

Wilson Historical Society

WILSON, NEW YORK 14172

NEWSLETTER

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

JAN. 1980 Vol.9 No. 1
(Coleman Press)

THE CHRONICLE: Louis Swick has provided a copy of the first issue of the Wilson High School "Chronicle" published by the Wilson Star Press in Nov., 1911. The booklet sold for 10¢ a copy and was also supported by ads from area merchants. The staff consisted of Joanne Hamilton, Man. Editor; Kathyne Wilson, Assoc. Editor; Ruth Blacklock, Literary Editor; Amy Hamblin, Adv. Mgn; and Maybelle Gillis, Asst. Adv. Mgr.

Articles were written by students and hint that their flare for humor was little different than that of today's pupils. An editorial explained that the paper was being published in the best interests of the Senior Class and students, and all who felt inspired to "pen a classic for posterity" were invited to do so. It continued, "If you have a grudge against any dear friend, do not nurse your wrath, but rather give vent to it in the "Chronicle" where ill-will is shown to all and mercy to none."

Some of the advertisements could raise a question in the minds of some who might think Wilson hasn't changed much in the past 60 years. For instance, see if you can determine where the following businesses were located: Charles Haner, Cel Gran (the cerial substitute for coffee); Taggart & Stevens, Groceries & Drygoods; H.W. Ferrin, Tonsorial and Billiard Parlor; Cuddeback & Cooper, Undertakers & Furniture; Wm. H. Creasy, Gen. Blacksmithing; The Banner Store; William Albright, Farm Implements & Wagons; and S.S. Rising, Undertakers & Furnishings.

Score yourself: If you can locate 5 or more, you're a "Wilsonite"; Under 5, a "Newcomer".

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IN MEMORIAM: S. Joseph Hurst, 72, passed away Nov. 25th at Inter Community Hospital, Newfane. He was a supervisor at Anaconda American Brass, Buffalo, for 40 years, and member of St. John's Episcopal Church, Wilson. The Society joins in expressing its sympathy to his wife, Phyllis (Twist), his daughters Delores Barrows and Judith Hacker, and son J. James and ten grandchildren.

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NEW MEMBERS: It is a pleasure to welcome four new members into the Society: Dr. George Cruickshank, Chestnut Rd., Newfane; Edward & Marilyn (Monroe) Rodgers, Oxnard, Cal.; and Mary Cornell of Lancaster, California.

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HOLIDAY CHEER: A ten foot white spruce Christmas tree in the Patterson Room was donated by Bill and Carol Smith. It was cut and delivered by their son, Darrell, who also placed it in position on its stand. It was beautifully decorated by Flossie Lortz, Gertrude Schnoor, Susan Thilk, and Burt Jennings. Other decorations giving the museum a touch of the Christmas spirit are the ceramic Nativity Scene made and donated by Mary Kidder of Beechwood, and the large evergreen wreath made by Joe Higgins and hung at the east end of the building.

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WILSON SEAL: Whit Barnum suggested that it would be nice if two of the new Town of Wilson Seals could be made up so that one could hang in the Wilson museum as well as the Town Hall. The Seal is the creation of Mrs. Marlene Marcks Schotz of the Willow Rd., who entered the winning sketch in a recent "Seal & Motto" contest sponsored by the Board. Her sketch illustrates some of the attractions for which Wilson is well known such as trees for fruit & agriculture; water for boating & fishing; and a cobblestone house to represent Wilson's architectural heritage.

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SPLENDID ACHIEVEMENT: A successful "Tasting Party" was held during December when approximately 15 recipes from the cookbook were prepared by members who submitted them (names in Nov. Newsletter). Tables were set up under Dorothy Linnabery's supervision so that visitors were treated to a tasty selection of entrees, main courses, and desserts. If one measures success by attendance, we suggest that the 72 persons who signed the guest register made it so... if one measures success by money taken in, then the \$140 dollars realized made it so... but if one measures success by the warmth that is created by good fellowship of friendly people, then everyone made it so.

The Society appreciates the effort expended in its behalf by Dorothy Linnabery, Lois Barnum, Nettie Stimson, Carole Schnoor, Chris Goodman, Millie Croop, and all the ladies (and Gentleman) who prepared their delicious recipes for the "luncheon".

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BON MOT: Those who bring sunshine to the lives of others cannot keep it from themselves.
(Submitted by a member)

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MEN IN BLUE: Gen. Peter B. Porter figured prominently in the Niagara Campaign, War of 1812, and his son, Col. Peter A. Porter was a member of the State Assembly when the Civil War broke out. Col. Porter raised troops for the army and became Commander of the 8th N.Y. Vol. Heavy Artillery. He was killed at the Battle of Cold Harbor, June 3, 1864, and the GAR Post at Wilson was named after this distinguished member of the Porter family.

Over 50 of Wilson's sons fought under Col. Porter, and the regiment in which they served, was born in an hour of crises. Pres. Lincoln had issued a call for 300,000 troops in an effort to break the Union's stalled offensive before Richmond. Companies for the 8th were raised in Niagara, Orleans, and Genesee counties and mustered in at Camp Church (Niag. Co. Fairgrounds), August 22, 1862. The regiment first served in the defense of Baltimore except for a short campaign at Harper's Ferry and western Virginia. They were next ordered to Washington where, in high spirits, "Porter's Life Insurance Company" arrived in May, 1864. The regiment then marched to Cold Harbor, and when they arrived on June 2nd, were moved into the front lines. Following two days of furious fighting, Col. Porter lost his life along with 631 other officers and men, killed or wounded. The badly decimated regiment later moved on to Petersburg where it served to the end of the war.

Perhaps one of your ancestors is in this list of volunteers who served in the 8th from Wilson: Truman Ash, Henry Billings, Charles Burroughs, George Chappell, Robert Churchill, Bradford Coe, Elwood Coe, Nelson Coe, Ezra Cole, Gardiner Conn, Eli Cuddeback, William VanDusen, George Dawson, George Day, Albert Dietz, Allen Drinkwater, Frank Fellows, Robert Fuhrman, Hiram Garrison, Charles Gifford, William Gleason, Stephen Gordon, William Green, Edward Green, John Harry, Daniel Johnson, J.K. Johnson, Hannis Kolby, Walter Martin, Albert Mackenzie, Andrew Merwin, Franklin Morrison, John Longstaff, Jessie Olmstead, Levi Pettit, Josiah Pierce, Eugene Pollard, William Rodgers, B. Frank Sawyer, Charles Smith, Joseph Stoeffen, George Stewart, David Swann, Philander Thayer, James Thayer, Alexander Thompson, Wallace Thompson, John Thorton, William Thorton, Charles Thorton, Enford Webster, Sharon White, George Wilson, James Wilson, and Eugene Wright.

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AMES PIONEERS: Dorothy Thilk has submitted a letter received in 1844 by her g. grandfather, John Ames, from his brother Titus, who lived in Rushford, N.Y. The letter was mailed at a cost of 10¢ but no stamp was used. The single page folded with the message inside and was sealed together with sealing wax. It was addressed to the Molyneaux Postoffice at Cambria, Niagara County. The message was short and stated that, "John and Sharl would probably be at your place next week. We are all well. I now think of sending most of the goods by Canal to Lockport. Clay is elected and no mistake." signed, Titus Ames.

Titus decided to leave Rushford and come to Niagara County despite a previous letter in which he questioned his brother having moved to such a dismal wilderness. (Today's residents of the Daniels Rd. might find it hard to believe that in 1844 it was just a mud-rutted wagon trail through a virgin forest with closely knit tree limbs above it. The only indication of where the road started at North Ridge, was a slash cut on the trunk of a large tree.)

Ruth and Mary Hamblin were also g.grandaughters of pioneer John Ames who lived a little south of where Wirt and Dora Wakeman now live. When Titus moved from Rushford, he settled a little further west of John on the Randall Rd.

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PTA PROGRAM: There is a saying that if you want to get a job done, ask a busy person. Chris Goodman, a member of the Society's Ways & Means Comm., is Chrm of the PTA program at Thomas Marks to provide a Story Hour for pre-school youngsters at the Wilson Free Library. In addition to story telling, other small skills are taught such as identifying colors. About 40 children attend the sessions which are held on Mondays from 10 to 11 AM. Two story tellers are provided each month and in Dec, they were Kathy Kropp and Vicki Kosanwich.

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NIAGARA HISTORIC TRAIL: Last fall we decided to make believe we were "out-of-state-tourists" and drove around the Niagara Historic Trail. At several vital turns we discovered the trail signs were missing, and had to conclude that had we been visitors we would have become hopelessly lost. We decided to write the Niagara Co. Dep't. of Ecnomical Development & Planning to see if they were aware of the trail's condition. We received a nice letter from Betty Gigliotti, Tourism Administrator, who replied, "If the tourist who visits Niagara Falls.....is interested in the rest of the county, we must, as you state, make their tour enjoyable and not confusing. Let me assure you we will do our utmost in regards to replacing non-existant signs."

Highway construction and vandalism could contribute to missing trail markers, so it is suggested when driving along sections of the trail, keep your eyes open and report any areas you think signs are missing. Tourists bring money into the county, but none will benefit if they are left stranded in someone's cabbage patch.

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IN PASSING: As the Wilson Historical Society enters the decade of the '80s, we note that this is the start of our 9th year as editor of your Newsletter. We especially would like to thank everyone who has contributed material for the publication, also for your letters, cards, and kind words of encouragement. We must also bring to your attention the work and help from my "patient" wife, Millie, without whom it would be most difficult to keep mailing-plates up to date; also for her help in folding, stapling, and sorting newsletters for mailing each month. About 50 Newsletters were sent out when it was first published in 1972. Now, approximately 325 letters are mailed to our 430 members--and we're still growing.

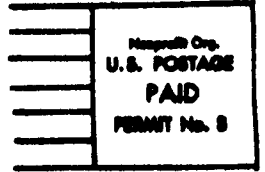
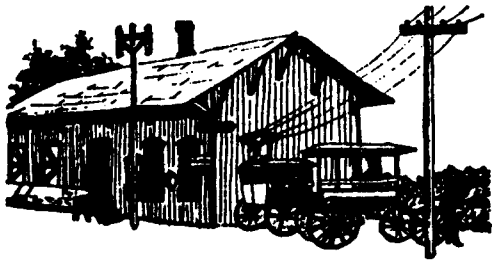
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OVERSIGHT: When mentioning area apple growers in the last newsletter we somehow plumb forgot about the Singer Orchards. Sorry about that.

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GRANDPA SAYS: Remember when movies were rated on how good they were, not on who should be allowed to see them?

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Wilson Historical Society

WILSON, NEW YORK 14172

NEWSLETTER

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

FEB. 1980 Vol. 9 No. 2
(Coleman Press)

HISTORIC BUILDING BURNS: A familiar old landmark, the Hub Hotel, was consumed by flames in an early morning fire, Jan. 2nd, 1980. Also destroyed by the blaze were the Wilson Post Office and Felipe's Art Studio. Fortunately, no lives were lost but upstairs apartments were burned out leaving about 20 persons homeless. A fire wall between the hotel and Okie's Pharmacy was credited with preventing the fire spreading further.

The charred remains bring back nostalgic memories of a time when the "Hub" was well-known for its delicious chicken and biscuit dinners on Sunday. Hubert "Hub" Ferrin was proprietor and the dinners were cooked by his wife, Ida, and served by their daughters, the late Vera Pease and Almira Burch. It is recalled that people used to line up in the street outside the door waiting to be served. How the "Hub" became one of the area's most popular eating places is a story in itself.

In the early 1900's, H. W. Ferrin, a barber from Springville, came to Wilson and acquired the Emerson property on Young Street. He started up a Tonsorial and Billiard Parlor in the two story building, and letters from the old Emerson sign were used to help spell the Ferrin name over his barbershop which was located to the right of the front entrance. "Old Timers" probably remember the rows of shaving mugs along the wall--many bearing the names of regular customers, also the pool tables in back which made the shop a popular gathering place for the "young blades" around town.

In 1908, another disastrous fire leveled the majestic Sutherland Hotel located on the Southwest corner of Young and Lake Streets. About that period, many salesmen used to come to Wilson on the "Hojack" railroad, but with the Sutherland gone, there was no place to eat. They used to complain about this at the barbershop and Mrs. Ferrin got the idea of preparing lunches for the visitors. This small accomodation expanded until finally Mr. Ferrin hired his good friend, William Mudge of Mudge & Wilcox, to add on a dining room, kitchen, and third story living quarters. The new "Hub" Hotel, sparked by Mrs. Ferrin's excellent cooking, soon became known as one of the better eating places in the area.

Marie Swick Reynolds, Jean Wilson Kress, and Phyllis Chapman Hageman also spent many busy hours serving table at the "Hub". Marie recalls that she and the other girls would often be dead tired at the end of a day's work, but if someone suggested they go dancing at Olcott, their recuperating ability was little less than remarkable.

In more recent years, the "Hub" maintained its reputation for good food under the management of Alex and Cecilia Andrasik who also catered to monthly dinner meetings of the Lion's Club and Wilsonian Business and Professional Womens' Club.

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THE Gnostic GUILD: February marks the 40th anniversary of the Gnostic Guild in Wilson. It all started Feb. 20th, 1940, when a group of girls met at the home of Eleanor Baetzhold, a member of the Delphic Circle, and organized a Junior Delphic Club. Four months later on June 5th, 1940, the club changed its name to Gnostic Guild, the word "Gnostic" meaning "pertaining to knowledge". The object of the club was for intellectual and social improvement, and an important part of that purpose has been realized by its support of the Wilson Free Library for many years.

Charter members were Corinne Schoultz McGovern; Betty Burton Treichler; Jean Wilson Kress; Jennie Moose Donop; Phyllis Chapman Hageman; Yvonne Duxbury Smithson; Ruth Martin Phillips; Beatrice Hahn Rockwood; and Helen Salisbury Covey.

The first officers of the Guild were Jean Wilson Kress, Pres; Corinne Schoultz McGovern, Vice-Pres; Helen Salisbury Covey, Sec'y; Virginia Mark Nichols, Treas; Marie Swick Reynolds, Sunshine; and Jennie Duxbury Smithson, Marie Swick Reynolds, and Phyllis Chapman Hageman, Program.

A year after the club was organized, the Gnostic Guild joined the Federation of Womens' Clubs. Blue and white were adopted as the official colors, and membership was limited to 25 persons. On Oct. 3rd, 1978, it was voted to increase the total membership to thirty.

The current officers of the Guild are Jan Zipp, Pres; Margaret Siener, 1st Vice-Pres; Polly Maxfield, 2nd Vice-Pres; Sara Berry, Sec'y; Celeste Crawford, Treas; Jean Kerwin, Membership; Emily MacAvoy, Sunshine; and Marlene Dinse, Helen Stevens, and Mary Clark, Program (Factual information, courtesy of Eloise Culverwell)

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FAIR DATE SET: The trustees have approved Mon., May 26th, as the official date of the 1980 "Country Fair". The Monday Memorial Day date will co-incide with most plant closings, provide necessary parking at Pfeiffer's Foods, and hopefully please all our Dealers.

