiz, Walter Moxham, Jamie Moxham, Kevin King, Lea King, Keith Dixon, Kathy Dixon, Karen Aikin, Michelle Walck, and Edward Webster.

The fair's finances were in good hands with Jim and Beth Waldron and Carole Schnoor spending most of the day in the Depot distributing change, counting money, and keeping a record of all receipts. Judy King also worked with them as a "runner", and picked up cash from the various concessions all day. The bigger job started after the fair, however when all bills had to be turned in and accounted for.

Not enough can be said for the fair chairmen and workers who cleaned up their work areas before going home. Special thanks to June Rohring, Red Clark, and Wally Moxham who stayed until 7PM cleaning the Barnum Building and loading up the tables and chairs that were loaned for the Bar-B-Que by Frank Brunner of Newfane.

We should also be very grateful to the members and friends who worked until 9PM Monday night putting away ticket booths, stands, refrigerators, and picking up trash left around the grounds: Don Burrows, Gary Fitch, Darrell Smith, Elton Kropp, Sally Smith, Wanda Burrows, Judy King, Marianne Evans, Laurie Evans, Michael Evans, Joshua Smith, and the "Brady Bunch", Lorraine, Joshua, Michael, and Daniel.

With cooperation from fair chairmen, we have tried to list everyone who worked at the fair. It is quite possible some may have been overlooked. If so, we are sorry.

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SOUNDINGS:

Summer is the time to keep the house as cold as you complained about in the winter.

* * * * *

MEMBER IN THE NEWS:

Chris Schultz, son of Calvin and Sue Schultz, was named Valedictorian of the Class of '97, Wilson Central High School. He had a 98.17% average in an academic program consisting of AP Chemistry, AP English Literature, and College level Calculus.

Chris was President of the Senior Class and member of the National Honor Society. He was a member of the Student Council and participated in the Band and the All County Band and Orchestra. He is listed in Who's Who among American school students, and his involvement in sports included Varsity Baseball, Tennis, and Football.

Chris also found time to volunteer his services at North Ridge U.M. Church; the Wilson His. Society; Sanborn Fire Company Band, and member of Troop 67, B.S.A., where he achieved the rank of Eagle Scout. He plans to further his education at the University of Rochester where he will major in Mathematics.

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RECENT ACQUISITIONS:

Bill Rose has donated a "Cram Atlas, 1889; "Secession", a personal Narrative of Proscription for being an Abolitionist-1856; Leather bound "Gettysburg Address" and other speeches; and Poetical works of Robert Burns-3rd Impression, 1911.

Jallie Cuddeback, Lockport: 50 Star Flag in memory of Robert Cuddeback.

Nettie Stimson, Lewiston: Painting of the Wilson Pier by Audrey Orr.

Wilson Central School (via Wallace Goodman): 1995 and 1996 "Crests"

* * * * *

IS MUSEUM ON INTERNET?:

Frederico Marzoratti, an eleven year old boy from Paris Etulain S/NO, Argentina, sent a letter to the Wilson Museum requesting brochures, cards, or pictures. In response we sent him some cards and brochure so he could learn a little more about Wilson.

Since this is the second time we have received letters from South America, it would be interesting how a boy from Argentina and one from Brazil found out about the Wilson Museum.

* * * * *

NEW MEMBERS:

It is a pleasure to welcome the following new members: Rev. Ronald Haefer, pastor of St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Wilson; also Charles and Jessie Michel of Ransomville; and Suzanne H. Scott of Dayton, Ohio, a direct descendent of Reuben Wilson after whom the Town of Wilson is named.

* * * * *

SUMMER MEETINGS:

There will be no monthly program meetings during the months July and August. The Board of Directors will meet as usual on the 2nd Wednesday of each month, and the museum will be open for visitors from 2-4pm on Sunday afternoons.

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BOARD REPORTS:

At the May meeting, the Board accepted, with deep regret, the resignation of Lois Jennings as Chairman of the Acquisitions Comm., who served in that capacity for the past 20 years. Don has appointed Celeste Crawford to succeed Lois in this very essential position.

The resignation of Jim Waldron as treasurer was also accepted, and Don Burrows, Pres., has appointed Judy King to replace him. Jim has served two years as treasurer during which time he did a commendable job. We are sorry to lose the services of Jim, but happy that someone as well qualified as Judy will be taking his place.

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WAR HORSES:

Mr. Richard Lynch of Jaffrey, NH, hit the jackpot when he wrote the society for information about a horse called "Billy Sherman". He is writing a book about Civil War horses and hopes to include Wilson's "Billy" in it.

We sent Mr. Lynch a copy of the society's 12th publication, "The Story of Billy Sherman", and suggested that he might use material from the booklet providing he credits the Wilson Historical Society as his source of information.

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MUSEUM GREETERS:

Virginia Strablow, Chrm., has submitted this list of greeters for the Museum on Sunday afternoons from 2-4PM: July 6th, Howard & Leona Hunter (open-Dick Schmidle); July 13th, Gus and David Bradley (open-Carole Schnoor); July 20th, Harold & Neva Benedict (open-Celeste Crawford); July 27th, Robert & Bobbie Hull (open-Don Croop);

August 3rd, Don and Mary Ann Basil (open-Wally Goodman); August 10th, John and Jane Demmin (open-Darrell Smith); August 17th, Bill & Maxine Jones (open-Milton Clark); July 24th, Charles & Ann Horton, (open-Don Croop); August 31st, Bill and Judy Rose (open- Wally Goodman); September 7th, Don and Wanda Burrows (Open- Don Burrows)

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ANNUAL DINNER:

About 50 persons attended the annual "picnic" on June 9, 1997, that was held in the Bar-num Bldg. at 6:00PM. A tasty menu consisting of hot dogs, potato salad, carrot salad, baked beans, lemonade, coffee, brownies, cookies, watermelon and ice cream was served. Janice Sporleder, Chrm., Shirley Evans, Barbara Mosher, Winnie Terry, Lucille Upton, Emily McAvoy, Marge Williams, Miles Linnabery, and Mary Ann Brogan.

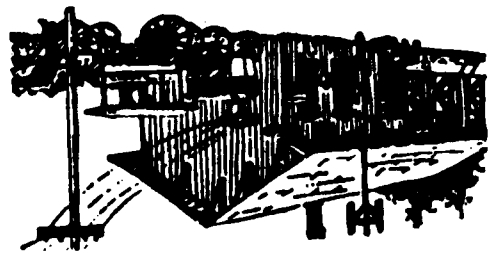
After the dinner, a short meeting was conducted by Don Burrows, Pres., who also asked for reports from committee chairmen on their past year's activities.

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FINAL THOUGHT:

A wise man never plants more garden than his wife can hoe.

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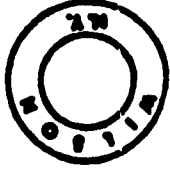
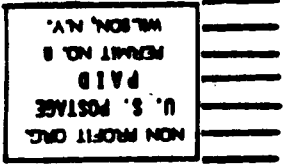
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September 1997 VOL. 25 No. 8

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

NEWSLETTER

Wilson Historical Society
Wilson, New York 14172-9763



September 1997

MARKERS HIGHLIGHT WILSON'S PAST:

About 14 historical markers have been erected in the town of Wilson, and most of them were put in place through the efforts of Janet Sporleder, Chrm. of the Historical Sites Comm. In addition, whenever any of the signs needed re-painting, Jan has taken care of it.

The society has selected sites that are noted for their historical interest, and these include, "Billy Sherman's Gravesite", Wilson/Burt Rd.; Reuben Wilson's Landing, Rt. 18 at Maple; Port of Entry, Wilson Boathouse; Reuben Wilson Home, W. Young Street; Collegiate Institute, at site of Town Hall; Tabor Bridge, Lakestreet; Wright Homestead, Daniel's Rd.; 1824 Log Cabin, East Wilson; "Hojack Park", museum grounds; Randall Road Cemetery; First schoolhouse in village, site of Wilson House Inn; Kruse Brick Kiln, Beebe Road; and home of Ira Pettit, (Diary of Deadman)

Eleanor Myers, town historian, suggested recently that the site of the former Barnum Foundry on Wood Street might also possibly be considered for a historic marker. The Barnum Foundry is listed in the 1869 Niagara County Directory as the Barnum, Wilson Co., manufacturers of agricultural implements and castings. In its day, the Barnum Plow was built there, and one of them is on display at the museum in the Fittro Shop. It was acquired and donated to the museum by the late Helen Borngraeber of Wilson.

The origin of the Barnum family is quite interesting and dates back to 1650 when Thomas Barnum of Danbury, CN, and many of his descendents, attained prominence in New England. Perhaps the most famous of these was Phineas Taylor Barnum, better known as P.T. Barnum, whos "Greatest Show on Earth", brought fame and fortune to such well-known personalities as "Tom Thumb", "The Seven Sutherland Sisters", and "Buffalo Bill".

P.T. Barnum's grandfather, Ephraem Barnum, who served in the Revolutionary War, was the great grandson of Thomas Barnum of Danbury, and another great grandson was Captain Richard Barnum, who also served in the Revolution with the 16th Connecticut Regiment.

Capt. Barnum's grandson, Richard Barnum, was named after him, and Richard was the one who brought the Barnum name to Western New York. In 1808, a Cooper by trade, he walked from Danbury, CT. to Monroe County and settled near Penfield, NY.

He married Electa Lloyd, and they moved to Brighton, NY, where their homestead later became known as the "Barnum's Terrace." Two sons, Frederick Foster and David Lloyd, received their education in Brighton.

David Lloyd later moved to Wilson where, in 1863, he opened up an iron foundry on Wood St. in the village. He married Elizabeth Dygert and they had eight children. He was a member of the Presbyterian Church; the village board; and the Wilson School Board; and he was always interested in the welfare of the village. Both he and his wife, Elizabeth, are buried in Greenwood Cemetery.

David's brother, Frederick Foster Barnum came to Wilson in 1862, and purchased land south of the village on Wilson/Cambria road, Lot #5. His son, James, married Alida Wollaber, and they had a son whom they named Frederick Foster Barnum after his grandfather.