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WANTED: Mrs. Marge wilson, guest speaker at the Jan. Meeting, would like local recipes for use in connection with the Native American Center for the Living Arts, 466 3rd St. Niagara

IN MEMORIAM: Jane B. Moxham, 61, died Jan. 12th with an apparent heart attack while vacationing in Florida. In 1963 she was elected at Wilson as the 1st woman Justice of the Peace in Niagara County. Justice Moxham served the community for 16 years and in November was re-elected to her 5th four year term. She graduated from St. Mary's Seminary and was a member of Our Lady of the Rosary Roman Catholic Church in Wilson. She was a member of the former Wilsonian BPW Club, and attended the first meetings held in April, 1972, to found the Wilson Historical Society.

The Society extends its deepest sympathy to the surviving members of her family: Walter Moxham, Jr. Atty., Lockport, N.Y.; William Moxham, Miami, Fla.; Janie Moxham, Lockport, N.Y.; Mrs. Patricia Fisher, Wilson; Susanne Hunt, Dallas, Texas; and George M. Moxham, Rochester.

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NEW MEMBERS: The Society is pleased to welcome the following new members: Caroline Campbell Paton, Irvington, N.Y.; James Campbell, Atlanta, Georgia; Helen Salisbury Covey, Deming, N. M.; and Joyce Salisbury Gajewski of Lancaster, N.Y.

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SUNDAY HOSTESSES: Edna Rose has announced that the Sunday Hostesses for February will be as follows: Feb. 3rd, Helen & Ralph Dinse; Feb. 10th, Lois & Whit Barnum; Feb. 17th, Leona & Howard Hunter; and Feb. 24th, Marilyn & Ed Allgeier.

Attention, All Hostesses! The Library Comm. would appreciate your co-operation. If any visitor leaves something for the museum while you're on duty, please be sure to fill out a transmission slip (with as much information you can get about gift or donor), and leave slip with the acquisition. This will help Library Comm. keep an accurate record of all gifts.

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NEW MUSEUM EXHIBIT: The theme for the Feb.-March museum exhibit will be "Old Tools". There will be a meeting to arrange the display Jan. 28th at 1:00 PM, and anyone can bring items for loan at this time. Since the Society already has a fine exhibition of tools built around a lifetime collection donated by Bob Lewis of Newfane, members are encouraged to bring unusual specimens that may not presently be shown.

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HONORED: John Thilk, Chestnut Rd., was named linebacker on the Div. VI All Star Football team. John, defensive Captain, has played on the Wilson Varsity for three years.

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FEBRUARY PROGRAM: The theme of the Feb. program will be "School Day in a One Room School". Hazel Salisbury, former teacher, will be guest speaker. The Refreshment Committee will be Millie Lonsbery, Chrm., Cheryl Brown, and Mary Gamble.

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RECOGNIZED: In a letter to Dr. John Argue, Pres., Stephen Larock, Director of Curriculum, and Richard Zipp, Supt. of Schools, have cited the Wilson Hist. Soc. for promoting local history and education in the community, both through local activities and related programs at the Wilson Museum. To assist in the continued success of the program, the school has invited the Society to participate in the development of the 1980-81 School Calendar. Dorothy Thilk, Town Historian, and Don Croop will collaborate to provide the school with a list of locally important historical dates.

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WIRELESS MEET: The Board of Trustees has granted permission to the Niagara Frontier Wireless Assoc. to hold a "Wireless Meet" at the Museum on Saturday, April 12th, from 12N to 5:00 PM. The group is a non-profit Corp. of N.Y.S., and holds 3 or 4 meets each year to promote the history of Wireless Communication and related matters.

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GRAND LADY: It is a little hard to picture Jennie Bigelow as a former Matron at the Niagara County Jail, but she was...for nine years. She smiles when she tells how shocked people would look when she told them she "served time" in jail, but considers this as her own little private joke. Wife of former Sheriff, Fred Bigelow, she worked before and after his tragic death at the hands of a cornered fugitive. She married Fred, a farmer, in 1908, and he was well known for his honesty in dealing with others. He also liked to play baseball, and basketball, and in later years was an avid golfer.

The nature of Jenny's work caused her to rub elbows with many shady characters, but she always seemed to have a knack for getting their co-operation. She tells a cute story about one inmate who had the reputation of being a lady of ill repute. One day a "gentleman", who was running for the office of City Councilman, came to the jail looking for support when suddenly the 'fore mentioned "lady" spotted him and hollered, "Hey, don't I know you?" According to Jenny, the politician's face turned bright red and he lost no time beating a fast retreat out of there.

Jennie started life as the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William Haner, who operated a farm on the west side of Rt. 425 about one half mile south of the village. Her serene out look on life may be attributed to the fact she never once heard them engage in a family arguement. Although in her 93rd year, she acts and talks like she was 20 years younger. She keeps in shape by taking daily walks (when able), and Sunday morning services at Exley United Methodist Church wouldn't be quite the same without Jennie sitting in "her favorite pew".

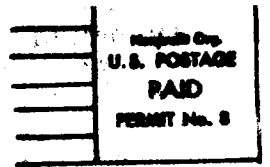
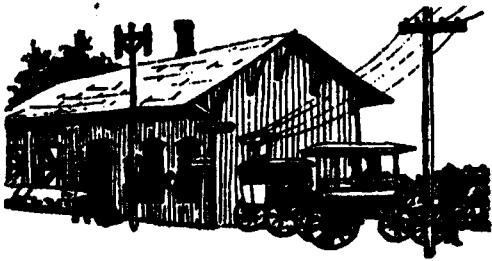
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FIRE AFTERMATH: Although the Wilson Postoffice had to move into temporary quarters after the "Hub" Hotel fire, all was not lost. Postmaster Dean Stoberl gave the familiar old service window and counters to the Society, and with the help of Bob Rohring, they were moved to the museum. The window was used by several generations of Wilsonites and dates back to 1897 when Elmer A. Johnson was Postmaster. It was then located where Okie's Pharmacy now is. When Elmer Johnson and George Middleton started a drugstore, the office was moved next door where it remained until the recent fire.

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BON MOT: America has a brand new slogan: "Have Car, Can't Travel."

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Wilson Historical Society

WILSON, NEW YORK 14172

NEWSLETTER

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

March 1980 Vol. 9 No. 3
(Coleman Press)

WILSON, NEW YORK 14172

THE WILSON STAR: Much of Wilson's early history has been preserved because of a weekly newspaper called the "Wilson Star". It was started in October, 1878, by Tower and Betts but one month later Charles Honeywell, a Toronto journalist, purchased the business and began to publish the eight page "Star" as a politically independent local and general newspaper. It was printed on the 2nd floor of the present Masonic building and completely "set" by hand--a very tiring and time consuming process. After an edition was published, all type had to be placed back in their respective compartments, letter by letter. In a few years a linotype machine was purchased which permitted type to be set from a keyboard--similar to ones on a typewriter. Much of this work was done by Dora Honeywell, an accomplished operator, and it was during her 45 years of service with the paper that much of Wilson's history was recorded. After her husband's death, October 31, 1932, Dora Hatch Honeywell took over publication of the "Star", and when she died in 1936, it was willed to her nephew, Milburn E. Campbell.

"Chuck" Campbell published the paper for 7 more years during which time, Harold Albright became his business associate. A decision was made to purchase a new press, and when it was delivered, was found to be too wide for the door. So the press sat on the 2nd floor of the Masonic building, blocking stairway and entrance to print shop, until "Chuck" was able to get in touch with the company. Fortunately, the contract had specified the width of the door, so he was able to persuade them to tear down the wall, move the press in, and repair the damage.

During the period that "Chuck" was Editor-Publisher of the "Star", he recalled that Mrs. Julian Lutz became the first woman chosen in 1939 to serve as juror from Wilson at the Niagara County Courthouse in Lockport....A correspondent reported that Roy Church had died so his obituary was written. Luckily, before publication, "Chuck" happened to look out the window and saw Mr. Church riding a bicycle down Young Street....A wedding ceremony was held in the cemetery at the grave of the bride's mother because she had given consent for her daughter to be married....Correspondents always reported if anyone shingled a privy roof because "That was News"....Many State Banks closed their doors during the Great Depression of the 30's, and after liquidating, many depositors received small percentages of their savings. The "Wilson Star" received a check from the Ransomville State Bank for two cents, and a three cent stamp was used to mail it to them.

On May 28, 1943, "Chuck" Campbell was called to serve in the armed forces during World War II, and he sold his interest in the "Star" to John Bieda, owner of the Wilson Pharmacy. Up to that time, the "Star" had been published for 65 years without missing a week, and also had the distinction of becoming a member of the "One Half Century Club" of the American Press Assoc.

John Bieda published the paper until November 1, 1943, and then sold it to Fred McLennan, acting manager of the Buffalo Courier Express. Unfortunately, Mr. McLennan died shortly after and publication was suspended December 9, 1943. Mr. Bieda felt that the loss of the weekly paper was a blow to the community so he sold the drugstore and re-purchased the "Star" equipment. Publication was resumed, August 31, 1944 and continued until April 3, 1945, when he also was called to join the armed forces. Mr. Bieda retained ownership, however, and arranged for Robert Wark to act as managing editor. The "Star" was published a little while longer in Wilson, but was later moved to Newfane under new management and a new name. Thus ended sixty seven years of the Wilson-oriented "Star".

Milburn "Chuck" Campbell now resides with his wife, Marion, on Lake St. in Wilson, and is a retired employee of the Niagara Gazette. He is an active member of Exley United Methodist Church, Ontario Lodge No. 376, F. & A.M., and a trustee of the Wilson Historical Society.

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QUILT COMPLETED: The new "Progress" cross stitch quilt has been completed, thanks to quilting veterans, Florence Schultz, Chrm., Betty Stimson, Beryl Tovell, and Anna Mae Nevins. Others who helped were Eva Zortman, Maxine Jones, and Gail Smith.

Ticket donation books have been printed by Tom Fare and will be available from Betty or Nettie Stimson. It is hoped that all members will respond this year and make a special effort to sell and/or purchase some. The quilts have helped to make past Fairs a great success. In the words of Winston Churchill, "Never was so much owed by so many to so few."

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BAD BREAK: John & Eleanor Myers recently donated a dismantled barn for erection on the museum grounds as an agricultural building. Theft of the main timbers will necessitate a smaller one. Whit Barnum suggests a "lean-to" type shed, (like many farmers once used to store their tools), might be appropriate for our needs. A truckload of boards were moved by Whit Barnum, Burt Jennings, Elwin Upton, and Johnnie Myers.

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GRANDPA SAYS: "If you worry about missing the boat, remember the Titanic."

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ACQUISITIONS: The "Doll House & Toy" exhibit included some recent acquisitions from Herbert Kahler of Newfane including a "Geetar" Music Box; 3 "Hurdy Gurdys"--one with monkey; a Fisher-Price "Teddy Zillo"; Musical "Jack-in-the-Box"; 1950 metal truck; and a red Bee 29 Sled, ca. 1929.

Helen Borngraeber gave two army canteens, one from World War I, and one from World War II. Janet Sporleder: A Child's lace apricot-color umbrella and doll, ca. 1900.

Beryl Tovell: A beautiful black wedding dress and black umbrella that was made for Jessie Oliver Tovell in Paris, France.

Florence Mudge Donner of Cleveland, Ohio: A Pedestal Stand that was once used in the old Peter A. Porter Post GAR Hall in Wilson. It was given to her by her grandfather, John B. Litchard, Civil War Veteran.

Harriet Landy Nolan of N. Tonawanda: Bound book of 1893 "Buffalo Enquires"(July thru Dec.)

Anna Mae Nevins: Old change purse, and 2 Wilson School diplomas. (Willard Nevins, 1927)

Garnette Upton: White Wedding Dress that belonged to Alma Farrell.

Mabel Wilson: Pair of pillow cases hemmed with hand-made rickrack from strips of muslin. Pillow cases came from Reuben Wilson home on W. Young St., and were made by Rachel Wilson, wife of Oliver.

Wally Beutel: Souvenir "Stockwell & Blacklock" Carpenter Pencil from the former Blacksmith and International Harvester Shop once located on the south east corner of Beebe & Chestnut Rds.

Florence Swick: Three Law Books that belonged to the late Alonzo P. Swick, Justice of the Peace in Wilson for many years.

Jean Hayes: Sewing Caddy dated 1901, given in memory of her grandmother, Florence A. Swick.

Betty Stimson: 48 Star American Flag.

Marion McLennon of Buffalo: Old table legs from Buffalo beer parlor table.

Lucy Monroe: One pair of Pillow Cases

Harold Mudge: Sons of Veterans (S.V.143) Pin worn by Burt Mudge.

Don Croop: Hand Sickle and Wire Fence Pliers, ca. 1900; Coldcut Blacksmith Anvil Tool, ca. 1880; and Drop Forged Monkey Wrench made by J.C. Speirs & Co.

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PROGRESS: The Society has made many improvements to the old depot in order to make it worthy of the name, "Wilson Museum". The treasurer has compiled figures showing that \$8,811.82 has been spent on building materials; \$2,673.92 has been expended for labor; and \$3,172.02 has been paid toward construction of the new building. Also, \$2,529.29 has been spent for museum furnishings and supplies such as tables, chairs, files, etc., making a total of \$17,187.05. If, on top of that, one places a dollar value on the hundreds of hours of labor that has been volunteered, it is reasonable to conclude that the Wilson Historical Soc. has made a creditable contribution to the town we all love.

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ACCLAIMED: Many Hist. Soc. members attended the recognition dinner for retired Town Councilman, Larry Pease, held at the South Wilson Firehall, Sun., Jan. 27th. Sen. John Daly and Ray Beiter, County Clerk, were special guests, and Whit Barnum, Town Supervisor, and Dr. John Arque, Pres. of the Hist. Soc., praised Mr. Pease for his 36 yrs. of dedicated service as did other officials of the town boards, water district, and highway department. An excellent dinner was served to approximately 200 guests by the South Wilson Fire Co. Auxiliary.

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WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS: James Mangan, Lewiston; Jack & Melinda Hutchison, Sanborn; also Ruth Phillips, Kenneth & Vivian Briggs, and Ida Ereon from Wilson.

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BI-MONTHLY EXHIBIT: The theme for the February-March exhibit is "Old Tools" and many unique pieces are on display including a set of barn-erecting tools that belonged to Burt Jennings's father, Jesse, who built many barns in this area. There are also various types of copper soldering irons, and shoe lasts and tools used to make and repair shoes, as well as an old foot pedal jigsaw and many other miscellaneous items.

Specially featured is an old Excelsior Hand Press donated by Esther Casselman of Sanborn. It was used by Mr. J.R. Casselman to print calling cards, bill heads, and labels for maple sugar containers. Miss Caselman also gave a "plug Cutter", bookbinder, and a teacher's Printing Case used by her mother, Clara Falmer Balcom Casselman, a graduate of the old Wilson High Teacher's Training Class.

Joseph C. Rice, Sr., g.g.grandfather of Judith Rice Okoniewsky, was born in Cambria in 1828. He was an expert millwright and built the Franklin Flour Mill in Lockport, first whole wheat flour mill in the United States. Some of the tools of his trade are displayed including a machine caliper, wood marking gauge, wooden mallets, stone hammer, and also a wood depth gauge used to read liquid measure through a bung hole in the end of a barrel.

The regular tool exhibit featured in the Patterson Room includes the lifetime collection of Bob Lewis of Newfane, and is made up of the various types of tools used to build Niagara County's 19th Century homes, barns, and mills.

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GOOD START: Dorothy Thilk, Town Historian, started a new trend at the Jan. meeting when she introduced "Chuck" Campbell, who gave a first hand account of the "Rise and Fall" of the Wilson Star. Excerpts from "Chuck's" fine presentation have been featured in this "Newsletter". There are many unique historical tales that could be told about Wilson, and hopefully, more of our knowledgeable members or guests will give short talks in the future.

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JOHNNIE RYAN MYSTERY: An old wooden case filled with empty Johnnie Ryan pop bottles was left at the museum, but there is no record of the donor. Please let Lois Jennings know so it can be recorded. The Acquisitions Comm. wishes to have a transmission slip on record for all donations.

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TAX TIME AGAIN: I'm proud to pay taxes in the United States; the only thing is, I could be just as proud for half the money. (Arthur Godfrey)

FRONTIER BUILDER: Horatio Alger must have had men like Walter Johnson in mind when he wrote stories such as, "Bound to Rise", or "Strive and Succeed." Founder of the Johnson Construction Co., Walter, 93, and his wife, Laura, are now comfortably retired in a Parkway Apt. overlooking the Niagara River, but in the early 1900's things were much different. He was born on the McClew Rd. in 1887 and later moved with his family to a small farm on the south side of Chestnut east of the Creek in South Wilson. His mother was a hard-working Christian woman and they attended the East Wilson Methodist Church. Most people were honest then so doors were seldom locked. His early upbringing no doubt laid the groundwork for his becoming the owner of one of the most successful construction companies on the Niagara Frontier.

At age 15, he started working for Edgar Bull, then spent a year with Merle Tower but returned to work for the Bulls. His bedroom extended off the west wing of the Bull home so he could come and go as he pleased. Built in 1835 by John Bull, the house is now the residence of Don and Millie Croop.

Franklin Bull, father of Edgar, lived next door to the east and the Bull lands extended along Chestnut on both sides. Large amounts of cabbage, apples, melons, cukes, and tomatoes were grown and much of it taken to the Buffalo market. A huge windmill back of Franklin's place provided power for sawing wood and grinding grain for feed. He also had a one cylinder "brush" auto that started hard when cold. If Walter heard the dinner bell ring in mid afternoon, he knew it was a signal to go to the house and get it going. This he enjoyed doing.

Farmers like Fred Thilk and Edgar Bull often went to market together, but since roads were rough and muddy, it was difficult to climb the Cambria Center or Baker Hills. When they reached the Ridge, they would hitch both teams to one wagon, draw it to the top, then return for the other. The wide wagon racks were built by "Hub" Stockwell with 3 or 4 layers and had a capacity of 75 or 80 bushels. Mr. Stockwell and his four sons were highly regarded in East Wilson and it wasn't unusual for them to shoe 25 or 30 horses per day in their blacksmith shop. Wagons were completely built and assembled by them and designed with smaller wheels in front so wagon could be turned in a sharp circle. A cider mill stood across the road from the wagon shop and thousands of bushels of apples were pressed into cider each year.

The Lockport-Wilson Stagecoach, driven by "Jockey" Faery, stopped each day at the East Wilson Postoffice located in Stockwell's shop. It also stopped at the South Wilson Postoffice located in the Baylis home, now the residence of Mrs. Hazel Thilk.

Like other self-made men of his day, Walter Johnson got most of his education from "the school of hard knocks", however, he did attend the Wilson schools for a few years. One of his favorite teachers was Carrie Martin, and he went to school with Louis Swick. He also knew Lee Hamblin, Jennie Bigalow, Rex Tugwell, Fay Campbell, Doc Pratt, Ronald Wright, and the Carrigans to mention a few.

He worked awhile for Mr. Perrigo in Wilson and through his urging bought his first farm on the Fletcher Pl. It cost him \$1.00 down and the "rest when he was able". He was 23 years old when he left East Wilson but that move probably started him out as a builder. He had to do a lot of carpenter-work to get his place in shape so he could get married. It looked pretty hopeless for a while, but he was finally able to "take the plunge" and eloped with Laura Wiseman. Their eldest son was born in their first log cabin with beams so low one could hardly stand up straight, but after the first winter he laid a foundation for a new house. By the following winter he closed it in enough so they could move in. As his prowess for building became known, other farmers hired him to do work for them.

While farming, he had two teams but since he had need for another horse decided to go to an auction on Grand Island. He hitch-hiked to N. Tonawanda where he took the Ferry across the river. He bought a good mare for \$200 and rode it back to his home. One night, while leading the horses to an open well for water, one of them nipped the mare on the neck and she lunged into the air and plunged feet first to the bottom of the well. Walter rigged up a tri pod and lowered himself into the icy water where he managed to get a rope around her. There was just enough room to squeeze next to her and he hates to think what might have happened had the horse decided to kick or squirm. The mare was eased from the well but looking back Walter concluded, "Was that water ever cold."

He was the first man drafted from Wilson in World War I but was deferred because he was a producing farmer. Later on he helped build "flying boats" for Curtis-Wright, but disliked it so much he went to work for the Otto E. Grupp Construction Co. After two years he went on his own and by the time World War II arrived had more work than he could do.

We asked him what he considered to be the secret for his success and he replied, "Hard work, good credit, and hiring good men and treating them right." He is also thankful that he always had good health, never was injured, and was able to work and produce every day. When asked what he remembered most about Wilson he said, "There is no better farming area, no better place to live, and no better people to associate with. I've always regarded them as hard-working, energetic, and honest."

In view of Mr. Johnson's success as a builder, it is ironic that his father opposed it and told Walter to "stick to farming, you don't know anything about construction." Were he alive today, he'd be proud of the son who built Shopping Centers, hundreds of houses, and over a dozen schools including Gaskill Jr. High. The first surgical building at Niagara Falls Memorial Hosp. was erected by him as well as the 201 apartment complex on Cedar St., and the Tower apartments in Lockport. In addition his company did much work for industrial giants such as Carborundum, Union Carbide, Hooker Chemical, and Harrison Radiator.

Walter keeps in touch with his early boyhood home as a member of the Wilson Historical Soc. We wish to thank him for sharing an afternoon of memories with us, and also Karl Wright for making arrangements for the interview and luncheon at the Niagara Club.

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COME TO THINK OF IT: If you observe people long enough, you'll realize that the self-made ones have an abundance of working parts. (Bob Talbert)

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TREASURER'S QUARTERLY REPORT:

	Bal. 10/14/79	Credits	Debits	Bal. 2/14/80
General Fund	\$ 6,359.02	\$ 1,244.32	\$ 1,800.63	\$ 5,802.71
Memorial Fund	\$ 67.02	\$ 135.00	\$	\$ 202.02
Building Fund	\$ 2,796.28	\$ 500.00	\$ 2,968.30	\$ 327.98
Life Membership Fund (frozen)	\$ 2,228.86	\$ 13.97		\$ 2,242.83

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IN MEMORIAM: Miss Mildred Mudge passed away Feb. 11, 1980, while residing with her sister, Mrs. Florence Donner of Cleveland, Ohio. She was a member of Exley United Methodist Church and Wilson Hist. Soc., and retired as a postal clerk from the Wilson Postoffice in 1970 after 37 years of service. The Society extends its sympathy to her sister, Florence, her brother Harold of Wilson, also all other members of the family.

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SHINING HOUR: Mayor Kenneth Welker proclaimed Monday, Feb. 18th, as "Ida Ereon Day" in honor of Wilson's oldest and liveliest citizen, Ida Ereon, 101, who was also honored by friends and relatives at an open house in the Wilson Fire Hall, Sun., Feb. 17th. She is a lifelong resident of the Wilson area, and she and her husband built the old Gem Theater on Young St. which was destroyed by fire in the 60's. She presently resides at her home on Wilcox St., and is a member of St. Peter's Lutheran Church and Wilson Rebecca Lodge, IOOF. Mrs. Ereon has also been sponsored as the latest member of the Wilson Historical Society.

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MUSEUM GREETERS: The following members have agreed to serve as hostesses at the museum on Sunday afternoons from 2-4PM during March as follows: March 2nd, Sid and Donna Pettit; March 9th, Anna Mae Nevins and Joe Higgins; March 16th, George and Dorothy Linnabery; March 23rd, Jeanette Schlyer & Helen Horton; and March 30th, Ed and Dorothy Lort.

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MARCH PROGRAM: Lois Jennings and Eleanor Myers will bring some local color to the March 17th meeting of the Society when they present the program, "Flowers in Many Forms Decorated Our Homes in the Past." Marietta Goodman has announced that refreshments will be served by Winnie Fischer, Chrm., Edna Rose, and Leona Hunter.

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GIFT FROM SCHOOL: The Wilson School has given a 50 yr. old Chandler-Price Platen Press to the Society for display at the museum. Instructions and parts manual are included. The press can print on either cards or large sheets and will make impressions on any weight stock from "onion skin" to 6-ply cardboard, and turn out up to 3,000 pcs. per hr. In this day of rapidly changing printing techniques, it is predicted that computerized technology will soon replace pencils, paper, and typewriter in major newspaper offices. When computer technology takes over, presses like the Platen will become as extinct as the dinosaur.

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FAIR DATE: The "Country Fair" will be held this year on the federal Memorial Day Monday, May 26th, the date on which most industries will close. Also, Assembly Bill 1460 was enacted into law last year which allows school districts the option of closing on Monday instead of the State Observance, which this year falls on Friday.

The Wilson School District Calendar indicates schools will close Friday and be in session Monday, so Dr. Argue wrote Richard Zipp, Supt., requesting that the school Board consider exercising their option of closing on Monday. In answer, Mr. Zipp wrote that the decision of whether Wilson schools close on Monday rather than Friday will rest on what other schools do.

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GOOD MEETING: Mrs. Hazel Salisbury was guest speaker at the Feb. meeting, and related some of her experiences as a teacher in one room schools at North Ridge, Randall Rd., Beebe Rd., and Coomer Rd. Those days were pleasant though rugged by today's standards, but youngsters who attended them were taught to help others and have respect for their elders. She said that she taught the 6 R's; Reading, 'Riting, 'Rithmetic, Right, 'Rong, and the Golden Rule, and that she had 99% backing from the parents.

John Rodgers introduced Jennifer Weller, Teresa Toenniessen, Caryn Grenville, and Mary Okiewneski, who are working on an 8th grade class project about the Civil War. Martha Eaton and Patty Donner were absent. The girls have visited the museum several times, and under the guidance of Lois Jennings used reference material, and photographed guns, swords, flags, and Civil War period dresses. Mrs. Jennings, Museum Chrm., is pleased that some students are beginning to recognize the museum as a good source for acquiring historical information.

Dora Wakeman gave the first of several talks about serious fires in Wilson. She told of the great conflagration of 1890 that lowered the Masonic Block when the "bucket brigade" was the only method available for fire-fighting. It was in this blaze that the Dox building burned destroying equipment and all early records and surveys.

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MARCH CALENDAR: March 12th: Trustee Meeting, Dr. Argue's Office, at 8:00 PM.
March 18th: Monthly Meeting, at museum, at 7:30 PM.
March 31st: Museum Committee, at museum, at 1:00PM. All members requested to bring artifacts for "Tonsorial" exhibit during April and May.

APRIL "BLOWOUT": Put April 16th on your calendars now, and sign up with Dorothy Thilk for a Happy, Hilarious, Historical night out at the Riviera Theater in North Tonawanda. We will leave by bus from the Wilson Museum. More details in the "April Newsletter".

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SURPRISE: Mabel Wilson "sprung a surprise" at the Feb. meeting when she brought an unusual tool for identification with the offer to give a year's membership to the first person to guess what it was. Tammy Monroe said it was a pear corer, and won, and thanks to Mabel, her membership has been renewed for another year.

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"FINAL TOUCH": Every successful man likes to think he has done it all by himself; and his wife smiles and lets it go at that.

ACQUISITIONS: Mrs. Ruth Gale has donated several antique fans that belonged to her mother in the 1880's, also an old valentine card and handkerchief made by her grandmother for her daughter's wedding in 1860.

Mabel Burrows, Burt: Book, "The Specialist" by Chic Sales, given to Mabel's granddaughter, Phoebe Campbell, in 1929.

Harold Mudge: Railroad spikes from "Hojack" railroad ties.

Ora. J. Pettit: Early model cashregister.

Arthur Schnoor: Set of car turning signals (arrows); two Lehigh Valley Coal signs; and an old 8 qt. wooden basket. All items came from R.E. Stacy, Inc., Wilson.

Mrs. Genevieve Keers: An enlarged framed photograph of the Wilson Harbor taken in the late eighteenth hundreds.

Lillian Garlock: Book, "Report of the Joint Comm. on Reconstruction at the First Session of the Thirty-Ninth Congress" Government Printing Office--1866.

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OUT HOUSE DELUXE: The Society booklet, "Wilson's Vanishing Heritage", didn't feature any "Out Houses" that could compare with one manufactured by Vitronics of St. Louis. Theirs has the usual look of the customary "Little House out back", but once the door is opened a whole new world of outdoor relief is exposed. It is equipped with wall-to-wall carpeting, battery operated Sony TV, fly swatter, CB Radio, lightning rod, smoke detector, and a reprint of a 1908 Sears Roebuck catalog. A real energy saver, designed to save electricity, conserve water, and eliminate plumber's bills. Who knows, with all the inflation and energy problems facing the nation today, we may all yet live to see a "Little House" in our future.

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CHAIRWOMEN SWITCH: Carole Schnoor will replace her mother, Gertrude, as chairlady of the Library Comm. The new Librarian would like to meet with all persons who have served on the committee, or would like to. A meeting is scheduled at the museum for Sat. January 12th, at 10:00 AM. She hopes everyone will try to be present.

Nettie Stimson will take over the duties of Chairlady of the Ways & Means Comm. Lois Barnum, who has done a great job, has asked to be relieved in order to devote more of her time to the Sunday School in Exley Church.