Frederick Foster Barnum married Maude Crossman and, from 1936 to 1947, he was town highway superintendent. In 1947 he was elected town supervisor and held the position until he died in 1949. He was succeeded by his son, Whitney Barnum, who held the position for 22 years--longer than any other supervisor. Three others who served a long time were: Victor Berlin, 11 years; Reuben Wilson, 10 years; and Roland Singer, 7 years.

Since the Barnum family name has been so prominently connected with the business and political life of the Wilson Community for so many years, the suggestion made by Mrs. Myers to place a historical marker at the site of the old Barnum, Wilson Co. foundry appears to be a good one.

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SNAKE OIL:

Early settlers used to find hundreds of rattlesnakes in several areas of Niagara County including the rocky sector in Lockport named after them, "Rattlesnake Hill." Many of the snakes were killed when hunting parties were formed to "root out" the venomous reptiles,

"Rattlesnake Johnny", famous Niagara County snake hunter, amazed residents by his apparent immunity to snake bites when he raided the serpents' nests.

"Johnny" was the sole owner and vendor of a cure-all, "Rattlesnake Oil", which was supposed to be good for rhuematism and arthritis.

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BON MOT:

Admit you're wrong when you're wrong, and you'll be alright.

* * * * *

NEW MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMEN:

Don Burrows, Pres., has appointed Sandy and Kara Holden of Wilson to the office of Co-Chairmen of the society's Membership Committee. The appointments were made to fill a vacancy left by the resignation of Anne Faery, who plans to move out-of-state.

The Membership Chairman performs one of the most important functions in operation of the historical society---that of keeping accurate, up-to-date files on all active and delinquent members; mailing out membership cards; making up the annual membership roll; and addressing and mailing out the society's monthly Newsletter.

The society has had several very dedicated members hold the position of Membership Chrm., including Marion Campbell (1972-75); Millie Croop (1976); Christine Kelman (1977-90); and Anne Faery, (1991-97).

We welcome Sandy and Kara, and hope that everyone will try to make their job easier by renewing memberships by the first of each New Year. During the last quarter of the year, a renewal application will be placed in the Oct., Nov., and Dec., Newsletters so that by Jan. 1st everyone will have had ample time to renew their dues and start the New Year off right.

Sandy and Kara have designed a new application form for 1998 which we believe will be easier for members to use. We again caution everyone to be sure that your address is correct because the Post Office will generally not forward 3rd Class mail.

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NEW LIFE MEMBER:

It is a pleasure to announce that Melva (Arnold) Beecher Craft has become a Life Member of the society through the courtesy of her sister, June. Melva is the daughter of Milford P. Arnold and Emma S. Snyder, and was born in Somerset, August 21, 1918. After attending schools in Ransomville, Kenmore, Jamestown, Orchard Park and Barker, she graduated as Valedictorian of the first class to graduate from the New Wilson High School in 1936.

She married Edgar N. Beecher in 1972 and they had five children, Dorothy, Marian (Brojosus), Edwin, Elsie (Ondak), and Carl. She married Kirby Craft in 1991 and both he and Edgar Beecher are deceased.

She is a member of St. James United Methodist Church in Niagara Falls; the St. James Senior Citizen Club; the Niagara Falls Chapter O.E.S #582; International Training in Communications; and the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation of WNY. (Three of her children passed away with Cystic Fibrosis--a genetic disease.)

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SUCCESSFUL SEARCH:

Wanda Burrows, Cor. Sec'y., recently received a beautifully framed marriage certificate of the 1868 marriage of Charles Shaw of Wilson and Mrs. Chester VanWagoner. It was in good condition when found in a cellar at 155 Park Ave., Buffalo, where it laid for 43 years. Mr. Tom Geist, who acquired the certificate, gave it to Bob Zastrow of Wilson, and he turned it over to Wanda. It was Mr. Geist's wish that the Wilson Hist. Soc. genealogical records be searched for a descendant, but if one could not be found the certificate was to stay in the Museum.

Celeste Crawford, genealogical chrm., checked her computer files and discovered that Mrs. Van Wagoner was Doug Farley's g-g-g-grandmother, so Wanda turned the marriage license over to him. It was easy to find the connection because Doug Farley had previously turned in his "family tree" to the society. Doug also did research on his wife's maiden name which was Geist.

Celeste Crawford has done a fine job of entering the society's family records on computer, and she will still welcome information from any of our members or friends. She adds that it isn't necessary for a person to go back 6 or 7 generations for their records to be valuable--just having your grandparents or great grandparents on file can be helpful.

So take a few minutes to get your family tree up to date, then give or mail it to Celeste at Box 265, Wilson, NY, 14172---She'll take it from there.

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BILLY'S IN BOOK:

Capt. Richard Lynch, commander of the 1st NH Vol. Cavalry, has acknowledged receiving a copy of the society's booklet, "The Story of Billy Sherman." He noted that "Billy Sherman" is being included in his book, "Horses of the Civil War". and that proper credit is being given to the Wilson Historical Society.

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2ND GRADERS VISIT MUSEUM:

Three second grades from Thomas Marks School visited the Museum on June 22nd, and spent most of their time in the schoolhouse, caboose, and depot. It was a beautiful day, and the youngsters were able to hike to and from the museum.

The first to arrive were Sue Cruickshank's class, accompanied by Diane and Daniel Fournier. About a half hour later, Pat Lash's class arrived, accompanied by Bridget Moley. Mary Watt's class arrived last accompanied by Debbie McGahan.

As each group arrived, they assembled in the schoolhouse where Celeste Crawford presented a short talk on the history and restoration of the Randall Rd. Schoolhouse, and explained how one teacher could teach several grades at the same time.

When the pupils left the school, they visited the caboose, then the depot where Lucille Upton served them lemonade and cookies.

Area teachers who would like to visit the schoolhouse with their students may make arrangements to do so by contacting tours chairman, Lucille Upton, 751-6883.

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BOARD REPORTS:

A request was made by Shirley Hunter to hold the Methodist Church "flea market" at the historical society grounds on Labor Day, 1998. Motion made and passed to grant permission.

Elton Kropp announced that Leo Volk has ordered the necessary parts to fix the player piano acquired recently. When repaired, the piano will be placed in the schoolhouse.

If the new acreage is made ready, Nettie Stimson said she would like to use it for the 1998 Memorial Day Fair.

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IN MEMORIAM:

James "Dutch" Cornell, 85, died July 27, 1997, at the Briody Nursing Facility in Lockport. He was born in Ransomville, and attended the Dist.#7 Schoolhouse on Chestnut Rd., and graduated from Wilson High in 1931 as Pres. of his Class. He completed his education at Niagara University. During World War II he was a civilian employee of the U.S. Army, and administered work-release programs for German prisoners of War. After the war he joined O'Connors Accounting Firm and opened an office in Youngstown, and when he retired 37 years later was a partner and head of O'Connor & Cornell Accounting Service of Lockport, NY.

He was a member of the Holy Name Soc. of Our Lady of the Rosary Church in Wilson; a charter member and Pres. of the Wilson Lions Club; Exempt member of Wilson Vol. Fire Co. #1; Executive Comm. Member of the 1958 Wilson Centennial; Knights of Columbus; member of the Niag. University Alumni Assoc; and Honorary Member of the Wilson His., Society.

He is survived by his wife, Mary Elizabeth "Betty" Cornell; 2 sons, James (Carole) of Boston, MA; and Kevin (Ann) of Wilson; 2 daughters, Barbara Young of Longmeadow, MA; and Kathleen (Jack) Evans of Rochester, NY.

A Mass of Christian Burial was held at Our Lady of the Rosary with burial at North Ridge.

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John Weiler, 86, died July 29, 1997, at the Newfane Health Facility in Newfane. He was a chemical engineer, and received his B.S. at Akron Univ. in Ohio, and his M.A. at Ohio State University. He worked for the Olin Company and the National Lead Co. in Niagara Falls(1950-76).

John liked astronomy and music, and until several years ago enjoyed bowling at the Townline Bowl in Wilson. He was an Honorary member of the Wilson His. Society.

His wife, Pauline (Minnich) Weiler, pre-deceased him in 1969; and he is survived by a son, David (Mary) of New Egypt, NJ; 2 daughters, Ann (David) Perkins of Boston, MA; and Dr. Mary Margaret Weiler of Wilson; also 5 grandchildren and 3 g-grandchildren.

A Mass of Christian burial was celebrated at Our Lady of the Rosary Church in Wilson, and interment was in Greenwood Cemetery, Wilson, NY.

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Rev. Ernest Kerrison, 81, died at Greece, NY, on July 25, 1997, following a long illness. He was born in Hilton, NY, and graduated from Hilton High School. He worked for Bausche & Lomb in Rochester until he received the call to enter the Ministry and attended Colgate-Rochester Divinity School

He served the Exley United Methodist Church in Wilson from 1961 to 1964 before accepting a call to the Greece United Methodist Church from where he retired in 1981. Rev. Kerrison and his wife, Joan, were members of the Wilson His. Soc. since 1974.

He is survived by his wife, Joan, and a sister, Ruby, of Hilton, NY. A Memorial Service was held at the Parma, NY Cemetery where he is interred.

* * * * *

Howard D. Croop, 58, of Minot, ND., died suddenly at home on August 10, 1997 following a heart attack. Howard graduated from Wilson High School in 1957, and immediately served three years in the U.S. Naval Reserve aboard the U.S. Aircraft Carrier, the "Intrepid." He rejoined the U.S. Airforce and served 23 years more in the Stragic Air Command (SAC) and retired as a Missile Elect Equipment Specialist with the rank of MSGT.

At the time of his demise, he was a Manager for the Boeing Company and worked out of the Airforce Base at Minot, ND.

He is survived by his wife, Joyce and two former wives, Barbara Johnson of Rapid City, SD, and Lucille Nelson of Sturgis, SD; also 3 daughters, Donna(Kurt) Huehl of Hur on, SD; Denise (Tom) Barlow of Rapid City, SD; and Dianne (Clark) Brown of Colorado Springs, CO: a son, Casey N. Croop of Sturgis, SD; a sister, Carol (Bill) Smith of Sanborn, NY; and father, Don Croop of Wilson; also 7 grandchildren.

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RECENT ACQUISITIONS:

Estate of Hazel Salisbury (Diane Lane): Wilson High School Classnight Program(6/26/22); Note Pad containing Memories of One Room Schoolhouse; books and 2 graduation certificates; 4 School pictures, Commencement Card, Class of '22; newspaer clippings.

Don and Wanda Burrows: 2 gallon Ceramic Water Dispenser for Schoolhouse.

Deborah Grzybowski, Ransomville: 1927 "The Everybody Songbook" used in Dist. #* Schoolhouse.

Charles and Ann Horton: LARGE FRAMED PHOTO OF Wilson Freed Union High School for schoolhouse. Union Free School was located where Town Hall now stands.

Jane Kstner: Plaster Bust of Hiawatha, previously owned by Dr. A. Marie Murphy, teacher in Lockport Schools (1936-75). Bust was always displayed in her classrooms.

Walter Evans: Photograph of local personalities, identified are Russell Hurlburt, Ralph Evans, Fred Barnum, and Ken Stockwell.

Virginia Klaiber, Williamsville: 1917 Teacher's Handbell used by Doris Fittro Clark when she tauhght at schoolhouse at corner of Randall RD. AND Wilson/Youngstown Road.

Carl and Judy Jennejohn, Spencerport: 15 Old Books for Schoolhouse.

George Berger, Ransomville: Book, "The New Theoretical & Practical Complete Bookkeeping, dated 1891. Excelelent condition, for use in the schoolhouse.

Marie Keller, Williamsville, NY: 1993 Ford "Thunderbird". Excellent condition.

Carol C. Smith, Sanborn: Book, "Stories of Ancient Peoples". For schoolhouse. This book was used by Don Croop in English III Class at old Parker High School, Clarence NY (1929).

Wilson Fire Co. #1: 1961 Ward LaFrance J4 Fire Tanker Truck. Fine Condition.

Jane Demmin: 24 old Reading, Math, Spelling, etc., Schoolbooks.

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING:

Board will meet at the museum, Wednesday, September 10, at 7:30 PM.

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SOUNDINGS:

The Ten Commandments aren't multiple choice.

SOCIABLE SOCIAL:

A pleasant day ushered in the annual Historical Society Ice Cream Social on August 10th at the museum grounds. Entertainment was sponsored by the town of Wilson and featured music by the Niagara County Deputy Sheriff Assoc. Pipe and Drums, also the "Killer B's".

Historical Society served old fashioned ice cream sundaes and root beer floats in the Barnum Building and other facilities open to visitors were the Depot, Carbuilding, schoolhouse and Caboose. Darrell Smith, assisted by Lorraine Brady and sons, Michael, Daniel, Josh, and Joshua Smith, erected tents and arranged tables and chairs.

Sally Smith, Chrm., Lorraine Brady, Melinda Hutchison, Susan Sobiegray, and Don Burrows dispensed the icecream, while Lois Barnum, Don Croop, Josh Smith and Audrey Collesano handled ticket sales. A membership and afghan table were tended by Sara Berry, Shirley and Micky Hunter, and when the afghan drawing was held at 3:30 PM, it was won by Linda Hoover of Niagara Falls.

John and Jane Demmin were host and hostess in the Depot, Don and Wanda Burrows hosted the schoolhouse, and Bill and Judy Rose and Wally Goodman tended the Dr. Argue Car Building.

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PROGRAM MEETINGS TO RESUME:

James Flood, Music Director of the Niagara Falls Symphony Orchestra, will be the guest speaker at the September 15th meeting of the society at 7:30 PM. Mr. Flood's topic will be on "The Kind of Music we would have listened to in 1838."

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BITS AND PIECES:

If anyone took pictures of the Randall Rd. Schoolhouse while it was being moved to the museum grounds, Wanda Burrows would be interested in getting some copies for a scrapbook she is making for the schoolhouse

Kristine Murphy and Stephan Simard were the recipients of \$100 each at Class Night given by the historical society in recognition of high achievement in history. The awards were presented by Donald Burrows, President.

Eleanor Myers, town historian, made history come alive recently for 4th graders at Thomas Marks School, when she toured the village with them and gave a slide presentation to acquaint them with their ancestral culture.

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MUSEUM GREETERS:

Now, with the society's expanded facilities, it is felt that we should have 3 attendants on duty Sunday afternoons from 2-4PM so that one person can be at the desk while the other two accompany visitors through the other buildings.

Virginia Strablow, Chrm., has been doing a great job of getting members to serve on Sundays, and we regret we have to ask you so far ahead-to be in the Newsletter, so it is understandable when sometimes a person forgets. Virginia thanks all who agree to serve, but we hope you will make an extra special effort to get your date on your calendar and be at the museum when you agree to. It really damages our image in the eyes of the public when visitors come and no one is there to let them tour the premises.

Museum greeters who have agreed to serve in September are: Sept. 7th, Don and Wanda Burrows, (open up, Don Burrows); Sept. 14th, Norm and Martha MacAskill and Helen Stevens, (open up, Norm MacAskill); Sept. 21st, Ted and Melva Bull and Helen Horton, (open up, Gary Fitch); Sept. 28th, Lucille Upton, Frances Dietz, and Cheryl Brown, (open up, Lucille Upton); and Oct. 5th, Elton and June Kropp and Dorothea Mark, (open up, Elton Kropp.)

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WILSON/SCOTT LINE:

Thanks to Sally Scott Magruder, we are able to record the Wilson/Scott descendants of Wilson's namesake, Reuben Wilson, who was born at Spencer, MA on April 19, 1777 and died March 10, 1862 at Wilson, NY. In 1797, Reuben married Esther Oliver of Spencer, MA, who was born April 14, 1779 and died March 22, 1834 at Wilson, NY.

Their eldest son, Luther, was born at Broadalbin, NY, Dec. 18, 1797, and died March 18, 1890 at Wilson, NY. He married Sarah Stephens in 1825, and she was born in Whitby, Ont. Can., the daughter of Adam and Polly Crossman Stephens. This was the first recorded marriage in Wilson.

Their son, George Bainbridge Wilson, was born in Wilson in 1826 and died in Lockport in 1878. He married Mary Dyer Campbell of Wilson who was born at Stratford, NY in 1825, and died at Fargo, ND in 1901. The family resided in Lockport until George died, then moved to Fargo.

Luther Campbell Wilson, son of George and Mary Dyer Campbell Wilson, was born in 1851 at Wilson, NY, and died in Buffalo in 1898. He married Addie Dunn of Jeffersonville, VT., and she was born in 1852 and died in 1934 at Fargo, ND.

Their daughter, Alice Wilson, was born in 1853 at Fargo, ND, and died there in 1939. She was married to Frank Roy Scott, Sr., who was born in 1884 at Aberdeen, SD. He died at Fargo in 1953. Alice and Scott had 3 sons, Richard, Philip, and Frank Scott, Jr.

Richard Scott was born in 1908 at Fargo, ND., and died at Dayton, Ohio in 1991. He married June Von Sien, who was born in 1911 at Fargo, and died at Dayton, Ohio in 1985. They had 2 daughters, Suzanne H. Scott, born in 1937, and Virginia Wilson Scott, born in 1947.

Frank Roy Scott, Jr., married Jeanette Daniels, and they had 4 children, Douglas, 1941; Sally Scott Magruder, 1946; Todd, 1947; and Frank Roy Scott, born in 1949.

Suzanne Scott and Sally Scott Magruder are cousins, and both joined the Wilson Historical Society. Sally's father, Frank Roy Scott, Jr., was a pianist and arranger for the Lawrence Welk Band from the early 1950's to 1970.

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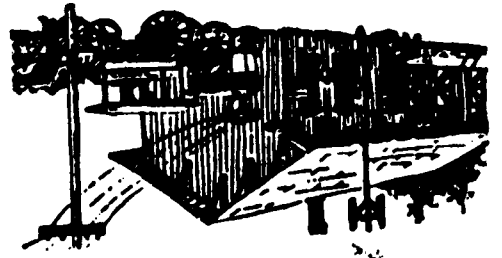
NEW MEMBERS: We welcome three new junior members who were very helpful during the Memorial Day Fair: Andy Evans, Laura Evans, and Michelle Evans of Ransomville.

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FINAL THOUGHT:

Forget your mistakes, but remember what they taught you.

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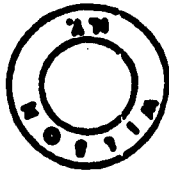
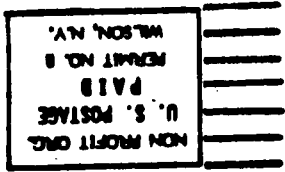
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October 1997 Vol. 25 No. 9

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

NEWSLETTER

Wilson Historical Society
Wilson, New York 14172-9763



October 1997

STAGECOACH BROUGHT MAIL TO WILSON:

History tells us that the first stagecoach line in Colonial America was started between Boston and New York in 1732, and it took about a week to cover the distance. Roads were always muddy in wet weather and full of ruts in dry weather, but as the roads improved so did their use for stagecoach travel increase.

As the "Ridge" developed as a fairly good road into the Niagara Frontier, many taverns began to spring up along the route where travelers could stop for food, drink, or an overnight stay.

Some of the better known taverns included the Frontier House at Lewiston which hosted several important guests including Henry Clay, Jennie Lind, and Washington Irving. There was also the historic "Four Corners Tavern" run by Tom and Betsey Hustler.

When James Fenimore Cooper visited Lewiston, he met the Hustlers and later used them as characters in his famous book, "The Spy". The cocktail drink was said to have originated at the Hustler Tavern when Betsey served rum and lemon juice drinks in a glass garnished with the tailfeather from a cock pheasant.

About 3 miles east of Lewiston was a tavern run by Sparrow Sage, and when the Indians raided the Settlements during the War of 1812, his tavern was spared because he had always supplied the Indians with plenty of 'fire water'.

Further east was Howell's Tavern where General Lafayette once stayed. It was said that his officers enjoyed drinking hard liquor at the bar, but that the General preferred lemonade drinks prepared for him by bar maid, Harriet Howell.

At Molyneaux Corners, the British pursuit of the burned-out settlers from Lewiston was halted when Captain McCarty and his Militia Co. from Gaines, surprised the British soldiers at the Tavern and captured them.

Warrens Corners received its name from Ezra Warren who operated a tavern there, and Wright's Corners got its name from Solomon Wright who opened a tavern there in 1822.

Before the railroads replaced the stagecoach as a way of long distance travel, many so-called stagecoach routes connected local communities such as the one between Lockport and Wilson. One of the drivers of this mailcoach line was Fred Faery, who formerly drove mules along the towpath of the Barge Canal.