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NEW CAR: The Board of Trustees has voted to accept Dr. Argue's offer to donate a 3rd antique car to the Wilson Museum--a 1928 Reo Wolverine Cabriolet coupe. The beautifully re-conditioned Wolverine Model was first introduced in May, 1927, and only remained in production until 1929. As soon as the new building is ready for use, the Reo, Metz, and Covert will be housed in it. The latest acquisition has been appraised at \$24,000 dollars.

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WANTED, ONE PLUG: Eleanor Myers' got the sleigh--all we need is a horse. When the white stuff covers the ground this winter it might be possible to hitch old Dobbin to her sleigh (if we can find Dobbin)-- then off for a ride 'round the museum grounds and back for hot chocolate or coffee. How's that sound to you? All we need is a horse, of course!

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TOP RATED: The Niag. Co. Hist. Soc. at Lockport, with financial backing of the legislature, operates one of the finest museums in Western N.Y. It is open Wed. through Frid. from 10 AM to 5 PM, and Sat. & Sun. from 1 to 3 PM. The Col. Bond House on Ontario St. is also open Wed. afternoons from 1 to 5 PM. It is the first brick house built in Lockport, (1823-24), and its twelve furnished rooms predate 1845.

Interesting monthly exhibits and programs are arranged through the professional expertise of John Krahling, Curator. Pres. Roy D. Cornell recently stated that the Niag. Co. Soc. is "here to help those societies that need help either in knowledge or artifacts." Membership dues are \$5 for single; \$8 for couples; \$10 for Sustaining; and \$100 for Life.

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AMERICAN EMBLEM: The large American Flag that presently flies over the museum was donated by Betty Stimson. On Sunday, Dec. 9th, strong winds broke the rope causing the flag to wrap itself around a nearby electric pole. Thanks to the Wilson Vol. Fire Co., in response to a phone call from John Myers, Old Glory once again waves on high.

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SUNDAY HOSTESSES: The following persons have agreed to serve as hostesses: Jan. 6th, John & Eleanor Myers; Jan. 13th, Wally & Chris Goodman; Jan. 20th, Dorothea Mark & Helen Stevens; and Jan. 27th, Eleanor Canfield & Cheryl Brown.

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MUSEUM EXHIBITS: The doll houses that were built and furnished by Elwin & Garnette Upton are featured in the Dec.-Jan. display. The workmanship and intricate detail of the miniature pieces is remarkable--don't miss it. Another attraction is the collection of old fire engines that were given to Jan Sporleder's father over a period of years.

On Monday, Jan. 28th at 1:00 PM, a new exhibit will be set up. The theme will be "Old Tools" and if you can help out, please try to attend the meeting. There will also be an exhibit by the Niagara Arts Guild of Lockport with paintings available for purchase.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS: Jan. 12th, 10:00 AM, Library Committee meeting at museum.
Jan. 16th, 8:00 PM, Trustee meeting at Dr. Argue's Office, Lake St.

Jan. 21st, 7:30 PM, Regular meeting at the museum.
Jan. 28th, 1:00 PM, Museum Comm. meeting at museum. Set up new exhibit. Bring old tools.

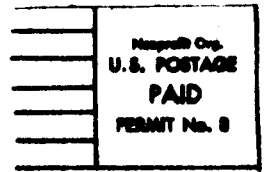
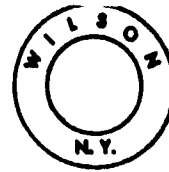
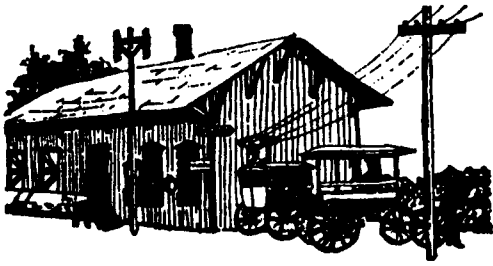
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JANUARY PROGRAM: program arrangements have not been finalized for the January 21st meeting so watch for an announcement in the papers. The Refreshment Comm. is set, however, and will be Bessie Cole, Chrm; Helen Dinse, and Helen Stevens.

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REMEMBER WHEN.....Lights, not people, were turned on and off.

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Wilson Historical Society

WILSON, NEW YORK 14172

NEWSLETTER

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

April 1980 Vol. 9 No. 4
(Coleman Press)

LANDMARK: One of Niagara County's oldest landmarks, the Reuben Wilson home, stands on the north side of Young St. near Twelve-Mile Creek. The principle structure was a log house started in 1818, and the original logs are still intact under the clapboards. Additional construction was completed in 1825 when Luther Wilson and his wife, Sara Stephens, moved in with his father.

The old house boasts several firsts. Foremost is the fact that it was the first dwelling, other than log cabins, built within the village. It was also the site of the first Postoffice when Reuben was appointed Postmaster in 1824. About that same time a store was added and in 1829, a tavern. Reuben's last three children were probably born in the house that was started the same year the Town of Wilson was set apart from Porter by act of the state legislature. Many parties and several weddings were held there while the house was owned by the Wilson family, and it was the center of much of the business and social activity of early Wilson. Today there is no indication that a grist mill, sawmill, and distillery were once located on Twelve-Mile Creek near the house.

The property was purchased from the Wilson estate by Benjamin Dearborn, and his daughter and her husband, A. H. Ackerman, lived there for many years. Mrs. Ackerman recalled as a child she remembered seeing store shelving still in place around their front living room. She loved to tell stories she had learned about the place, and could point out a spot in the yard where a monument is buried beneath the sod from which all the first surveys in Wilson were taken.

In 1938 it was suggested that a historic marker should be erected by the house to commemorate the initiative and industry shown by Wilson's most prominent pioneers, Reuben and Luther Wilson. However, it wasn't until April, 1976, that the Wilson Bicentennial Comm. elected to place a marker by the house which is now the home of Mr. Howard Glenn.

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COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE: About 60 years ago, former Wilson resident, L. N. Wilson of Ness City, Kansas, wrote a letter to Burton L. Gale, Pres. of the Wilsonian Club, and enclosed a document "yellowed by three quarters of a century" which listed the names of persons and events that led to the building of the Wilson Collegiate Institute. It stated that Luther Wilson proposed to his neighbor, Simon Sheldon, "You furnish the land and I'll furnish some money, others will contribute and we'll have an academy of our own for the benefit of our children and upbuilding of the town."

Although Mr. Sheldon was an old bachelor, "he drew up a subscription and subscribed liberally besides donating one half acre of land. The paper was speedily filled by interested citizens and an amount raised which was adequate to build a two story cobblestone school." (On site of present Town Hall). Mr. Wilson further stated in his letter to Mr. Gale, "The document is a valued keepsake and I hope you esteem it worthy of being preserved by the club as an interesting record of Wilson's early history." How fitting it would be if someone knew whether this document still existed today, and could arrange to have it acquired and preserved in the Museum.

The Wilsonian Club, like many clubs before and after it, is no longer a part of the Wilson scene--a grim reminder that no organization, no matter how worthy, can long flourish without the loyal support of its membership.

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HISTORIC TOUR: Dorothy Thilk, Chrm., has finalized plans for an evening out at the old Riviera Theater in N. Tonawanda, Wednesday evening, April 16th. A bus with a capacity of 44 persons will leave the museum at about 6:30 PM. A charge of \$3.50 per person will cover transportation and admission. Following the performance, a "snack" stop will be made at either Howard Johnson's or MacDonalds.

This tour should be a real treat for those who would like to re-live the days of the giant Wurlitzer organ, sing-a-longs, and old silent movies. Over 30 persons are already signed up so don't delay. Call Dora Wakeman for reservations, and please pay Millie Croop, treas., so that bus and theater admissions can be paid by check.

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"GOOD TURN": You can always count on the Boy Scouts to do a good turn, and now it looks like they'll give Larry Bulmer a helping hand. As you know, Larry has been mowing and caring for the "Billy Sherman" marker. Now, troop 67 has volunteered to help out. Don Wiltse is a leader of this active troop which meets in the Thomas Marks School and is sponsored by Our Lady of the Rosary Roman Catholic Church.

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"BON MOT": The great thing in this world is not so much where we stand, as in what direction we are moving.

RENEWAL TIME: With the end of another fiscal year approaching it is time to remind everyone that membership dues are renewable May 1, 1980. Dues are one of the Society's main sources of income so it is hoped everyone responds promptly. In spite of run-a-way inflation, annual fees have been maintained at the same low rate they were since the Society started in 1972. Your voluntary response has made this possible. There are presently 430 paid members on the roll. A membership renewal form is enclosed for your convenience. Please fill it out carefully and return to the treasurer with your remittance.

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ACQUISITIONS: Mabel Wilson has donated a beautiful marble top table that once belonged to Reuben Wilson and came from his home. Lulu Wilson had it before Mabel acquired it.

Jean Argue has donated a large assortment of hats and clothing including a Red Straw; Black horsehair and lace; White linen eyelet; Horsehair with large velvet rose; Black ostrich feather; Brown and rust bonnet; Navy velvet bonnet with tiny rose flowers; Blue velvet purse and fan. Also, Infant clothes including 2 sweaters, flannel slip, christening dress, sacque, baby dress.

Dorothy Thilk: Beaded purse made by Tuscaroras and owned by her grandmother Ferris. Sampler, ca. 1850 embroidered by her great grandmother, Mrs. John Ames. (b.8-20-1815--d.9-7-1855)

Mrs. Fred Bigalow: Two envelopes of pictures.

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SPRING DANCE: The Ways & Means Comm. is having another Round & Square dance at the Thomas Marks school, Saturday, May 3rd, from 8 to 12 Midnight. Admission will be \$3.00 each.

Music will again be by the "Rythm Aires", and refreshments will be available. The music is especially good for listening so if dancing isn't "your thing", bring along your favorite game or deck of cards. This can be a pleasant, sociable, and enjoyable evening for everyone.

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"COUNTRY FAIR": Good News! The school board has decided to close all schools on the federal Memorial Day Monday, May 26th. Their decision was based on a survey which revealed that most area schools (including BOCES) and most large industries also planned to close on that day. Let's all start to think "Fair" now!

Anna Mae Nevins has already mailed out dealer contracts. It isn't too early to start bringing in your housecleaning "fleas" for our money-making "flea" tent. We run out soon on foods, so plan to furnish generously. Eleanor will have a more detailed report in the May "Newsletter".

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PROGRESS QUILT: Ticket donation books for this year's quilt drawing at the Fair have been printed up by Tom Fare and may be obtained from Betty Stimson. Needless to say, the success of this event depends on your participation. The drawing will be held at the close of the "Country Fair" when some lucky person will receive the beautiful "Progress" cross stitch quilt recently completed by our expert quilters. Other prizes will include a home-made doll house, pair of hand-made pillow cases, and copy of the Society's popular Recipe Book. Florence Schultz is already making plans for 1981 and has ordered a Dahlia Top from a place she visited recently in the Pennsylvania Dutch Country. You can't "top" that.

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IN MEMORIAM: We have just learned of the demise of Mr. Dunning Idle, Gaithersburg, Maryland, husband of the former Helen Singer of Wilson. The Society extends its heartfelt sympathy to Helen and other members of her family.

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APRIL PROGRAM: An interesting historical program is planned for the April 21st meeting when Dorothy Thilk, Town Historian, presents "What's in a Name", or the stories and people behind the naming of roads in the town of Wilson.

Marietta Goodman has announced that refreshments will be served by Celeste Crawford, Chrm., Sue Schearer, and Marlene Dinse.

In an unprecedented decision, the trustees postponed the March meeting one week to the 24th. This was done to avoid a conflict with the annual St. Patrick's Day card party sponsored by Our Lady of the Rosary Roman Catholic Church.

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MUSEUM EXHIBIT: The April-May exhibit will consist of artifacts of a "Tonsorial" nature. Please collect any items you have related to barber shops or beauty parlors such as old shaving equipment or mugs, hair cutting equipment, curling irons, etc., and try, if possible, to bring them to the museum on Monday, March 31st, at 10 AM or soon after.

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OLD FORT NIAGARA: Many persons are unaware that the Old Fort Niagara Assoc. is a membership organization open to all. Benefits include free admission to the Fort and all special programs, also a monthly newsletter which concentrates on the history and archaeology of Fort Niagara. Annual dues are \$10 for individuals; \$15 for family; and \$100 for Life. Prospective members may join or get more information at this address: Old Fort Niagara, P.O. Box 169, Youngstown, N.Y. 14174. Phone 716-745-7611.

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MUSEUM GREETERS: Edna Rose has obtained the services of the following persons to serve as greeters at the museum during April: April 6th, Don and Millie Croop; April 13th, Ralph and Helen Dinse; April 20th, Norman, Dorothy, and Sue Thilk; and April 27th, Harold and Marion Mudge.

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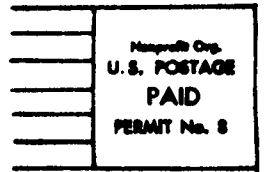
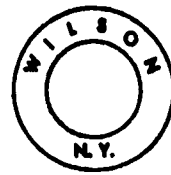
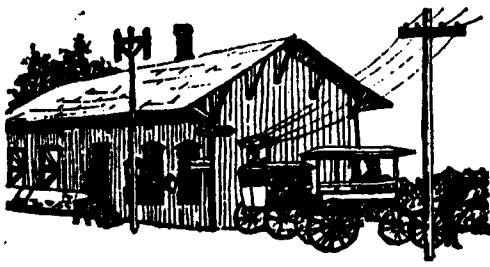
CALENDAR: March 31st: Museum Comm. meeting at museum. 10AM
April 9th: Trustee meeting at museum. 8PM
April 19th: Library Comm. meeting at museum. 10AM
April 21st: Regular monthly meeting at museum. 7:30 PM
May 3rd: Spring Dance at Thomas Marks School. 8 to 12 Midnight.

SPECIAL, April 16th Riviera Theater tour 6:30 PM at museum
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LAST WORD: The easiest way to find more time to do all the things you want to do is to turn off the television set. (J. Harold Smith)

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Wilson Historical Society

WILSON, NEW YORK 14172

NEWSLETTER

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

MAY 1980 Vol. 9 No. 5
(Coleman Press)

THE AMERICAN LEGION: America entered into World War I, April 6, 1917, and the first troops reached France in late June. During the following 19 months the United States built an army of 4 million men and sent 2 million of them to France. After the war, delegates from combat and service units of the American Expeditionary Forces founded the American Legion in Paris, March 15-17, 1919. A national charter was granted by Congress, September 16, 1919, and was amended in later years to admit veterans of World War II and the Korean and Vietnam conflicts.

The Martin F. Jennings Post #836 of Wilson received its temporary charter, January 27, 1920 with the following veterans listed on it: Arnold R. Worden, L. Clair Coe, Ralph H. Biggins, Harry L. Biggins, Harold L. Teague, Harold T. Singer, Roy E. DeNeau, Herman M. Smith, Ralph K. Giles, Morton H. McClellan, Stanley F. Giles, Carl F. Abel, Albert W. Johnson, Eugene W. Ehrhart, and Walter F. Mark.