Fred married Emily Rowe of Reynolds Basin, and they moved to Wilson where he passed an exam and put in a successful bid to drive the mailcoach between Lockport and Wilson.

The late Mabel Wilson once donated a tin horn that was used by the drivers of the Wilson Stage. As the coach drove along the townline road and passed the home of someone who had mail in the coach, the driver would give a loud "blast" on the horn to alert the homeowner that he should come to Wilson and pick up his mail at the Postoffice.

Some mail was delivered to Wilson by train after the "Hojack" operated through Wilson in 1876, and mail by stagecoach was discontinued and rural free delivery of mail was started in 1901 when out-lying postoffices in East Wilson, Maple Street, South Wilson, and North Wilson were terminated.

Fred Faery not only drove the mailcoach to and from Wilson to Lockport, but also did errands for individuals and store keepers such as delivering large wheels of cheese, crackers, and pickles at 10¢ an errand.

He also had a regular passenger, a blind girl, who gave music lessons in Lockport. In the wintertime, Fred would wrap hot bricks in a blanket and place them around the girl to keep her warm on the trip to the city. The fare to Lockport was 50 cents.

The Faerys had a daughter, Emily, who attended school with Charles A. Wilson. They were later married and he became a successful commercial fisherman in Wilson.

Timothy Wilson, father of Charles, ran a bowling alley in the village on Young Street, by the present Marine Midland Bank. When the alleys were closed, the site was taken over by the Swann Bakery.

(Note: A picture of the old Cuddeback and Cooper Funeral Parlor as well as the buildings that adjoined it may be seen on page 67 of the "Wilson Sketchbook.")

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MEETING DATES:

- Oct. 8th: Board of Directors at the Museum, Wednesday, 7:30 PM.
- Oct. 13th: Monthly Program at Museum, Monday, 7:30 PM.

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BON MOT: One way to be happy ever after is not to be after too much.

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ONE VOTE IS IMPORTANT:

Under the Articles of Confederation, the 13 original States had very little influence in foreign affairs; were unable to raise taxes or armies; and had no central currency. Also, under the "Articles", there was no chief executive or national judiciary, and amendments could only be made by the unanimous consent of all the states.

A Constitutional Convention was called in Philadelphia where a new Constitution was drafted in 1787, but it wasn't adopted without much controversy, and some of its provisions were only passed by one vote. For instance, one vote changed the course of history when it was voted that each state would have 2 senators instead of one. Another proposal, to limit the number of states in the Union to 26 was defeated by one vote. The power of the veto might also have been shared by the President and the Supreme Court except for one vote, and the office of President might have been limited to one term except for one vote.

The Constitution was finally adopted through compromise, and for 210 years it has kept our Country united in spite of many social, economic, cultural, or political changes. It also leaves the door open for change through a system of amendments, and in 1791, under this provision, ten amendments were passed that guarantee everyone the right of free speech, freedom of religion, and freedom of the press.

Elections are coming up in November. Remember, one vote can make a difference.

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SISTERS WIN RECOGNITION:

Michele Evans, a junior member of the Wilson Historical Society, has qualified for the USAC/RS National Junior Olympic Championships by finishing first in her figure skating event at the Northeast Region Junior Olympic Level I, Division A Womens' Figure Challenge Award. Michele was a 3rd grade student at Thomas Marks School.

Laura Evans, a 5th grade student at Thomas Marks, was one of three students to graduate from the DARE program at the end of the school year. Laura received a certificate for her DARE essay which was presented to her at the Wilson House Restaurant by Inspector Jon Weslowski and Sgt. Scott Elliot. The event was sponsored by the Thomas Marks PTA.

Michele and Laura are the daughters of James Evans of Niagara Falls, and Marianne Evans of Ransomville, New York.

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NEW INDUSTRY IN WILSON:

Jerry Dean, Mayor, has announced that the Sharpe Industries of N. Tonawanda are moving to Wilson, and will open up an electroplating business in the former Basil Plant across from the Wilson Museum. It is reported the firm has a new "air scrubber" and a contract with Harley Davison and the Ford Motor Co. It is expected that the firm may employ up to 45 persons.

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AFGHANS STILL AVAILABLE:

The Town of Wilson Centennial Afghans make great birthday gifts, and Christmas isn't too far away either. They come in Navy Blue, Teal, or Rose, and may be purchased at the Museum from 2-4PM Sunday afternoons, or from Sally Smith (716) 751-0102). They are priced at \$30 each with \$5.00 added for postage and handling if ordered by mail.

The afghans were acquired from Diane Albright, and when sold out, no more will be ordered.

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BITS AND PIECES:

The historical society's 40 year old, Shiny Cadillac was entered in the Firemens Field Day Parade this year, and managed to make it around the parade route until near the end when it began "gasping for gas". Pres. Burrows, however, managed to nurse it back to the museum grounds. Three charter members, Sara Berry, Bessie Cole, and Zilpha Petty graced the back seat of the car, while Katelan Smith, representing the future of the historical society, sat in front with Grandpa.

A new night light has been installed at the north end of the Dr. Argue Car Building to light up the area between the car building and the storage barn. Gutters were also replaced from recent windstorm damage. Work was done by Don Burrows, Bill Rose, and Darrell Smith.

Jerry Dean, who did a fine job painting the schoolhouse, has also painted the outside of the Barnum Bldg. and Dr. Argue Car Bldg. It really looks nice, and Don Burrows hopes to have him paint the Fittro Shop barn also. If things continue to go well another year, we may also be able to afford to get the depot re-painted.

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IN MEMORIAM:

Annabell Benedict, 93, died September 6, 1997 at Inter Community Hospital, Newfane, after a short illness. She was a native of Wilson, the daughter of John and Lottie (Evans) Duxbury, and she graduated from Wilson High School in 1924. She later taught at the Coomer Road rural school from 1927 to 1930, and, an accomplished pianist, gave piano lessons at her home.

She was a member of Exley United Methodist Church, and an Honorary Member of the Wilson His. Society. She is survived by two sisters, Emma Schrader of Wilson, and Stella Dochstader of Baldwinsville, NY; also several nieces and nephews.

Funeral services were held at the Hamilton & Clark Funeral Home in Wilson with Rev. Ed Irwin and Rev. Sue Kaiser, co-officiating. Burial was in North Ridge Cemetery, Cambria.

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CEMETERY WREATHS AVAILABLE:

Barbara Mosher has announced that Christmas Wreaths are now available, and suggests you place your order before the Nov. 21st deadline. Mail requests to Box 221, Wilson, NY, 14172, and please make checks payable to the Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Comm. Cost per wreath is \$25, and please include name of deceased loved one where wreath is to be placed. For further information, please call Donna Fritton, (716-751-9624). Other members of the Advisory Comm. are: Shirley Evans, Don Luff, Floyd Clark, Maureen Bryer, Jean Figura, Eleanor Myers, Dorothy Linnabery, Molly and Ron Martin, and Rena Rohring.

The attractive "Greenwood Cemetery" sign near the entranceway was made by John Davis, and donated by Mr. and Mrs. Walter Moxham of Wilson.

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CORPORAL EZRA WILSON:

We hear much about the early development of Wilson because of Reuben Wilson and his son, Luther. Reuben was one of nine children born to Ezra and Lucy Wilson at Spencer, MA.

Ezra Wilson (Willson) and Lucy were born in the 1740's, (probably in Massachusettes), and both died at Broadalbin, NY.

Corp. Ezra Wilson fought in the Revolution in Capt. Josiah White's Company, - Col. Samuel Denny's Regiment. Records show that he was able to return home between two enlistments to check on his wife, Lucy, who had a three year old daughter, Elizabeth, and a 4 month old baby son, Reuben.

Their children were: Elizabeth (12/27/74); Reuben (4/19/77); Joel (4/3/79); Sally 9/3/81); Sybel (11/2/83); Isaac (6/15/86); Ezra (4/1/89); Jo Mary (Polly)(4/4/92); and Anna(9/23/1795).

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THUMBNAIL SKETCH:

In 1997, 117 students graduated from Wilson Central High School. When Commencement Exercizes were held in the High School in 1903, there were 7 graduates: Satie Clicknor, Pres., Florence Ransom, Vice-Pres., Emma Lafler, Secretary, Adelburt Green, Treasurer, also Ella Mae Gifford, Frank J. Aldridge, and Rubie Ann Jarvis.

After graduation, Rubie Ann, daughter of Rev. Charles Jarvis of Wilson, taught in the District School on Lake Road at the end of the Hulburt Road. She also taught in the former schoolhouse at the corner of the Brayley and Daniel's Road.

Rubie married Earl Pettit and they lived on the Brayley Road and raised two sons, Jarvis and Sidney Pettit. (Sidney's son, Gary, recently gave the museum a fine copy of a picture of the 1903 graduation Class)

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MUSEUM HOSTS & HOSTESSES:

Oct. 5th, Elton & June Kropp & Dorothea Mark--open up, (Elton Kropp); Oct. 12th, Jack and Winifred Terry & Norma Ward--open up (Celeste Crawford); Oct. 19th, Jack & Dorothy Maxfield & Gerry Swann--open up (Dorothy Maxfield); Oct. 26th, Bill & Margaret Fritton & Joyce Richards--open up (Carole Schnoor); Nov. 2nd, Bob & Ruth Thomas & Don Wiltse--open (Don Croop)

Virginia Strablow thanks everyone who cooperates, but please mark your date on calendar.

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RECENT AQUISITIONS:

Mrs. Arthur "Kay" Ness has donated Stationary from the former "Tuscarora Beach & Golf Club"; Photo of the old Wilson House; Greens fee ticket from Tuscarora Golf Club; 1945 Tax receipt; Photo and 6 Adv. cards for Lakelands Driving Range, Art Ness, Mng.; Niag. Power Co. Brochure; Backboard from Tuscaroras; 7 Kitchen Utensils.

Christine Irr, Burt, NY: 2 pair boys short pants and one boy's cap.

Donald Wiltse: Shoulder Patch & Lapel Pin issued at the Korean War Memorial Ded. (1995)

Barriet Nolan Landy, Payson, AR: Landy Genealogy and 21 Books.

Janeta Fredericks: 34 Books; Framed Photo of Elwood Rohring, W.W.I.

Gary Pettit: Genealogy material on Jarvis Family.

Mrs. Robert (Mary Lou Hurlburt) Young, Rye, NY: Two Schooldesks given in memory of Judy Gale Sweeney.

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OCTOBER PROGRAM:

Lynn Belluso, Director of the LeRoy, NY Historical Society, will be our guest speaker on Monday, Oct. 20th, 7:30 PM, and she will talk about the "History of Jello, J-E-L-L-O."

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SOUNDINGS:

Kids are hard to figure. They can learn to operate a computer in nothing flat, but can't understand how a clothes hanger works.

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1998.....MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION.....1998

NEW..... RENEWAL.....

NAME.....

ADDRESS..... PHONE # () _____

BOX #..... CITY..... STATE..... ZIP CODE.....

PLEASE CHECK BOX IF ADDRESS/NAME HAS RECENTLY CHANGED

PLEASE INDICATE PREVIOUS LAST NAME, IF APPLICABLE _____

JUNIOR (UNDER 18) \$1.00 EACH COUPLE \$8.00 _____

NAME _____ AGE _____ SINGLE \$5.00 _____

NAME _____ AGE _____ LIFE \$150.00 _____

NAME _____ AGE _____ LIFE (Couple) \$250.00 _____

HONORARY MEMBER (85+) FREE

BUILDING FUND DONATION \$ _____ TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED _____

* * * * *

APPLICATIONS AND MONIES ARE DUE BY JANUARY 1ST.

PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO THE WILSON HISTORICAL SOCIETY, AND RETURN TO:

SANDY HOLDEN PO BOX 319 WILSON, NY 14172

* * * * *

NEW LIFE MEMBER:

Kathleen Armstrong-Voelkle of Clarkston, MI, has joined the Life Membership Class of the Wilson Hist. Society. Her father, Corliss E. Armstrong (1904-1984), who was born and raised in Wilson, was Budget Manager of Pontiac Motors-World Wide. Her mother, LaVerne E. (Weigel) Armstrong (1910-1995) was born in Cleveland, Ohio.

Kathleen received a B.S. degree in Elementary Education; a B.S. degree in Home Economics; and a Master degree in Counseling & Guidance, all from Michigan State University. She has one daughter, Suzanne Kathleen Voelkle, born in 1964. Retired: Kathleen has been a 3rd grade teacher Nursery School Director and teacher; and Counselor in 2 private psychiatrik hospitals. In addition to a Life Member of the Wilson Society, she also belongs to the Waterford Historical Soc. and Clarkston Historical Soc. in Clarkston, MI. Her interests include genealogy, gardening, and interior decorating, and her home is furnished with family heirlooms dating back to the 1800's.

Her family background history includes her great paternal grandfather, Byron B. Barber, who served with Battery M, N.Y. Light Artillery, during the Civil War. Her great great paternal grandfather, Ira Armstrong of Wilson, married Mary Brewster, a descendant of William Brewster of the "Mayflower". Kathleen's roots also tie in with the Swick, Dobbs, Pettit, and Upton families of Wilson.

* * * * *

NEW MEMBERS:

It is a pleasure to welcome Rev. Ed and Kathy Irwin of Exley United Methodist Church as our most recent new members in the Wilson Historical Society.

* * * * *

BOARD REPORTS:

Motion made and passed at the September meeting to install new telephone in schoolhouse to meet emergency and insurance requirements. Also, Fittro Shop will be repaired and painted.

Gary Fitch reported the new acreage has been worked up. Motion made and passed to permit Gary to purchase seed needed and arrange for planting it this fall.

Pres. Burrows reported that new door has been installed and rotted framework replaced, and gutters replaced on west side of Barnum Building.

Darrell Smith requested use of Barnum Building for Hollowe'en party on Sunday afternoon, October 26th, from 2pm on. Prizes for best costumes will be awarded, and apples, cider, and donuts will be served. Motion made and passed for society to sponsor event with up to \$200 allowed for expenses. All ages invited.

Bill Rose has been appointed a trustee to fill the vacancy left by Anne Faery's resignation.

* * * * *

WILSON REPRESENTED AT FAIR:

Norm and Martha MacAskill entered a small exhibit at the annual Federation of Niag. Co. display at the Niagara Co. Fair at which 18 societies participated. Over 800 signatures from interested persons were tabulated in the guest book. Our thanks and appreciation to the MacAskills for their dedication and continuous participation in a good cause.

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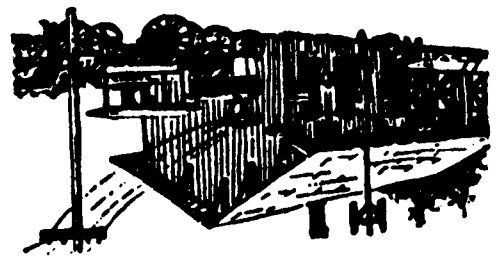
TOUR OF HOMES:

The Wilson Museum was the fourth stop on the Niagara Council on the Arts 5th annual "Tour of Homes" on September 13, 1997. Ten outstanding Wilson homes were highlighted, and Council Representatives served refreshments in the Barnum Building from 10 AM to 2 PM.

Celeste Crawford was in charge of museum arrangements and hostesses, and she, Sara Berry and Don Croop greeted guests at the Depot; Wally Goodman tended the Dr. Argue Car Building; and Don & Wanda Burrows and Helen Horton, greeted visitors in the Schoolhouse.

Close to seventy persons signed the museum's guest Register, and many favorable comments were expressed in regards to the museum's displays and appearance. Facilities were open 10AM to 3PM.

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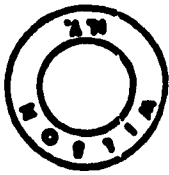
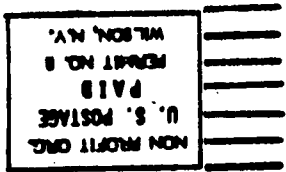


November 1997 Vol. 25 No. 10
(Coleman Printing)

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

NEWSLETTER

Wilson Historical Society
Wilson, New York 14172-9763



November 1997

MOVIE MEMORIES:

When you drive out of the Lakeside Market parking lot into Young Street, old timers may recall that the area was once the site of the former "Gem" Theater. Built in 1920, the movie house was erected by Seymour Erion and Henry Giles.

Ida Erion and Ada Giles sold tickets for the movies which were then silent, so piano players were hired to accompany the action on the screen. Some of those well-known pianists were Earl McCormick, Marjorie and Frances Hurlburt, Helen Borngraeber, Alice Nelson, Laura Eick, and Florence Partington Porter.

Erion and Giles sold the "Gem" to Michael Radigan in the 1930's, and the building stood idle until 1937 when Francis Tate moved to Wilson. He rented the place for one year, then bought the movie house in 1938. Under his management, the first film was shown there on February 22nd, and his wife, Lena, helped him at the ticket window.

The theater was a popular attraction in Wilson for about 20 years, and some newsletter readers may recall going there to see two classic movies, "Gone With The Wind" and "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs."

Occasionally there were times when the management was hard pressed to preserve order, and the late Bob Horton remembered one time when, as a boy, another youngster sitting behind him jabbed him in the rear with a hat pin. Bob let out such a howl he was ejected from the theater--which seems to bear out the fact that the perpetrator of a crime isn't always punished.

The movie era in Wilson ended in 1960 when Mr. Tate sold the building to Duane Hill, who turned it into a billiard parlor. This venture came to an end when fire destroyed the place on November 18, 1967.

The first silent movies were actually shown in Wilson at the Tuscarora Park--20 years before the "Gem" theater was built. At that time, Timothy Wilson supervised most of the events held at the Park, including movies which were shown in the old open pavilion. Whenever a show was held, it was necessary to place canvas curtains around the building to make it dark inside.

A hand-cranked carbon-arc type projector was used and Timothy's son, Floyd Wilson, operated the machine. It was said that sometimes, when his arm got tired, he'd slow down so the images on the screen would begin to appear in slow motion.

Movies were later shown in Middleton's Hall behind the drugstore, and benches were used for seating until folding chairs were acquired.

In 1910, the Conant and Bryant Power Company bought land on Harbor Street, and ushered in the new age of electricity in Wilson. It then became possible to purchase an electric projector to use in Middleton's Hall and Floyd Wilson, an employee of the power company, continued to operate the machine there.

One of the first Movie-News films shown at Middletons was the presidential election of 1912. That was the year when Woodrow Wilson, the Democratic candidate, beat out William Taft and "teddy" Roosevelt in a three way race for the presidency.

A few years later the silent "flicks" featured Pearl White in her serial episodes of the "Perils of Pauline"--which were awaited eagerly by her fans at each showing. Perhaps the greatest "heartthrob" of all, however, was Rudolph Valentino who "wowed" the ladies with his portrayal of the movie, "The Sheik".

* * * * *

LAST CALL FOR WREATHS:

November 30th is the deadline for ordering wreaths for placement in Greenwood Cemetery. Please mail your requests to Box 221, Wilson, NY, 14172, and be sure to include a check for \$25 along with the name of the loved-one where wreath is to be placed. Make all checks payable to the Wilson Cemetery Advisory Board.

Each wreath comes with a sturdy stand and will be placed in the cemetery in early December, and removed in the Spring.

If you need more information, please call Donna Fritton (716) 751-9524.

* * * * *

MEETING DATES:

Nov. 12th: Board of Director Meeting; Patterson Room; 7:30 PM.
Nov. 17th: Regular Meeting; Patterson Room; 7:30 PM.

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BON MOT:

When it comes to work, there are many who stop at nothing.

* * * * *

LIFE MEMBERSHIP CLASS:

The Life Membership Fund of the Wilson Historical Society was established by the Board of Trustees in 1976 following a recommendation of the Membership Committee chaired by Millie Croop. The first members to join the new Class were Dorothy Thilk, Mildred Eakin, and Mildred Croop. When the fund was started, a \$100 donation per person was required.

On November 17, 1993, the society's By-laws were updated and the following procedures were established in regards to Life Memberships:

- Article II, Sec 3: A Life Membership shall be available to any person who applies for and tenders the prescribed dues.
- Article IV, Sec.2: Life Membership fees shall be \$150 per person unless otherwise determined by the Board of Directors. (Note: The Board has since determined that the fee for married couples will be \$250.)
- Article VII, Sec.e All funds received for Life Memberships shall be deposited in an endowment fund, in a long term CD or Savings Account from which only 60% of the interest may be withdrawn for society use.
- Sec.f The principal amount in the Life Membership fund may be used as collateral for obtaining loans for emergency use or capital improvements with approval of the Board of Directors.