The Post, which received its permanent charter, March 20, 1921, was named in honor of Martin F. Jennings who was killed in action at Barsdeloges, France, October 20, 1918. Other Wilson men who died during the war were, George W. Anderson, William Daunce, Joseph Middaugh, Henry C. Thiemke, and Vincent L. Yingling.

Today the Wilson Post has 34 paid up members and its officers include John H. Demmin, Post Commander; Wendell Strubing, 1st Vice-Commander; Warren Ward, 2nd Vice-Commander; Howard Hunter, Adjutant; Thomas Galyen, Sgt. at Arms; Gerald Smith, Finance Officer; and Milburn "Chuck" Campbell, Service Officer.

One of the legion's major concerns is for the care of sick or disabled veterans, and it has been instrumental in establishing hospitals and other services for those veterans. It was also successful in sponsoring measures that helped create the U.S. Veterans Administration and in 1944 played an important part in the enactment of the G.I. Bill of Rights.

Americanism and youth programs include projects known as "boys' state" and "boys' nation" where young people are given practical instruction in the functions of democratic government. The legion has also been responsible for sponsoring thousands of Boy Scout troops and high school oratorical contests through out the nation, also junior baseball leagues with over a million participants under age seventeen. In addition the legion sponsors Memorial Day Services, Flag education programs, help for needy families, special Olympics for mentally handicapped, and Honor Guards, when requested, at funerals for deceased veterans.

The American Legion Auxiliary of Post #836 has also been active in these and similar programs and its officers presently include, Eleanor Paradise, President; Hazel Thilk, 1st Vice-President; Edna Martin, 2nd Vice-President; Jane Demmin, Secretary-Treasurer; Maude Hausman, Chaplain; and Marietta Goodman, Historian.

Commander Demmin presides over meetings of Post #836 on the first Wednesday of each month at 8:00 PM in the 2nd floor Post rooms at Masonic Hall. The legion was started as a non political, non sectarian organization with membership restricted to veterans with wartime service and an honourable discharge.

At 10:00 AM, Monday, May 26th, all patriotic groups may join with the American Legion and march from Town Hall to Greenwood Cemetery where Memorial Day Services will be conducted. This is the time to pause for a moment and give thanks to all American servicemen and women who have, by their sacrifices, made it possible for everyone to enjoy the freedoms we still have today.

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YESTERYEARS: Did you know that on July 4, 1894, a celebration was held in Wilson to commemorate the event of the first electricity, and that Lillian Russel (who was in Buffalo) attended the ceremonies?.....also, 50 yrs. ago in 1930 the Wilson High School basketball team took its 10th straight victory of the season from Gasport as Herbie Swick, brother of Marie Reynolds, led the scoring with 8 points...final score was 22 to four.

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MUSEUM EXHIBIT: The "Tonsorial" exhibit which has been on display during April and May will be changed for the "Country Fair" on May 19th at 10:00 AM. The Fair exhibit will be built around the theme, "Wilson Remembered", and the museum comm. is making a special appeal to all members to bring something...anything pertaining to Wilson's past. The field is unlimited, so use your imagination. Everyone should be able to help on this one. May 19th has also been selected as the time to shine up the museum for our Fair visitors.

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LOOKING GOOD: Nettle Stimson, Lois Barnum, Betty Stimson, Millie Croop, and Art Schnoor have put the finishing touches on the kitchenette. They hope you'll like it.

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"COUNTRY FAIR": Most of the funds used to run the Society and help renovate the museum are raised at the annual "Country Fair". That is why your Fair Committee will be asking you to furnish and help in the weeks ahead. Monday, May 26th, will be the big day, and if the weather co-operates, our Society should be able to have another good year.

Special emphasis will be placed on the "Old Home Day" theme and tables and chairs will be available in the Patterson Room so that former schoolmates and friends of former years may register and "reminisce". This activity will be directed by Dorothy Thilk, Town Historian, and the museum exhibit, "Wilson Remembered", which will be arranged by Lois Jennings and the museum comm., will complement the Fair's theme.

Eleanor Myers, General Chrm., has held three meetings of the Fair Comm., and various areas of activity will be directed by the following persons: Antique Autos, Dr. John Argue; Balloons, Dave & Mary Weiler; Beverages, Millie Lonsbery & Sara Berry; Candy, Lucy Monroe; Chili, Jan Sporleder; Dealers, Anna Mae Nevins, Joe Higgins, and Milburn Campbell; Fishpond, Dianne Albright; Funnel Cakes, Carol Smith; "Flea Market", Lois Jennings; Foods and Salads, Lois Barnum; Desserts, Edna Rose; Hot Dogs, Art & Gertrude Schnoor; Check out, Betty Stimson; Membership, Chris Kelman; "Old Home Days", Dorothy Thilk; Genealogy, Celeste Crawford; Movies, Doug Smith; Museum, Lois Jennings; Parking, Joe Geiser; Cleanup, Bill Smith; Plants, Jerry Swann & Dorothea Mark; Popcorn-Lemonade, Sue Toeniessen & Emma Lou Reppentine; Publicity, Dorothy Linnabery; Ads, Millie Croop; Bulletins and Announcements, Don Croop; Quilt, Florence Schultz; Cards, ceramics, and cookbooks, Nettie Stimson; and Audio and Electric, John Myers.

Sponsoring the annual fair is a big job. Everyone's help is needed, so don't be bashful... if there is some area where you are willing and able to help, please let it be known.

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ACQUISITIONS: Mark Raymond, Daniels Rd, has donated a megaphone from the old Covert Gear Co. at Lockport, also 5 old cooking advertising books. He was born in Lockport.

Adolph Trippensee: Bootjack, goat's hide carriage duster, and old bellows type folding Eastman Kodak camera.

Mrs. Ruth Phillips: Old Leetch Dairy milkbottle.

Betty Stimson: Ten advertising cards from Wilson businesses, also 75 yr. old glass spooner, (bulls eye pattern).

Nettie Stimson: 1944 Wilson Central Graduation Exersize Program, also pickled pear jar from the former Hurlburt Bros. Canning Co. of Wilson.

Ralph Millard of Lockport: Service pins from the former Simonds Saw & Steel Co., Lockport.

Jeff Bulmer: Iron wagon wheel skid, ash sifter with Frank Pingle lettered on it, also handle from a cross cut saw.

Joseph Smith: 1916 Class picture and Wilson Badge.

Jean Argue: Umbrella (ca. 1910), Needlework bell pull, also 4 brass framed car pictures of an 1895 Duryea Motor Wagon, a 1908 Stanley Steamer, 1899 Packard, and 1898 Winton.

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MASONIC BLOCK FIRE: Wilson has had a long history of disastrous fires, and Dora Wakeman has been giving accounts of some of the more spectacular ones at recent meetings. Her research has revealed some interesting stories.

The Masonic Block fire, which broke out in the Metzger & Son Hardware store, was probably one of the worst. It started on the morning of August 19, 1890, and several citizens had almost managed to bring it under control when a powder keg exploded, engulfing the building in flames. Metzger had been a former hardware clerk in Lockport, and his Wilson store was known as one of the best in the county. He also carried an extensive line of jewelry.

The entire plant and offices of the "Wilson Star" were also destroyed as a brisk east wind carried the fire and consumed the Dry Goods & Notions store of Frank Clark. A Blacksmith shop on the Johnson esate was saved as was John Markle's Wagon Shop, but the Charles Markle Dry Goods store was burned out. The office of surveyor Dox was one of the more serious losses in the fire as a 40 year accumulation of surveying instruments, maps, and charts burned up. His barn behind the Masonic building was also lost.

The origin of the fire was never determined but was believed to have been the work of an arsonist. The rapidly spreading flames made it impossible to salvage anything and for a while considerable fear was expressed that the entire business section on Young St. would go. If any good came from the fire, it at least started people talking about having a fire co. in the village.

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LIFE MEMBERS: It is a pleasure to welcome Karl and Gwen Wright as the 23rd and 24th Life Members of the Wilson Hist. Soc. The Life Class is especially beneficial to the Society for two important reasons: First, the fees are placed in a high interest account which insures a high annual rate of return. Secondly, since only the interest earned may be withdrawn from the Life Membership account, it is possible to maintain a good income from each Life Member indefinitely. On behalf of the Society, we thank Gwen and Karl for their bequests.

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NEW POSTCARDS: The Ways & Means Comm. has obtained two new postcards that should appeal to both Wilson residents and visitors alike. One is a color photo of the Wilson Harbor taken by Carole Schnoor showing the Wilson Boathouse in the background. It truly depicts the beauty of Wilson's popular recreation area. The second card is a black & white photo of the Society's "Covert" antique car which should be popular with antique car buffs.

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APPLEBLOSSOM TIME: The Newfane Hist. Society "Appleblossom Festival" will be held Sunday, May 18th, on the Hrvol grounds, Creek Rd., from Noon to 5:00 PM.

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GRANDPA SAYS: "By the time a person gets to greener pastures, he can't climb the fence."

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MAY DANCE: If you want to have a good time and get those achin' joints working smoothly again, plan to attend the Historical Society "Spring Dance" at Thomas Marks School, Sat. evening, May 3rd, from 8:00 to 12:00 Midnight.

The "toe-tappin" music of the "Rhythm Aires" is gggreat!! and you'll love it, even if you don't care to dance. Bring your favorite game if you like--there'll be card tables for your convenience.

And, of course, there will be tasty refreshments provided at minimal cost. Donation tickets will be available at the door.

"So, go back to school and pretend we're still young; Let yourself go, and have lots of fun."



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NEW MEMBERS: Our treasurer reports that membership renewals are coming in at a fast pace. It is encouraging when our regular members sign up again, but it is also nice to be able to add new names to the roll. It is, therefore, a pleasure to welcome John Myers, Jr. of Cal; Mrs. Gene (Katherine Myers) Wright of Ohio; also Paul & Arlene Karsten, and Tod Fraser of Wilson.

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MUSEUM HOSTESSES: Sunday afternoon hostesses for May will be as follows: May 4th, Chris Kelman and Harry Rohring; May 11th, Betty Stimson & Gwen Heidenfeldt; May 18th, Marion & Chuck Campbell; and May 25th, Mabel Wilson and Laura Kick.

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WAKEMAN PIONEERS: The Wakeman name originated in Ripon, England, and the family history dates back to 1473 when William Wakeman was Priest of the Chapel of St. Mary at Kidderminster. John Wakeman was the last Abbot of Tewksbury who surrendered to King Henry VIII in 1540. He later became Bishop of Gloucester, and thereis a Wakeman Cenotaph in the Abbey Church of St. Mary at Tewksberry.

The Wakeman family emigrated to the New England Colonies in 1631, and many of their descendants fought in the Revolution. In 1810, Capt. Stephen Wakeman, Sr., and his wife, Sara Whitehead, moved from Conn. and settled in the Cold Springs area. At that time it was thought a village would be built there but when the Erie Canal was dug, people settled instead near the locks and Lockport was born. About this time, Silliman Wakeman cleared most of the land where the old Odd Fellow Home was built.

Stephen Wakeman, Sr., was elected overseer of the poor at the first town meeting held in Hartland, April 7, 1812. Benjamin Wakeman was elected Commissioner of Highways. A few years later, Stephen, Sr., moved his family to East Wilson.

On March 6, 1871, a meeting was held at the home of his son, Stephen Clark Wakeman, to organize the East Wilson Methodist-Episcopal Church. Stephen C. was elected one of the first trustees, the other two being Benjamin Bull and Warren Wetmore. The new church was built on Lot #56, Chestnut St., on land donated by Stephen C. and Elizabeth P. Wakeman. Members of the family who donated money to build the church were, Stephen C., Elizabeth P., James, Amanda, Mattie, and S.M. Wakeman. (Mattie was one of the church's first organists.)

In 1881, Stephen Clark Wakeman was elected Supervisor of the town of Wilson. In 1903, his son, James, moved to the Daniel's Rd. and settled with his wife, Addie Woods, in the old home-stead built by John Webster which is located across from the present home of Wirt and Dora.

Like many of his forebears, Wirt, (son of James) has figured prominently in church and community affairs. In the 1940's he was elected to the board of education of Wilson Central School, and served in that capacity for over 20 years. He is presently a member of the Town of Wilson Planning Board, and both he and Dora are charter members of the Wilson Hist. Soc.

Wirt and Dora raised two children, Ross and Marcia, and both graduated from Wilson Central School. Ross isa teacher at Starpoint and lives with his family near Lockport. Marcia marrie Jim Sweet of East Wilson and both teach at Gowanda, N.Y.

Friends and relatives of the Wakeman were saddened in March when Myra E. Wakeman, sister of Wirt, died at the Beachwood Nursing Home. Myra graduated from Wilson High in 1913 and was an accomplished pianist. She received her education at the Rochester Conservatory of Music, and for many years was pianist and Sunday School Supt. at the North Ridge Methodist Church. She left Wilson in 1945 to teach a Methodist Mission School at Pittman, Tenn., and later taught music for 13 years at Wesley College, Greensboro, N.C. After her demise at Beachwood, she was interred at Cold Springs Cemetery--not too far from the area where her great grandfather, Capt. Stephen Wakeman, Sr., settled in 1810.

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IN MEMORIAM: The Society extends its condolences to the family of Mrs. Lillian Garlock who died at St. Mary's Hospital on April 6th. She operated an antique shop near the harbor for many years. She was pre-deceased by her husband, Belton, in 1965.

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MAY PROGRAM: Dr. Argue will speak about "barbershops & barbering in the past". It is planned to have a singing group present for the occasion. (To be announced)
Refreshments will be served by Beryl Tovell, Chrm., Florence Schultz, and Fay Pisello.

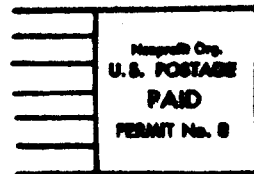
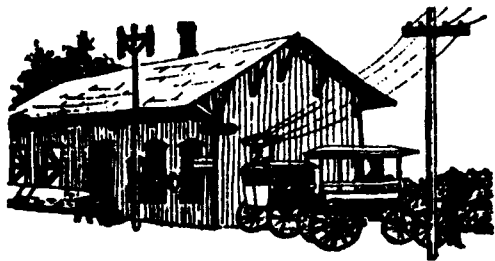
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CALENDAR: Sat., May 3rd: Hist. Soc. Dance at Thomas Marks School. 8:00 to 12:00 Midnight.
Wed., May 14th: Trustees meet at museum. 8:00 PM.
Mon., May 19th: Museum Comm. meeting at museum. 10:00 AM.
Regular meeting at museum. 7:30 PM.
Mon., May 26th: Annual "Country Fair".

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LAST WORD: Trying to squash a rumor is like trying to unring a bell.