Since the Life Membership Class was started in 1976, three plaques with room for fifty names on each have been placed in the museum on which the names of 146 Life Members have been engraved on plates and attached to the plaques.

Funds donated by persons who become Life Members not only help the society now, but continue to do so long after they will have departed.

Our most recent new Life Members are: Melva (Arnold) Beecher Craft, Kathleen (Armstrong) Voekle, Emma (Duxbury) Schrader, and Marie Keller.

* * * * *

YOU CAN HELP:

The friends of Jim Haas are sponsoring a Spaghetti Dinner at the Wilson High School Cafeteria Monday, November 3, 1997, from 4:30 to 7:00 PM.

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ELECTION DAY BAKE SALE:

Sally Smith, Chrm., has announced that the Ways & Means Committee of the Wilson Historical Society will hold a Bake Sale at the Town Hall on Election Day, Tuesday, November 4th, from 8AM to 4PM.

Please try to help make this annual event a BIG success by dropping off your favorite baked good contributions at Town Hall on Election Day.

* * * * *

50TH ANNIVERSARIES:

Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Harvey of Olcott celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary on Saturday, September 13, 1997 at a reception held in the Wilson House hosted by their children. Attending were their bridesmaid, Eleanor Steinfeldt and best man, Albert Harvey.

Martha Stockwell and Alfred Harvey were united in marriage, September 13, 1947, at Exley United Methodist Church in Wilson. They are currently members of the Olcott United Methodist Church where they recently renewed their marriage vows before Pastor Richard Kempton.

Mrs. Harvey was born in Wilson, the daughter of the late Clayton and Rosella Stockwell, and Mr. Harvey was born at Geneva, NY, the son of the late Sibley and Sara Harvey. The Harveys have two sons, William (Colleen) Harvey of Wilson, and Stephen Harvey of Loveland, CO; also a daughter, Susan (Norman) Wilson of Lockport. The Harveys joined the Wilson His. Soc. in 1976.

* * * * *

Mr. and Mrs. Gordon and Virginia Strablow of Wilson celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary at a reception held for them at the Wilson House Restaurant, Wilson, October 11, 1997.

The Strablows renewed their wedding vows the same day in St. Peter's Lutheran Church, North Ridge, before Rev. David Mussall. In attendance were Maid of Honor, Lorraine Hillman, sister of the Bride, and Norman Schultz, Best Man.

Gordon Strablow, a native of Wilson, is the son of Edward and Mary Strablow of Wilson, and his wife, Virginia, is the daughter of Clarence and Irene Hillman of Niagara Falls, NY.

Gordon and Virginia have five children, Martha S. Level of Niagara Falls, NY; Laverne (Elizabeth) Strablow of Lockport, NY; Lucille (Vincent) Zarbo of Cheektowaga, NY; Margaret (Jacub) Satiezynski of New Jersey; and Linda (Paul) Wzientek of West Seneca, NY; also ten grandchildren--the youngest 2months old.

The Strablows, both Life Members of the Wilson Historical Society, are spending their second honeymoon vacationing in Hawaii.

* * * * *

MEMBERSHIP RESPONSE GOOD:

The membership applications being returned to Sandy and Kara Holden, co-chrm., indicate that the initial response has been good. If renewals keep coming in at the same pace, everyone may be paid up by the start of the New Year.

Several new members have joined including Marie Keller, who joined as a Life Member, Also, Kenneth Radig of Grand Island; Mrs. Gail Upton of Appleton; NY; and Andrea and Jon Upton of Appleton, junior members.

A number of generous donations to the society's Building Fund have also been received from Marie Keller; Leah Bigalow; Robert and Ruth Thomas; Dr. George Cruickshank; Norman Mac-Askill; Dr. L. Mark and Phyliss Huntington; Terrence Upton; Thomas Sharpe; Ruth and John Zauner; and Norman and Patricia O'Brien.

* * * * *

SOUNDINGS:

The true measure of a man is not how he behaves in moments of comfort and convenience, but how he stands at times of controversy and challenge.

* * * * *

IN MEMORIAM:

Edward Lonsbery, 87, died at Inter Community Hospital, Newfane, on September 30, 1997. He was the son of Edward and Ella Stafford Lonsbery, and was born at Niagara Falls, NY. He lived most of his life in Wilson, but worked for the Carborundum Company in the Falls from where he retired in 1973.

He was a member of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Wilson, and an Honorary Member of the Wilson Historical Society.

He is survived by his wife, Mildred; a grandson, Brion Lonsbery of Wilson; a granddaughter, Karen Jones of St. Louis, MO; and one great grandson, Brion Lonsbery, Jr. of Wilson.

A Memorial Service was held at St. Paul's Lutheran Church with Rev. Ronald Haefer officiating. Burial was in Greenwood Cemetery, Wilson.

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MUSEUM HOSTS & HOSTESSES:

Virginia Strablow, Chrm., has submitted the following list of members who will serve as greeters at the Wilson Museum, Sunday afternoons from 2 to 4 PM:

Nov. 2nd, Robert & Ruth Thomas, Don Wiltse, (open-Don Croop); Nov. 9th, Hoyt & Norie Desso, Jeanne Swanson, (open-Hoyt Desso); Nov. 16th, Dan & Judy King, Bill & Bernice McLaughlin, (open-Dan King); Nov. 23rd, Jim & Beth Waldron, Andrea Hohensee, (open-Ollie Clark); and Nov. 30th, Gordon & Virginia Strablow, Susan Cruickshank, (Gordon Strablow). Dec. 7th, Edward & Marilyn Allgeier, Marlene Schotz, (open-Elton Kropp).

* * * * *

MUSEUM BITS:

The new seeding, which cost the society over a \$1,000, is reported to be coming up fine with an assist from fall rains and warm weather.

Randy Ward has installed new storm windows on the schoolhouse, and Gordon Strablow and Elton Kropp have cleaned up all the rocks and brush that cluttered up the area.

The Fittro Shop is a credit to the museum now with its new roof and freshly painted red sides set off by white doors. Roof and paint job cost the society approximately \$8,000.

* * * * *

MORE "INPUT" NEEDED:

Generally when acquisitions are received at the museum, they are placed in the library until they can be moved to the area where they should be exhibited.

Celeste Crawford, Library and Acquisition Chrm., expressed concern at the Oct. Director meeting that items that are put in the library are not removed by area chairmen. Since all acquisitions are put in the Newsletter, it is felt that area chairmen should be able to determine what items should be removed from the library to their areas.

If anyone is uncertain, Dorothy Maxfield, curator, should be able to clarify things.

It was also decided that all chairmen will be asked to fill out an evaluation sheet outlining what their job entails and the procedures that are being followed to accomplish it.

These forms could then be kept on file and be available to new chairmen when needed.

* * * * *

MEMBER IN THE NEWS:

Richard J. Zipp, former Sup't. of the Wilson Central School District, was cited at the school on October 8, 1997, when the new gymnasium at the Wilson Junior-Senior High School was named the "Richard J. Zipp Athletic Center" in his honor.

Mr. Zipp has served the Wilson schools well for nearly thirty years, and leaves behind a legacy of many accomplishments--not only in the school but in service to the community as well.

* * * * *

DID YOU KNOW.....Niagara is the Indian name for "Thundering Waters"?

* * * * *

A BACHELOR is a man who can take a nap on top of the bedspread.

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1998.....MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION.....1998

NEW..... RENEWAL.....

NAME.....

ADDRESS..... PHONE # () _____ - _____

BOX #..... CITY..... STATE..... ZIP CODE.....

PLEASE CHECK BOX IF ADDRESS/NAME HAS RECENTLY CHANGED

PLEASE INDICATE PREVIOUS LAST NAME, IF APPLICABLE _____

JUNIOR (UNDER 18) \$1.00 EACH COUPLE \$8.00 _____

NAME _____ AGE _____ SINGLE \$5.00 _____

NAME _____ AGE _____ LIFE \$150.00 _____

NAME _____ AGE _____ LIFE (Couple) \$250.00 _____

HONORARY MEMBER (85+) FREE

BUILDING FUND DONATION \$ _____ TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED _____

* * * * *

APPLICATIONS AND MONIES ARE DUE BY JANUARY 1ST.

PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO THE WILSON HISTORICAL SOCIETY, AND RETURN TO:

SANDY HOLDEN PO BOX 319 WILSON, NY 14172

FREE CONCERT:

There will be a free Concert by the Niagara Symphony Orchestra, conducted by James Flood, at the Zipp Athletic Center, Thursday, Nov. 20th, at 7:30 PM. Participating with the orchestra will be the 62 member Wilson High School Senior Chorus conducted by Linda Williams.

The guest soloist will be Soprano Ann Kennedy, a former-resident and graduate of Wilson High who will sing Mozart's "Exaltate Jubilata". Also featured will be the selection by chorus and orchestra, "Gloria" by Antonio Vivaldi. Lighter selections by Victor Herbert and Wolf-Ferrari are also on the program.

The annual concert, previously held at the Wilson Museum, is sponsored by the "Friends of the Wilson Free Library, and will be partially funded by a grant from the Niagara County Council of the Arts.

* * * * *

NEW LIFE MEMBER:

Emma Duxbury Schrader, a native of Wilson, was born in 1902, the daughter of John J. and Lottie C. Duxbury, and of the 13 members of her family only Emma and one sister, Stella D. Dockstader, are still living. Emma's late husband, Lewis Schrader, was village clerk and village treasurer of Wilson, and she was deputy clerk from 1945 to 1960.

As a girl, Emma recalled happy times when her mother played the piano and all her family would gather around and sing. Even the neighbors would come out and sit on their verandas so they could listen and enjoy the music.

Emma and Lewis had two children, Emma Lou Reppentine, present village clerk, and Robert C. Mrs. Schrader has been a member of Exley United Methodist Church for 95 years and is also active in the United Methodist Women. She has been a member of the Golden Agers for 29 years; the Order of the Eastern Star; and the Wilson Historical Society. In 1985 she was made an Honorary Member, and as of October, 1997, she is an Honorary-Life Member. She was also Chrm. of the Society's Refreshment Comm. for six years.