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Wilson Historical Society

WILSON, NEW YORK 14172

NEWSLETTER

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

277 BAYVIEW STREET
WILSON, NEW YORK 14172

JUNE 1980 Vol. 9 No. 6
(Coleman Press)

FLAG DAY: On June 14th we honor "Old Glory", our Nation's Flag, the banner of hope and freedom for millions of Americans. Born in the turmoil of revolution, it has become a symbol of national unity and inspiration in all our 50 sovereign states.

It was on July 14, 1777, that the Continental Congress past the first Flag Act which established that our new nation would be represented by an official flag consisting of 13 alternating red and white stripes, and a union of 13 white stars on a blue field. Our first "Stars and Stripes", or the so called "Betsey Ross" flag evolved from this Act.

The Flag Act of May 1, 1795, created the "Star Spangled Banner" which was immortalized by Francis Scott Key during the bombardment of Fort McHenry, Sept. 13, 1814. This flag contained 15 stars and 15 stripes alternating red and white.

In 1818, Congress realized that adding a stripe for each new state would be impractical so returned the flag's design to 13 stripes and 20 stars representing the states in the Union that year. Since then, 30 new stars have been added to the blue field, and on July 4, 1960, Hawaii became the 50th state to join the Union.

Today, some nations and terrorist groups burn and dishonor our flag publicly in an effort to show their contempt for our government and democratic processes. To this nation's credit, we have so far acted with restraint, however, perhaps the time has come to heed the words of President Woodrow Wilson who said, "This flag, which we honor and under which we serve, is the emblem of our unity, our power, and our thought and purpose as a nation. It has no other character than that which we give it from generation to generation. The choice is ours.."

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HOLOCAUST: Further research by Dora Wakeman reveals that the most damaging fire in Wilson's history occurred June 9, 1901. That was the year the entire business area on Young St. was consumed--no doubt helped by the fact Wilson still did not accept the need for a fire department. The issue had been presented twice since the Masonic Block fire of 1890, but twice was voted down.

The fire was discovered at 11:30 PM by Freeman Emerson who was shaving a man in his barbershop. When his gaslight flisckered out, he and two customers, Perrigo and Vosburg, stepped outside and saw flames coming from the Burgess Boot and Shoe store. As crys of "fire" rang out in the night, bucket brigades were formed but were no match for the spreading flames. The Johnson Building, housing a grocery store and Postoffice, was soon in flames, and the 2nd floor meeting rooms of the "Order of Foresters". and "Womens' Relief Corps ofGAR Peter Porter Post were destroyed.

Emerson's Barbershop was next to catch fire, and next to him Vosburg's storage and Julius Weaver's Bicycle and Repair shop were consumed. The Dry Goods store run by Warren Bush then caught fire along with Charles Stores store. The 2nd floor meeting rooms of the "Modern Woodsmen" and "Sons of Veterans Lodges" were also destroyed.

The only store saved at the east end of the block was located where Shefflers now stands. It was Milo E. Vosburg's General Store, and the 2nd floor was occupied by Cuddeback & Coopers Furniture store. The sides of this building had been covered with sheet metal and lined with fireproof material, and though it caught fire several times, flames were put out. Across the street the Sutherland Hotel survived through the efforts of the many men fighting the fire, and even when the Methodist parsonage and adjoining barns caught fire, the men managed to put out the flames.

At the west end of Young St. the harness shop of E. F. Barton was destroyed as was Thompson's 2nd floor shoe-maker shop. J. W. Hacket & Son's Grocery and meat market were burned out as was George Perrigo's Hardware store. Frank Slocum's barbershop next door was also burned down. The home of Charles Haner and apartment of Frank Slocum at the corner of Young and Catherine Streets was saved. Kenyon's Variety store is now on that site.

It was estimated that the fire loss was \$36,500--considerable for those days--and insurance only covered \$15,200 of it. Merchants quickly cleaned up and built new buildings, however, and for awhile every available carpenter, stone mason, or mechanic was in demand. As in the case of the Masonic Block fire, origin of the fire was a mystery.

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THINGS CHANGE: June has become the traditional month for young people to take their first steps down the "rocky road of matrimony", however, it always wasn't so. About 100 years ago, December was the most popular month. Do you suppose, since America was a rural nation then, young people were too busy working in the summer to get "hitched"...and decided December was a better time, (after all the crops were harvested), to think about marriage and "cuddlin' in" for the long winter days ahead.

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IN MEMORIAM: The Wilson Hist. Soc. notes, with sincere regret, the passing of Walter S. Johnson, 93, founder of the Walter S. Johnson Construction Company. Walter, a life member of the society, will be long remembered for his gentle manner and wide civic interests. The society extends its sincere condolences to his wife, Laura Wiseman Johnson; his sons, Taylor Johnson of Niagara Falls and Jack Johnson of Lewiston; and daughters Mrs. John Brinckerhoff of Fla, and Mrs. Patrick Roderick of Seattle. Internment was at North Ridge Cemetery.

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ACQUISITIONS: Eloise Culverwell has donated an 1880 autograph book that belonged to Ellsworth Pettit. It contains autographs of Dr. Ellsworth Crampton, 1st veterinarian surgeon in Wilson, and his wife, Rachel M. Case. She also gave seven small pictures of former Wilson residents and a large picture of J. Ellsworth Pettit; also a collection of school memorabilia and a collection of wedding invitations and one baby announcement.

Estate of Florence Jacobs: Picture taken in 1924-25 in suite of Niagara District, Wilson Lodge #881, I.O.O.F., showing Dist. Deputy Grand Master, Clarence E. Johnson, William Ingram, Frank Dietrick, Rudolph Volls, William Bell, William Coombs, Ernest Donner, and Mark S. Wilson. Also a book, "The History of Oddfellowship, the three-link Fraternity" (1895-1897).

Pam Neuman: A cross made by Pam, age 6, and given to Dr. Argue. So much time and artistic talent were put into the cross, Doc thought it should be in the museum.

Wirt Wakeman: A Flail, once used to thresh out grain on barn floors prior to the days of the threshing machine. Very old and in excellent condition.

Mabel Wilson: An Irish Crochet "Choker" ca. 1900.

Frank Nugent: Draw shave used on hard wood floors. Owned by his uncle ca. 1900.

Floyd Salisbury: Counter Trip Scales believed to have been in use in the old Hacketts store.

Dr. Edwin Gates: 21 books and pamphlets historically revelant to our area.

Dr. John Argue: Books, "Legacy from the Past", National Geographic, 1924; and House Beautiful February 1919 through January 1920.

Anonymous: Spanish Fan.

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TRANSPORTATION BUILDING: Thanks to Ed Hastings, in co-operation with the town of Wilson and Wilson Hist. Soc., a new cement block building has been erected on the museum grounds at a cost which would have been far greater had not Ed donated his time and arranged to get certain materials provided at reduced cost. So far, approximately \$15,000 has been expended for the building, and it is estimated another \$3500 will be needed for rest rooms, wiring, and other related projects. Restrooms will be built on the outside west wall of the building so as to be conveniently located as plans progress to develop Dr. George Badger's "Hojack Park". Some 20 trees have already been planted and one proposal envisions erecting an old fashioned band stand as a center of attraction. Work has also started on the old windmill which will set on a water reservoir base so that it can be exhibited as a working model of one of America's first types of energy sources.

The Wilson Hist. Soc. has been very fortunate to have some extremely dedicated and generous members in the organization. Their names are well known and they will be long remembered for giving of their talents, their services, and themselves.

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MOWING CONTRACTED: The two dozen men who volunteered their services to keep the museum grounds mowed during the past eight years were probably pleased to learn that Harold Swanson has contracted to mow both Greenwood Cemetery and the Museum grounds. The Society is indebted to all the men who helped out--especially Elwin Upton, who often trucked his own power mower to the museum as the mowing area became larger and larger.

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FIRE PINPOINTED: At one time, the Tower House or "Town Hotel" was one of Wilson's most pretentious resort hotels. It was located on the corner where St. Paul's Lutheran Church now stands. Aulden J. Bowker, proprietor, spared no expense in furnishing the place which was opened to the public, June 6, 1896.

Carol C. Smith recently acquired a postcard picture of the Tower House at an area flea market which revealed the exact date of the fire. A message on the back addressed to Mr. A. G. Baecker of West Pullman, Ill., reads as follows: "Dear Albert: Great excitement here yesterday. Towerhouse burned to the ground. Helen's house started to burn. Poorest fire protection I ever saw---couldn't get water. See you later." Signed, Clara.

The card was dated 8/10/08. Perhaps some member can identify the "Helen" who lived next door to the Tower House; the 'Clara' who signed the card; or 'Albert Baecker' to whom it was sent.

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FITCH PIONEER: One hundred fifty years ago in 1830, Enoch Fitch turned over the first sod on his Fitch Rd. farm. His descendents have been actively engaged in fruit farming in the town of Wilson ever since.

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SORORITY MEETING: The Beta Lambda Chapter of Delta Kappa Gamma Society donated \$25 to the Wilson Hist. Soc. for use of the premises on April 19th. Celeste Crawford, who arranged for the meeting, announced that 23 persons attended and all expressed pleasure with the museum facilities and liked the way the exhibits are displayed.

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SOMEDAY, MAYBE: Many organizations buy mailing lists to help them peddle their services and wares, and even the Wilson Hist. Soc. gets caught up in the shower of 'junk' mail. An example is a letter addressed to 'Miss' Lois Jennings from the Lester Lanin Orchestra of New York City. It states they would like to have our chairman of entertainment consider hiring them for our next "museum ball", and would like to submit a music estimate for the committee's approval. Well, someday, maybe!

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GRANDPA SAYS: "When I don't have anything to worry about, I worry about that."

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NEW MEMBERS: On behalf of the Society we welcome Mrs. Vergil Singer Scott of Houston, Texas; Mr. and Mrs. Mark Raymond of Rochester; Mary Heidenfeldt of Orlando, Fla; Ralph Stuhlmiller of Newfane; Mark Peters of Cheektowaga; and Mrs. Billie Parker of Wilson.

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"BILLY SHERMAN": Don Polek of Channel 7 "Eye Witness News" interviewed your editor recently to set up a newscast about Wilson's Confederate Civil War horse, "Billie Sherman" Polek also interviewed Dorothy Thilk and Ray Dirling of Newfane, and the completed episode gave an interesting story of Wilson's unique Civil War hero. Although Wilson is fast becoming known as the fishing and boating playground of Niagara County, Polek's story about old "Billy" should convince thousands of channel 7 viewers that there is also some interesting and unusual history behind this little lakeshore township.

Boy Scouts of troop #67, under the leadership of Don Wiltse, will plant ornamental shrubs and flowers at "Billy Sherman's" gravesite. In view of the recent publicity by "Eye Witness News", it is fitting that our local scouts will receive some public recognition in the Union Sun and Journal for their "Good Turn" endeavors.

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BY-LAWS: Karl S. Wright, Chrm., presented a proposal at the May meeting to increase the number of officers in the Society by adding the position of 2nd Vice-President. It is felt that the need for another executive officer is justified by the dramatic increase in membership from fourty in 1972-approximately 450 in 1980. The proposal opened the way for the nominating comm. to select a candidate for the position.

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NOMINATIONS: The Nominating Comm., composed of John Myers, Chrm., George Linnabery, and Karl S. Wright, presented the following slate of officers and trustees to be voted on at the annual meeting on June 16th: Dr. John Argue, Pres., Donald Croop, 1st Vice-Pres., Arthur Schnoor, 2nd Vice-Pres., Judy Zauner, Rec. Sec., Flossie Lortz, Cor. Sec., and Millie Croop, Treas.

The Society is especially grateful to Mary Budde who served as Rec. Secretary during the past year. Our best wishes go to her and Bill as they await the arrival of their new "Blessed Event".

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TONSORIAL CLIMAX: Dr. John Argue gave an interesting history on the barbering profession while also compiling a historic list of barbers in Wilson from 1910 to the present. Jack Perry, one of Wilson's best known tonsorial experts, added some humor to the occasion by shaving off Gary Greenwald's full beard while Doc talked. Although Jack admitted Gary was his first customer this year, it was plain to see he hasn't lost his touch with a straight razor. Dr. Argue worked for his father to earn tuition money to attend medical school, and one of his associates, Mr. Palisano of Lockport, was at the meeting and exchanged some humorous stories of the early days when they worked together.

Another highlight of the evening was a half hour program by the Bargemen, one of the better known singing groups of Niagara and Orleans Counties. The pleasant harmonizing of the 20 male voices blended beautifully as they sang many of the old favorites, and was well received by the audience which numbered close to a hundred persons.

Ed Rose presented the monthly "historic moment" which has become an interesting part of the monthly meetings. We will try to bring his talk on the Volunteer Fire Companies of Wilson to everyone in some future copy of the "Nesletter".

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JUNE MEETING: The annual meeting on Monday, June 16th, promises to be a gala affair according to Dorothy Linnabery, Program Chrm. An old fashioned dinner featuring chicken pie and other turn-of-the-century "goodies" will be served buffet style at 6:00 PM. There will be a \$2.00 charge per person to cover costs except to those who volunteer to prepare parts of the assigned menu. Ladies working with Mrs. Linnabery on the dinner menu include Beatrice Salisbury, Hazel Salisbury, Mabel Wilson, Marietta Goodman, and Jan Sporleder.

In order to properly plan for the number attending, reservations will be in order, and must be in prior to June 11th. They may be made with either Dorothy Linnabery or Jan Sporleder. Those who attend the dinner are asked to bring their own old fashioned table service, and the comm. is looking for old salt and pepper shakers, spoon holders, cruets, castors, or celery holders. Let them know if you can help out here. The "feast", which will precede the annual meeting, will feature a menu that will show how our ancestors fared prior to the days of refrigeration.

Following dinner, an election of officers and trustees will be held, and each Committee Chrm. will be asked to make a brief report on the past year's activities. An interesting program is anticipated when Peggy Ward and Audry Orr present a program on how a broom can be made from a seed.

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"COUNTRY FAIR": On May 26th, another "Country Fair" will pass into the pages of history. We suspect success will depend more on the "Power Above" than the "workers below", so let's all pray for a sunny day.

We must emphasize that over 65 dealers have already signed up for space. This means we may have a problem furnishing food, so please be generous when you furnish pies, salads, cookies, or whatever you do best. We understand Jan Sporleder has already "got the message" and is doubling her delicious Chili output. Keep in mind that our Fair Chrm. wish to price things reasonably, and when people realize this, the food goes quickly.

Dorothy Thilk and Dora Wakeman are promoting the "Old Home Day" concept again this year which enables old friends to gather together in the Patterson Room, sip punch, and talk with former schoolmates about "the good ol' days". It's all a part of the friendly atmosphere that prevails at all our Fairs and blends in well with the "sing-a-longs" with the "Piano Rhythms".