Anyone who has sampled Emma's delicious baked "goodies" can readily understand why she has been known for many years as Wilson's "Cookie Lady". She has remarkable vitality for her age-- makes custards for shut-ins, and is always ready to help those in need.

* * * * *

NOVEMBER PROGRAM:

Bill Latten, Orleans County Historian, will be guest speaker at the Nov. 17th meeting of the Wilson His. Soc., and the subject of his talk will be "Stained Glass Windows". The public is always welcome to attend program meetings of the Society.

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MEMBERS RUNNING FOR OFFICE:

Marilyn Allgeier, after winning the September Primary, will be running for Town Supervisor on the Republican ticket, She is a member of Exley United Methodist Church; Vice-President of the Niag. Co. Clerks Assoc.; ; and Wilson Town Clerk for the past 32 years. Marilyn and husband, Edward, are both Life Members of the Wilson Historical Society.

Bruce Muck, member of the town's Planning Board for the past year and a half, is also running on the Republican ticket for a seat on the Town Board. Bruce operates a farm on route 425, South Wilson, and both he and his wife, Bonnie, are active members of the Wilson His. Society.

* * * * *

ACTIVE IN CHURCH:

We note that four of our Junior Historical Society members, Daniel, Michael, and Josh Brady, and Bill Banagis serve as Acolytes at the Exley United Methodist Church, while still another, Joshua Smith, is participating as an Altar Boy at Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Church. Which raises the question, Do we have other junior members serving in our local churches?

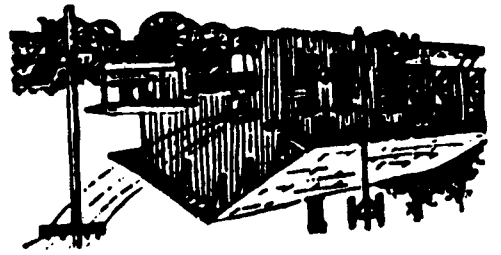
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WHAT A BEAU'T:

That's our 1998 Historical Society Quilt and it's called "Sunbonnet Sue Over the Year". Don't miss out on this one. Watch for more information in the Newsletter.

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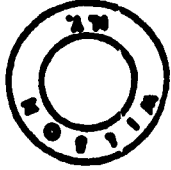
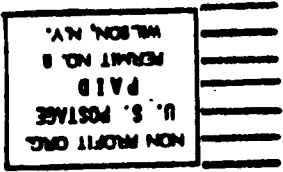


(Coleman Printing)
December 1997 Vol. 25 No. 11

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

NEWSLETTER

WILSON, NEW YORK 14172-9763
Wilson Historical Society



December 1997

PARK HISTORY REVIEWED:

The History of Lake Island Park dates back to the late 1800's when W.N. Harris and Dr. T.C. Walton acquired about 100 acres of land along the West Branch of the 12 Mile Creek--so named because the mouth of the Creek was 12 miles from old Fort Niagara.

The grand opening of the park was celebrated in 1889 with a number of activities including a Baby Contest, Parade of Boats, Ballgame, and Water Sports. The late Bessie Crawford, who lived most of her life on the Island, attended with her parents and received first prize for being the prettiest baby present. (Note: Much of the material used in this article was related to your Newsletter editor by Mrs. Crawford.)

A Parade of Boats was held in the early evening and the gaily decorated boats with Chinese lanterns made a pretty sight as they slowly sailed along the Creek to the strains of soft music played on mandolins and guitars. Luther Wilson, and other officials rode on a barge from which water was poured in the Creek and rechristened by Luther as the Tuscarora River.

The name, Tuscarora was suggested because the headwaters of the Creek originate in the Tuscarora Indian Reservation. The name, however, did not appear to take hold as the "river" is still mostly referred to today as the "Twelve Mile Creek."

The Park became very popular as a picnic area, and large crowds attended the Farmers Picnics which were held there each year. A ball diamond highlighted the recreational area which also had a water slide, bath house, boat livery, and Merry-Go-Round run by a thresher-type steam engine.

Thousands of people visited the Park during Wilson's "Gay Nineties" period including many Canadians who sailed by boat from Toronto. Some of the Canadian Steamers that unloaded passengers at the Park Piers had a capacity of 600 persons including the "Eurydice", "Cambria" and the "Columbia."

Ball games were a big attraction and an item in the July 7, 1892 edition of the Wilson "Star" described a game played between the Niagara Falls Dolphins and the Toronto Wilmots. Four hundred Canadians and 5,000 residents from nearby towns watched as the the Niagara Falls Dolphins defeated the Toronto Wilmots by a score of five to three.

Mr. Harris, who managed the Park, built a Boarding House on the south shore of the Bay, and for several years it was considered the "place to go" by summer vacationers. The house later became the summer home of the Tugwell family. It was said that Mr. Harris catered to a select clientele, and forbid liquor sales, profanity, Sabbath desecration, or other bad conduct. One of the first developments in the Park was a 40x70 foot Pavilion which was first called the Garden Opera House. Later, known as the Pavilion, it became popular for dining, dancing, band concerts, and the showing of silent motion pictures.

In the Sept. 24, 1890 edition of the "Philadelphia Real Estate Board and Building Guide", Harrison Albright, a Philadelphia Architect, is credited as having designed the structure. Considered architecturally beautiful, it was open on three sides with a bandstand built in on the south end. A small section with porch roof was where popcorn, soft drinks, and candy were sold.

On the north end, steps extended across the entire width of the building and led to the Bay where a large boatlanding and dock were built. Both dock and building were illuminated with kerosene reflector lamps making it a beautiful sight to vacationers visiting the Park.

Several old photos were taken near the pavilion including one showing the old Park Band. There is also a color lithograph in the Wilson Museum showing the old Pavilion as painted from the artist's memory.

The former Tuscarora or "T" Club was built around the Pavilion when the Tuscarora Park Association was organized in 1922. Art Ness managed the Association for 28 years during which time roads, lots, and a nine hole golf course were laid out by the Harris Architectural Firm of Buffalo. The "T" Club was a popular place for area residents who liked to dine out.

In 1979 the Association was dissolved and the Tuscarora Clubhouse was burned down in a controlled fire set by members of the Wilson and Olcott Volunteer Fire Companies.

Today, if you drive around the former Park grounds, you may notice the attractive home of Floyd and Mary Clark which now stands on the site of the former Pavilion and "T" Club.

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HOLIDAY GREETING:

From Sandy Holden, Kara Holden, and Don Croop, who make it possible for you to receive the monthly Newsletter: "Merry Christmas, and may the Best of Everything come Your Way."

* * * * *

BON MOT: They who walk with God always reach their destination.

* * * * *

REPUBLICANS HONOR JANET:

Mrs. Janet Sporleder was honored at the "Republican Candidate Night" held in the Wilson Boathouse Restaurant, Oct. 22, 1997, where she was presented with the Sen. Earl W. Brydges "Outstanding Republican Award" by Senator George D. Maziarz.

Janet attended the State College for Teachers at Buffalo and the University of Colorado, and in 1949 she moved to Wilson and began her long career as a teacher in the Wilson School District. Not only was she heavily involved in school but the community as well, and she was a member of St. John's Episcopal Church of Wilson; the Delphic Circle; Wilson Girl Scouts, and Historic Sites Chrm. for the Wilson Historical Society. She later spent many years as a member and President of the Wilson School Board. She also was a homemaker, and she and her late husband, Andrae, raised two children, Lisa Andra, and Andrae Jeffrey Sporleder.

Also honored was the late Elizabeth Schall, Councilman, when Dr. George Cruickshank, Wilson Committee Member, presented an award to her daughters, Nancy Simmons and Gloria Ierard, in reconition of her many years of service on the Town Council.

* * * * *

SENIORS ARE RECYCLED TEENAGERS:

If anyone has the idea that Senior Citizens are "Over the Hill" or a "Lost Cause", they should tune in on some of the activities of the Golden Age Club at Newfane directed by Wanda Manhardt. The Club celebrated it 37th Birthday recently at the Hartland Fire Hall when twelve of its members over 90 were feted as Honorary Guests.

Close to 200 "frisky" 60 to 80 yr. olds joined in a "penny march", (that's when everyone puts pennies in a bucket to match their age) and as the lively, cheerful group greeted their older friends, they really did appear to be "recycled teen-agers."

The active Club has had hundreds of interesting trips since it was organized 37 years ago-- both day and overnight tours and, having participated in many of them, we can vouch for the fact that there's seldom a dull moment.

For instance, a few weeks ago, the Golden Agers headed for Seneca Lake for a dinner cruise aboard the boat, "Columbia". A little east of Rochester, a wild turkey flew into the front windshield of the bus and smashed a hole in it. Although the turkey "disabled" the bus, it was nowhere to be found, but it did leave three feathers behind. These were presented to the busdriver for getting his first turkey of the season.

When a new bus arrived the trip to Seneca Lake was completed, and following a super meal and pleasant cruise, the congenial group finally returned to Miller Hose--already making plans for their next outing.

* * * * *

IN MEMORIAM:

Donald H. Weaver, 56, the son of Robert and Grace Schultz Weaver, died suddenly at home, Oct. 21, 1997. He was a member of the Wilson Conservation Club, Bolliver Post 0772 American Legion, Richburg Rod and Gun Club, Coyotes Limited, Life Member of the NRA, and member of the Wilson Hist. Soc. since 1982.

He is survived by his wife, Ruth Robinson Weaver; 2 sisters, Mary Guinn Elizabethton, TN; and Bonnie (Norman) Thrush of Wilson.

Funeral Services were held at the Hamilton & Clark Funeral Chapel, Wilson, and burial was in the North Ridge Cemetery, Cambria.

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John Goodrich, 92, a former Wilson Fruit grower, died Oct. 24, 1997 in Minnesota. He graduated from the University of New Hampshire, and received his Master's from Cornell University.

John owned and operated Goodrich Orchards on Lake Ontario, and was active in a number of organizations including Exley U.M. Church; Wilson Lions Club; Farm Bureau Extension Service; founder of the Lake Ontario Fruit Growers Assoc., and Pres., N.Y. State Multicultural Society.