Eleanor Myers has declined the position of Chairman of next year's Fair, but I am sure that every member of this Society will join with me in saying "Thanks, Eleanor, for Five Great Years of Leadership".

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LIFE MEMBERS: In what may have been one of his last feats, Walter S. Johnson renewed memberships for both he and his wife as Life Members of the Wilson Hist. Society. Their names will be added to the plaque in the museum as the 25th and 26th members to join this classification. We recently had the pleasure of interviewing Mr. Johnson and excerpts from our talk were included in the March "newsletter". Although 93 years of age he seemed remarkably active and his memory was sharp and clear. It is hard to believe he is gone.

We are extremely pleased to welcome Ed Lort as the 27th Life Member in the Society. Ed received his membership as a gift from his wife, Dorothy (also a Life Member) who made the bequest. It is especially nice when both husband and wife elect to make a permanent and lasting contribution to the Society's future.

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MUSEUM ADVENTURES: They say, "one thing leads to another", and fixing up the kitchen is a good example. After Lois Barnum and Nettie Stimson did a fine stipling job on the ceiling, Millie Croop took over with the painting. A "pumpkin" color was chosen to match the paper, but it took three coats to get the desired effect. After Betty Stimson got the paper on, however, the "pumpkin" clashed with the rest of the room which was green. Undaunted, the committee decided that "autumn wheat" would blend well with "pumpkin", and 'old pro', Burt Jennings, was called in to do the job.

Three gallons of paint and two coats later, Burt, in his customary manner, did a smooth job with only one flaw to mar an otherwise perfect performance. The step ladder on which he stood suddenly did a split...Burt did a flip...and landed on his hip. The ladder was put out of commission, but fortunately, not Burt.

Some other little jobs that have not gone unnoticed include work done by Art Schnoor's finishing of the kitchen cabinets; sanding the swinging doors; installing a water line for fire protection; and building in storage shelves above the kitchen. Cabinets acquired from Esther Caselman have been painted by Lois Jennings and installed in the library; books have been sorted and placed on shelves according to classification. Burt Jennings painted and installed a new hat rack in kitchen area. The museum Comm. has cleaned out the Schnoor Room in preparation for the Fair; Eleanor Myers has sorted out all announcements, cards, birth certificates, etc.; Nettie Stimson has placed hundreds of photos in 8 or 10 albums which are accessible in waiting room for viewing; All "Newsletters" to date have been mounted in loose leaf covers by Millie Croop, and when you see new curtains hanging in the Patterson Room you should know they were sewn by Dorothy Thilk. All old dresses acquired by the Society are being cleaned and mended by Jean Argue and stored in the Schnoor Room mezzanine.

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CANADIAN REBELLION: In 1781, the Constitutional Act was passed dividing Canada into two provinces, Upper, or British Canada, and Lower, or French Canada. However, because of serious abuses, the arrangement did not work and by 1837, rebellions broke out in both provinces. How this could even remotely connect with Wilson is revealed in a rare book, "Wait's Narrative", published in Buffalo in 1843, which tells of the trials and tribulations of Benjamin Wait, a resident of Wilson, who partook in the Upper Canada Rebellion.

Wait was captured and sentenced to the gallows, but personal appeals by his wife to the Earl of Durham resulted in his sentence being reduced to exile and imprisonment in Van Dieman's Land, Australia. Some of Mrs. Wait's letters were written while residing with friends in Lockport, and tell of her efforts in her husband's behalf. After four years of imprisonment, Wait escaped from his island prison and returned to the Niagara Frontier and was believed to have again lived in Wilson.

The short-lived rebellion woke up the British Government and in 1840 an Act of Union was passed which joined the Upper and Lower provinces. It wasn't until 1867, however, that their leaders agreed to form a confederation and the Dominion of Canada was born.

"Waits Narrative" is the property of Dr. John Donovan of Lockport..on loan to Dr. Argue. In view of the present separatist movement in Quebec, the book provides an interesting background for a current problem.

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WILL "SPRUCE UP" PARK: Dr. George Badger of Lockport has offered to donate and plant enough blue spruce evergreen trees to border the four and one quarter acre plot of land given by him in July, 1977, for the newly proposed "Hojack Park". The trees, which are approximately two to three foot high, will be set in place next fall when planting conditions are suitable.

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TREASURER'S REPORT:

	Bal. 2/14/80	Credits	Debits	Bal. 5/15/80
General Fund	\$ 5,802.71	\$ 3,042.67	\$ 3,050.28	\$ 5,795.10
Memorial Fund	202.02	155.00		357.02
Life Membership Fund (frozen)	2,242.83	578.90		2,821.73

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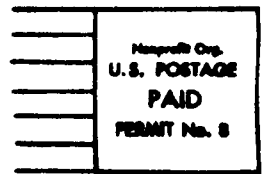
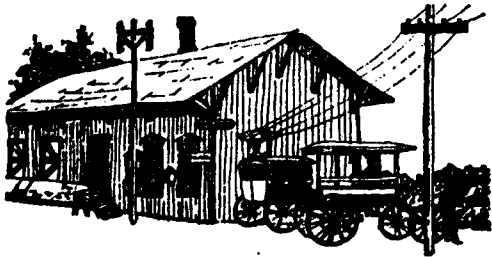
MEMBERS IN THE MEDIA: Howard Hunter, member of Wilson Troop #66, B.S.A, recently was given the top award in Scouting when he was presented with the rank of "Eagle" at a court of Honor held in Exley United Methodist Church....Mrs. Carol C. Smith, Sanborn, N.Y., has been elected 1st Vice Regent of the Niagara Falls Chapter, Daughters of the American Rev.

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SUNDAY AFTERNOON HOSTESSES: Edna Rose, Chrm., reports that the following members have agreed to serve as greeters in June; June 1st, Bill and Maxine Jones; June 8th, Charles and Bernie Messersmith; June 15th, Edna and Bob Rose; June 22nd, Leona and Wally Beutel; and June 29th, Peggy and Wally Ward.

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RIGHT ON: Our supersonic jets make it possible to have breakfast in New York and dinner in Los Angeles, but no engineer has ever been able to design anything that can go faster than a two week vacation.



Wilson Historical Society

WILSON, NEW YORK 14172

NEWSLETTER

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

JULY-AUGUST 1980 Vol. 9 No. 7
(Coleman Press)

WILSON BARBERS: As far as we can determine, the first barber shop in Wilson was run by Frank Slocum, and the shop was located next to the Perrigo Hardware store on Young Street. Frank had an apartment in the home of Charles Haner at the corner of Young and Catherine and though his shop burned in the big fire of 1901, the Haner home was saved. After the block was re-built, a new barbershop opened in front of Timothy Wilson's bowling alley and was run by William Slocum.

"Hub" Ferrin came from Springville and settled on a farm near Plumb's Bridge, East Lake Rd. He later moved to the village, bought the Emerson property on Young St., and enlarged it into the "Hub" Hotel. He was a barber by trade and had a shop there for many years.

Arthur Bundy came to Wilson from Jeddo around 1914 and Ray Nevins worked with him for awhile before opening his own barber shop. Tom and John Costello also barbered in Wilson from 1914 to 1925.

Al Toenniessen began working for Bill Slocum in 1925 and also worked for Ray Nevins and "Hub" Ferrin. Ed and Louis Singer of Lockport also opened a shop in Wilson for a few years.

A barber who became well known in the community was Max Ransom, formerly of Ottawa, Canada. He worked with "Hub" Ferrin for awhile then opened his own shop. (Your editor had his hair cut by Max for many years. One time Max broke off a couple twigs from a willow tree in his back yard and gave them to us to plant. We stuck them in the ground near a pond on our property and today, when we walk by them, two large weeping willows remind us of Max.) Lakeside Market now stands on the site where Max's Barbershop and Poolroom was located.

One of Wilson's best known barbers is Jack Perry. Jack originally lived on the Coomer Rd. and has been a barber for about 35 years. He worked for Powers in Newfane, Carls in Lockport, the Statler in Buffalo, the Park Hotel in Lockport, and Max's in Wilson. Not only has Jack been barbering in Wilson for about 25 years, he has also become one of the best auctioneers in the area. His Thursday night auctions, on the site of the former Wilson Lumber Co., have become well known throughout the community.

Jim's Barbershop on Young St. belongs to James Stephenson of Youngstown. Jim has been in Wilson for 11 years, and he operates a watch and repair shop in the back of his barbershop. He attended the Chippewa Barber School in Buffalo and worked in Youngstown and Niagara Falls before coming to Wilson.

A prominent member of the medical profession, our own Dr. John F. Argue, started his career working in the barbering trade. When only 13 he used to work as a "lather boy" in his father's barber shop in Lockport. He had to stand on a box to lather a customer's face, but after the man was shaved, he'd remove all traces of soap, apply shave lotion, and dry the face.

In 1929, after graduating from Lockport High School, Doc got a job as a barber in Olcott. It was there that he was able to earn enough money to pay his tuition at the University of Buffalo where he had been accepted. During his first two years in college he paid his room and board by working weekends as a barber in a shop on East Delevan Avenue. A barber chair setting in the museum's Schnoor Room is the one that Doc used at his father's barbershop 50 years ago.

Considering the number of patients he has administered to in the past 45 years, we think everyone will agree, "We're glad Doc stuck to medicine instead of barbering."

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CONGRATULATIONS: On behalf of the society, we extend congratulations to all June graduates and especially those who are sons or daughters of society members. Graduating from Wilson Central are, Raymond A. Geiser, John E. Hastings, Howard H. Hunter, Tracey E. Kent, Jeffrey T. Monroe, Denise E. Swanson, John M. Thilk, Merle N. Wiltse, and Martin J. Woodard. Also, from Niagara Wheatfield, Darrell G. Smith.

"May your joys be as deep as the ocean, and your troubles as light as the foam."

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IN MEMORIAM: J. Earl McCormick has passed away at his home in Oceanside, Cal., May 24th, and leaves his wife, the former Alice Barbari, and a sister, Mrs. James Berry of North Carolina, also several nieces and nephews. Earl was a graduate of Wilson High and Oberlin College in Ohio. He played the organ at Exley United Methodist Church from 1913 to 1917 and again from 1930 to 1941. He was a Naval veteran of World War I and directed the American Legion Band in Wilson from 1930 to 1946. The society extends its sympathy to his loved ones.

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"FLEA MARKET": A "flea market" for society members only will be held on the museum grounds Sunday, August 3rd, from 11:00 to 4:00 PM. Doug and Gail Smith plan to serve hot dogs and coffee. Call Betty Stimson if you have any questions.

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FAIR FACTS: The 8th annual "Country Fair" was brought to a successful conclusion Memorial Day, May 26th, as a large crowd showed interest in the antiques and collectibles displayed by 88 participating Dealers. Hundreds more milled around the antique cars while others crowded the museum looking at the "Wilson Remembered" exhibit or else signed the school registers provided for guests in a pleasant "Old Home Day" setting.

As you read this resume of Fair activities, please keep in mind that one little gal, Eleanor Myers, helped put it all together. The large attendance can be attributed to the excellent publicity in the media by Dorothy Linnabery, and we should also thank the Wilson Businessmen who, in response to a solicitation by Millie Croop, contributed 420 dollars to help run large display ads in local newspapers.

The Antique Car Display was chaired by Doc Argue and Ken Tracey, and helping them were Mr. & Mrs. Larry Bulmer, Glenn Stimson, and Bob Rose. A number of cars from various owners were entered this year.

Joe Geiser, Chrm. of Parking and his helpers did a tremendous job, and even though the Farm and Garden Supply, Ontario Orchards, and Pfeiffers Foods allowed fair-goers to use their parking lots, every space was taken. Directing traffic were Herb Kahler, Jerry Stevens, George Cruickshank, "Ollie" Clark, Ed Culverwell, Bob Rose, Harold Albright, Whit Barnum, Ed Lort, Harold Swanson, and Ed Allgeier. Special thanks to Don Stewart and Dave Godfrey, Town Constables, who also helped regulate traffic and stuck to their posts all day.

When large crowds gather there is always a chance for accidents, and though some may not have given it a second thought, it was comforting to know that trained personnel from the Wilson Volunteer Fire Company were standing by with truck and ambulance.

Celeste Crawford set up a Genealogical Display in the Patterson Room for those interested in tracing their family ancestry. Attention was called to it by the eye-catching sign, "Who's hanging from your family tree?"

Dorothy Thilk and Dora Wakeman were in charge of the "Old Home Day" exhibit, and the Patterson Room was the focal point for old friends to gather and reminisce about the "Good ol' Days" while sipping punch as guests of the society. Former school teachers hosted this event including Helen Borngraeber, Jennie Bigelow, Beatrice Salisbury, Margaret Wilson, Laura Eick, and Esther Albright...also, Winnie Stacy.

One of the best features of the fair was the "Piano Rythms" with Berne Kent and Frances Goldthorp at the ivories. Their lively toe-tapping melodies of yester year set a happy mood for fair goers, many of whom stopped to "Sing-a-long with Frances".

A variety of pies were entered by young people in the Pie Baking Contest conducted by Marion Campbell, Chrm., and Winnie Fischer. Sharon Shotz, 11, won first prize with a delicious apple pie; Paula Gormon, 11, was 2nd with a tasty peach; and Kelene Hunter, 14, took 3rd with her strawberry-rhubarb creation. Nancy Davis received honorable mention for her prune-plum pie. Sharon was given a Society Cookbook for 1st prize, and the other girls were given a choice of items on the Ways and Means table. Judges were Mrs. Shirley Fischer Novak of Syracuse, and Miss Ann Goldthorp of Tonawanda.

The "Wilson Remembered" exhibit was assembled and arranged by members of the museum committee chaired by Lois Jennings. It contained old items out of Wilson's past such as the Wilson Bros. fish net as well as many rare old photographs. Helping were Joe Higgins, Eleanor Myers, Gertrude Schnoor, Dorothy Thilk, Betty Stimson, Millie Croop, Helen and Ralph Dinse, Edna Rose and Nettie Stimson.

Clean-up after the fair has always been a co-operative effort. The job was made easy for Bill Smith, Chrm., as all concessions were policed by their own members. A good supply of trash barrels facilitated loading refuse on a truck provided by the village.

Considerable attention was attracted to a Railroad Exhibit set up in the new building by the Newfane Historical Society. We thank our friendly neighbors for participating.

Old Time Movies were shown to the youngsters all day by Doug Smith, Chrm., and Clark Stimson. Movies are shown free and are provided by the Wilson Public Library.

The Fair was co-ordinated through a public address system installed by John Myers, and announcements were made from the caboose by Don Croop, Joe Higgins, Bill Budde, and Karl Wright.