He joined the Wilson His. Soc. in 1973 and took an active part in its early growth until he and his wife, Marion, left the area. Most of the barnwood used to cover the walls in the museum's "Patterson Room" were donated by Mr. Goodrich.

He enjoyed music and was a member of several Wilson Bands as well as the award-winning Tonawanda American Legion Band.

He is survived by Son, Philip (Helen) Goodrich of New Brighten, MN; 2 daughters, Jean (Allen) Patchin of Friedly, MN; and Barbara Philips of Flagstaff, AZ; also 6 grandchildren' 2 brothers, Burton Goodrich of Portland, OR; Leland (Marjorie) Goodrich of Strathan, NH; and relatives, Olive Gay of Denver, CO; Ruth Downes of Lockport; and Dr. Robert (Isabelle) Downes of Winter Haven, FL.

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MUSEUM GREETERS FOR DECEMBER:

Greeters at the museum on Dec. 7th from 2-4PM will be Marilyn and Ed Allgeier, Marlene Schotz, (open) Elton Kropp; Dec. 14th, Darrell and Sally Smith, Ruth Weaver, Kathy Fericks, (open) Darrell Smith; Dec. 21st, Sara Berry, Don Croop, Lorraine Brady, (open) Don Croop.

As in previous years, the Museum will be closed to visitors during the months of Jan., Feb., and March, however, the Board of Directors will meet as usual on the 2nd Wed. of each month. Regular program meetings will be scheduled on the 4th Monday of each month.

Virginia Strablow, Chrm., thanks all who have cooperated and responded so graciously this past year when contacted by her to help out.

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MEETINGS:

Dec. 10th Board of Director Meeting, 7:30 PM at the Museum.
Dec, 15th Program Meeting, 7:30 PM at the Museum.

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SOUNDINGS:

Just about the time they plan to retire, some parents discover that the birds who left the nest are homing pigeons.

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WITCHES & GOBLINS INVADE MUSEUM:

Witches and Goblins convened in the Barnum Bldg. recently to participate in a Halloween Party sponsored by the Wilson His. Soc. Over 100 children and parents attended and three cash prizes were given in eight separate categories with \$5 for 1st; \$3 for 2nd; and \$2 for 3rd. Costumes were judged by Leah King, Carol Smith, and "Emmet Kelly".

One & 2 years: 1st, Jacqueline Blair, Elephant; 2nd, Scott Stewart, Cowboy; and 3rd, Chelsea Smith, Bunny.

Three & 4 years: 1st, Savannah King, "Barny"; 2nd, Trevor Wendt, John Deere Tractor; and 3rd, Karena Wise, Clown.

Five and 6 years: 1st, Adam Robbins, Jack-in-the-Box; 2nd, Katelyn Smith, Elf; 3rd, Thomas McInerney, Dracula.

Seven & 8 years: 1st, Emmalee Pearce, Mr. Peanut; 2nd, Kate Cornell, Cat; and 3rd, Michelle Evans, Genie.

Nine & 10 years: 1st, Jessica Stewart, Dorothy; 2nd, Laureen Scalzo, Mouse; and 3rd, Earl Robbins, Gorilla.

Eleven & 12 years: 1st, Joshua Smith, Mummy; 2nd, Derek Master, Devil; and 3rd, Laura Evans, Witch.

Thirteen & 14 years: Andrew Clark, The Shadow; 2nd, Dan Brady, Ghost; and 3rd, Wendy Clark, Farm Girl.

Fifteen & Adult: 1st, Sally Smith, Scarecrow; 2nd, Darrell Smith, Pirate; and 3rd, Lorraine Brady, Rich Witch. "Emmet Kelly" received Honorable Mention.

Workers who decorated and cleaned up after the party were Sally & Darrell Smith, c6-chrm., Kevin King, Judy King, Wanda Burrows, Lorraine Brady, Daniel Brady, Michael Brady, Joshua Smith, Joshua Fischer, Bill Smith, Carol Smith, and Sara Berry.

The committee extends a special word of thanks to Jerry Kadryna and Staff at IGA Lakeside for their courteous assistance and cooperation. Coloring books and suckers were provided by Lakeside so that every child attending the party could receive something. Refreshments were furnished by the historical society and consisted of apples, apple cider, donuts, and coffee.

The society thanks all the parents and children for attending and making our first Halloween Party a "Howling" success.

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MEMBERSHIP NEWS:

The His. Soc. is happy to welcome these new members: Michael and Laurette Clark of Ransomville, NY; Sally Moot Holladay of Boothbay, Maine; Kevin and Leah King of Gasport, NY; Jonathan Zauner of Wilson, NY; and Joanne P. Scherer of Kenmore, New York.

New Life Members are: Helen Flagler of Middleport, NY; Donald Flagler of Irving, Texas; also, Joseph Geiser and Marguerite Geiser of Wilson, NY, and W.R. Reese of Williamsburg, VA.

We are also glad to have several new Junior Members: Andrew Clark, Wendy Clark, Benjamin Clark, and Thomas Clark, all of Ransomville; and Savannah King of Gasport, NY.

A generous response from more of our members is also helping our Building Fund, and we thank Thelma Patterson, Ernestine Walpole, Rachel Flagler, William and Mary Brodie, H. Bruce Lederhouse, James Cornell, Harry and Bernice Brown, James and Ellen Ellis, Maryanne Sharpe, George Gasior, Mrs. Elma McGrath, Beverly A. Woolson, Jack and Melinda Hutchison, MR/Mrs. Donald Flagler, Kathleen Neville, Janet Welch, Ruth Lampman, and W. W. Reese.

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CHRISTMAS PROGRAM:

Miles Linnabery, Program Chrm., has announced that the program for the December 15th meeting of the society will be a "Christmas Show and Tell." Miles will act as moderator, and hopes that everyone attending will take part.

Please bring your favorite Christmas poem, prose, recipe, antique cards, or favorite Christmas story you might share. This will be your program, so come prepared to "Show and Tell".

Sara Berry has agreed to be in charge of refreshments.

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===== 1998.....MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION.....1998

NEW..... RENEWAL.....

NAME.....

ADDRESS..... PHONE # () _____

BOX #..... CITY..... STATE..... ZIP CODE.....

____ PLEASE CHECK BOX IF ADDRESS?NAME HAS RECENTLY CHANGED
 PLEASE INDICATE PREVIOUS LAST NAME, IF APPLICABLE _____

JUNIOR (UNDER 18) \$1.00 EACH COUPLE \$8.00 _____

NAME _____ AGE _____ SINGLE \$5.00 _____

NAME _____ AGE _____ LIFE \$150.00 _____

NAME _____ AGE _____ LIFE (Couple) \$250.00 _____

HONORARY MEMBER (85+) FREE

BUILDING FUND DONATION \$ _____ TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED _____

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APPLICATIONS AND MONIES ARE DUE BY JANUARY 1ST

PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO THE WILSON HISTORICAL SOCIETY, AND RETURN TO:

SANDY HOLDEN PO BOX 319 WILSON, NY 14172

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LOCAL ELECTION RESULTS:

In the November election, Marilyn Allgeier became the first woman in the history of Wilson to win the position of Supervisor of the town of Wilson. Marilyn will begin her new career after having served the past 32 years as Wilson Town Clerk.

In other contests, Brad L. Clark, Sr., and Bruce G. Muck were elected to the town Council, and Kathleen Dixon was re-elected Tax Collector.

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NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT:

The Nominations Comm. composed of Art Schnoor, Chrm., Floyd Clark, "Ollie" Clark, Bill Rose, Eleanor Myers, Lois Barnum, and Don Croop, presented the following slate of officers at meeting November. The nominees will be voted on at the December 15th meeting.

Gary Fitch, President; Darrell Smith, Vice-President; Gordon Strablow, 2nd Vice-President; Richard Schmidle, Secretary; Corresponding Secretary, Wanda Burrows; and Treasurer, Judy King.

Trustees nominated to the year 2,000 are Lois Barnum; Bruce Muck; and Pam Groff. Miles Linnabery will fill out the term of Darrell Smith as trustee to December, 1999. Don Burrows, as Past President, will be made an Honorary Trustee.

Standing Chairmen nominated are: Celeste Crawford, Acquisitions; Virginia Strablow, Sunday Hostesses; Lorraine Brady, Refreshments; Lois Jennings, Memorials; Carole Schnoor, Publicity; Don Croop, Publications/Newsletter; Celeste Crawford, Librarian/Genealogy; Janet Sporleder, Historical Sites; Sandy and Kara Holden, Memberships; Miles Linnabery, Programs; Judy King, By-Laws; Lucille Upton, Tours; Schoolhouse, Wanda Burrows; and Sally Smith, Ways and Means.

Board of Director appointments including members of the 1998 Fair Committee will probably be announced in the January Newsletter.

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BOARD ACTION & REPORTS:

A motion was made and approved that starting in January, all program meetings of the Wilson Historical Society will be held on the 4th Monday evening of each month, (July & Aug. excepted). The meeting night was changed so Gary Fitch could accept the nomination for President.

Darrell Smith announced that John Minnick has volunteered to do some work on the society's Classic Cars when the necessary materials are furnished.

A motion was made and approved to give a Life Membership to Wanda Burrows in recognition of her splendid job in bringing the schoolhouse project to a successful conclusion.

A motion was also made and approved to name the "ticket office" the Myers Room in honor of the society's late President, John Myers.

Elton Kropp suggested that the player piano be moved quickly into the schoolhouse so that the work can be completed on it.

Sally Smith reported that about 8 more afghans have been sold recently, and that \$61.40 was cleared on the election day bake sale despite low voter turnout and fewer baked goods donations.

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HONORARY MEMBERSHIP:

When members reach the age of 85 they may receive free honorary membership for the remainder of their lives. To receive this recognition, you must notify either Sandy or Kara Holden so they may change your status on the membership roll and send you your new Honorary Card. You may either note your age on a membership application or call Sandy or Kara at 751-6596.

In 1997 there were 37 members holding Honorary Membership in the society.

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CONGRATULATIONS TO:

Donna and Sidney Pettit, who celebrated their fiftieth Wedding Anniversary at a reception held in the Wilson House Restaurant, Friday, November 14, 1997.

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WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT IT...

Of course it costs more to live today than it did 100 years ago. Most of the things that we take for granted now didn't exist then.

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