One of the nicer aspects of our "Country Fair" were our charming Host and Hostesses who project a favorable impression of the society on our guests. Chris Kelman set up two tables in the waiting room and the membership table signed up 39 persons for next year. Hostesses were Chris Kelman, Chrm., John Weiler, Esther Albright, Grace Singer, Flossie Lortz, and Marietta Goodman. Attendants at the Guest Register table were Bessie Cole, Helen French, Marie Getman, Marion Goodrich, Harry Rohring, and Harold Albright. Hosts for the Ticket Office room included Bob Lewis, Rex Stacy, Harold Swanson, Art Ness, Burt Jennings, Norm MacAskill, and Lou Schrader.

Anna Mae Nevins and Joe Higgins had a key role in signing up nearly 90 Dealers for this year's event. Placing the Dealers amiably with a minimum of "ruffled feathers" is no easy task so a lot of credit must go to "Chuck" Campbell, Harry Rohring, Ted Lonsbery, and Ralph Dinse.

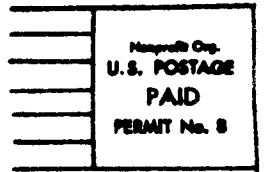
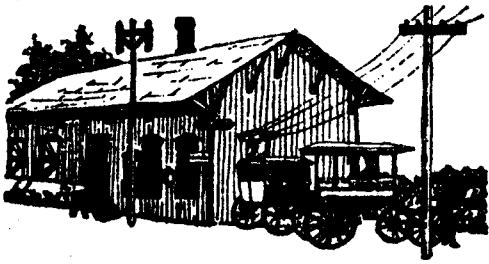
Dave Weiler blew up nearly three boxes of balloons with helium provided by Strate Welding of Lockport. Most of them were sold by the "Hojack Hoboes" and "Clowns", Beth Weiler, Melissa Murphy, Jaimi Cowles, Tracy Douglas, Kristin Szantor, and Tommy MacVie.

The ever popular Home Made Candy Tent was supplied by Mike Vince of North Ridge. Lucy Monroe Chrm., was assisted by Esther Albright, Helen Dinse, Celeste Crawford, Nan Johnson, Hazel Benzino, Tammy Monroe, and Wendy Edgerton. Candy was sold out by mid afternoon.

The Coffee, Donuts, and Beverages, including loganberry juice provided by Pfeiffers and iced tea, were combined this year under the chairmanship of Sara Berry and Millie Lonsbery. A large crew consisting of Bernie Messersmith, Marion Mudge, Bessie Cole, Dorothy Lort, Jane Demmin, Marion Goodrich, Fred Berry, Elwin Upton, Wirt Wakeman, Ted Lonsbery, Sid Pettit, and Harold Mudge, were kept busy supplying the thirsty crowd.

As in past years, many of our out-of-town members mailed in donations to support the Fair.

The Fish Pond is one of the popular concessions with the "small fry", and this year, Dianne Albright, Chrm., had it freshly painted. Helping her string fish were Sue and Debbie Cruickshank, Chris and John Demmin, Laurie Albright, Tammy Monroe, Sandy Stimson, Sue & Jay Johnson



Wilson Historical Society

WILSON, NEW YORK 14172

NEWSLETTER

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

SEPTEMBER 1980 Vol. 9 No.8
(Coleman Press)

WILSON FIRE CO. #1: As the Wilson Vol. Fire Co. Field Day fades into history, we note that the 57 yr. old company was organized Sept. 17, 1923 with Ernest Horton, Pres., and Charles Crawford, Fire Chief. Meetings were held at various locations including Biggin's Blacksmith Shop, Catherine St, the 2nd floor of Horton's Hardware, Young St., and the old cobblestone schoolhouse that once stood between the Wilson House and Kerwin's Gas Station. The volunteers had no funds at all and at meetings orange crates were used for seats. Their equipment consisted of two hose carts borrowed from the Town of Newfane, and fire drills saw the men racing through the village with two volunteers on the tongue and one each on the two ropes used to pull the carts. In order to raise funds for equipment, a series of entertainments were held and the first was a balloon dance, so named because many balloons were floated into the air--some containing dollar bills. Lucky finders received free admission to the dance which was held at Middleton's Hall.

Fire company By-Laws were adopted, signed, and sworn to before Bethel Johnson, Notary Public, on Aug. 22, 1924. Officers were A. E. Horton, Pres., William Lashner, Vice-Pres., Harry Biggins, Fire Chief, Frank Lashner, Asst. Fire Chief, L. Clare Coe, Treas., and H. W. Smith, Sec. Other men who helped establish the company were Merle Wilson, Bill Scheffler, R. E. Wright, Roy DeNeau, Harris Holden, Lee Ward, James Wilcox, W. G. Leetch, C. W. Baker, C. H. Reeves, Edward Rockwood, Chester Demmin, Walter Wheeler, Harold Teague, Frank Dietrick, Ciril Wilber, Leslie McClellan, Andrew Wright, Elton Armstrong, Clifford Schultz, F. H. Duxbury, Fred Ganshaw, Dewey Fisk, Paul Winter, Thomas Rogers, Ray Nevins, Louis Wiefert, Carl Hausman, Earl Armstrong, William Schnoor, Courtland Feigehen, Bernard McClellan, Dr. Kenneth Moore, V.M., and J. Pearce. The first Field Day was held Aug. 30, 1924. (Refer to 8/79 Newsletter)

On March 14th, 1925, the company purchased its first fire truck for \$12,000, and eight volunteers signed notes to make it possible. The old LaFrance pumper is still in good running shape and is proudly referred to as "Old Betsey". One of its first drivers was Bill Scheffler.

In 1926, Miss Helen Knowles gave her house on the south side of Young St. to the Fire Co. with the stipulation that no beer or liquor could be sold there. In 1964, a small white house next to it was torn down and a new fire hall erected there.

If all the men were alive today who helped organize the Fire Co. in 1923, they'd no doubt take a deep sense of pride in the modern up-to-date company that has grown from their efforts. Three buildings now house meeting rooms and space for 9 pieces of equipment including a rescue boat and new ambulance. Approximately 60 members respond to 50-75 fire calls per year while a well trained ambulance crew answers about 300 emergency calls. In addition to the new modular type ambulance, the company has an aerial fire truck, a Ward truck by LaFrance with generator, portable pump, nozzles, boots, coats and helmets. Also a four wheel drive emergency truck with water tank, hose, fire extinguishers, brooms, and metal-cutting saw. A tank truck with 1500 gallon capacity and back up pumper were purchased in 1949, a Seagrave pumper bought in 1952, and a Ward LaFrance combination pumper and high pressure tank truck was added in 1958.

Officers of the company as of May, 1980, were Lynn Sherrie, Pres., Richard Zipp, Vice-Pres., Mike Kress, Fire Chief, James Welch, Edward Goodnight, and Rodney Toenhessen, Asst. Fire Chiefs, Thomas Eberwein, Sec., and Bill Ganshaw, Treas. First Aid Captains are Mathew Myer and Brad Clark, Captain, Dave Godfrey, and Fire Police Captain, William Reinboldt. Trustees are Don Luff, Ollie Clark, George Pearce, Fred Lort, and Julius Stapf.

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IN MEMORIAM: Rev. Carl W. Oldach, 80, passed away suddenly on June 17, 1980. He graduated from Concordia Seminary in St. Louis and served pastorates at Owego, Brockport, and North Ridge. After 29 years at St. Peters, he retired as pastor emeritus and was associate pastor at Concordia Lutheran Church, Beebe Rd., the past 15 years. He was a member of the society since 1976. Sincere condolences are extended to his wife, Alma Sutorius Oldach, and all members of their family. Internment was at St. Peter's Cemetery, North Ridge.

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NEW MEMBERS: We welcome the following new members this month: Robert and Adrienne Gurski and 3 mos. son Andrew of Florida; Paul and Catherine Harold of Virginia; Henry Porter of New Jersey; Philip S. Brown from District of Columbia; John Eastman of Rochester; Mark and Monica Eastman of Hilton; Mike and Donna Jordan of Niagara Falls; Kathryn Upton of Kenmore; Frank and Vera Cornell of Lewiston; and Charles Boyer of Olcott. Also, from Wilson, Marion Sheelar, Fenton Cole, Clifford and Lucille Upton, Ruth Rawlings, and Ada Giles. New junior members are Mike Evans and Wendy Edgerton.

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HAPPY THOUGHT: If you think you're getting too much government these days, just be happy that you're not getting all you are paying for.

SUNDAY HOSTESSES: As summer fades away and a new year begins, we cannot over emphasize the importance of our Sunday afternoon hostesses. Mrs. Margaret Wilson has accepted the chairmanship for this very important area of operating the museum. If you have never served before, try it, we think you'll like it! Visitors are friendly, inquisitive, and generally very impressed with the museum. It is suggested that one hostess remain at the guest table and that the other hostess circulate around rooms and be available to answer questions. People love to ask about the exhibits.

Simple instructions for hostesses are on the guest table in the waiting room, and a key for the museum is available at Stimson's Barn Shop. Please note that it is necessary to use the key to lock the door. If any problems arise, please call either Lois Jennings or Millie Croop.

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Mrs. Wilson has announced that the following persons will serve as hostesses during the month of September: Sept. 7th, Bill and Peg Fritton; Sept. 14th, John and Jane Demmin; Sept. 21st, Mabel Burrows and Laura Eick; and Sept. 28th, Jim and Sharon Monroe.

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ACQUISITIONS: Adolph Tripansee, Church Rd., Lockport: A "Solar" Carbide Bicycle Lamp bought at Bert Laffler's store in 1916; also a Stilson Scale and small Gillian Scale Pat. July 1, 1890.

Mary Wiseman, Newfane Health Facility: Framed picture of Wilson High School students taken about 1914; copy of a 1914 "Orange & Black", and copy of "Wilson Chronicle" dated 1912. Of interest is Mrs. Wiseman's comment that she attended Wilson High two years before Newfane had a high school.

Kenneth Gifford, Newfane: Variety of postcards and photos including victory celebration of basketball team over Newfane; Niagara Falls Baptist Church dedication; 1st Baptist semi-centennial, Oct. 23, 1884; also 1910 Commencement Invitation and 1912 Commencement Program.

Mike Evans, Wilson: Packing Stencil, "Lucky Boy Seckel Pears", pickle net.

Robert Horton, Wilson: Nineteen Wilson Fire Co. Field Day Programs dating 1925 to 1955.

Herb Kahler, Newfane: Hand carved Basket Handle made by the Indians.

Mrs. Marion Sheelar, Wilson: 1966 Plymouth "Valiant" auto in good running condition.

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PLANNING BOARD: All Planning Comm. members please note: Arthur Schnoor, Chairman, has asked all committee members to meet at 7:00 PM, one hour before the regular trustee meeting held each month on Wednesday evening. Various projects for improving the museum and grounds are planned and we will try to keep you informed as things progress. Art has also scheduled a WORK DAY for Sept. 6th and we hope all able bodied men will make an effort to come out and lend a hand in getting our new year off to a great start.

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RIVER CRUISE: Sixty six members and guests enjoyed the sunset cruise on the Niagara River under perfect sky. The scenic trip included an offshore view of Old Fort Niagara and an upriver trip to Artpark and back. Light refreshments were available aboard ship but some gathered later at McDonald's historic Frontier House for a snack. Dorothy Thilk is to be commended for arranging a delightful evening cruise.

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WELCOME, CHARLES: It was nice seeing Charles Boyer at the society's "flea market" on Aug. 3rd. Mr. Boyer, former Curator of the Niag. Co. Hist. Soc. museum at Lockport, is now residing at his lakeside home in Olcott. He remains active and keeps up his interest in historical matters as trustee of the Newfane Hist. Soc. and director of the Old Fort Niagara Association. We are pleased that Charles has also chosen to join the Wilson society.

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PICNIC: About 25 elderly persons attended the annual picnic this year as guests of the society. Fred Schultz, 92, was presented with a beautiful bouquet of flowers as the oldest person present, "happy birthday" was sung to Louis Swick who was to celebrate his 91st on Aug. 13th, and Alice Nelson of Oriskany, N.Y., attended from the furthest distance away.

Gwen Heidenfeldt, Chrm., was assisted by Jean Hayes and others who helped with preparations and serving were, Garnette and Elwin Upton, Dorothy Halstead, Larry Halstead, Carole Schnoor, Edna Rose, Jeanne Swanson, Marion Goodrich, Mabel Wilson, Dorothy Linnabery, Dorothy Thilk, and Millie Croop.

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NEW LIFE MEMBER: Philip S. Brown of Washington, D.C., has joined the Wilson Hist. Soc. as a Life Member making him the 34th in that class. When Mr. Brown wrote us and mentioned that he had seen one of our "Newsletters" and wanted to know how he could get more, we were not aware we were corresponding with a member of one of Wilson's old prominent families. Philip is the son of the late Sam Brown who ran Miller and Brown's Grocery & Drygoods store--later known as Welker and Browns--located where Scheffler's now stands. He attended school in Wilson and Bob Rose was one of his schoolmates. Bob's father worked for Sam Brown and the Brown home is where "Chuck" and Marion Campbell now reside.

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DAIRY OF A DEADMAN: A revised edition of "Dairy of a Deadman", by Jean Ray, is now available at the museum through an arrangement with the Eastern National Parks Service. Books are provided to us so that we can sell them at the same price charged at National Park outlets--\$3.00 per copy. The dairy of Ira Pettit, Wilson youth who lost his life in a confederate prison, has been enhanced by an interesting epilogue with stories of other familiar persons such as William H. Holmes, Harvey U. Pease, Enocn Pettit, Jason L. Pettit, Marvin D. Pettit, William H. Salisbury, Azor Schearer, and William H. Wright, (to mention a few).

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NEW PRINCIPAL: Wally Goodman will be the new Junior High Principal in Wilson replacing Mr. Wes Johnson, who resigned. He comes from Niagara-Wheatfield where he helped build one of the outstanding musical departments in Niagara County. The society extends its congratulations to Wally, Wilson resident and long time member of the Wilson Hist. Soc.

"HOJACK" LINE: Much of the material we accumulated on the "Hojack" railroad was published in four issues of the "Newsletter" dated November, 1977 through February, 1978, but occasionally more information is provided to us.

Frank W. Cornell of Lewiston has a keen interest in the history and future of the "Hojack" whose rails, incidentally, run through the backyard of his Creek Rd. home. He sent us an interesting copy of an old newspaper clipping dated March 29, 1876, which describes the joining of the Lake Ontario Shore R.R. with the N.Y. Central tracks at Lewiston. Tracks for the new road were described as entering the upper portion of the Village of Lewiston and crossing the principal thoroughfare some distance below the Old Academy school and joined the N.Y. Central tracks about where the present Bells Supermarket stands by means of a tunnel built 20' below the street. When the final spike was driven, a construction train drawn by the old Lake Ontario Shore locomotive, the "Oswego", passed through the tunnel under main street and proceeded to the Central Depot in Niagara Falls.

The "Hojack", first known as the Lake Ontario Shore R.R., reached 146 miles from Oswego to Lewiston. The first rail was laid at Oswego, May 1, 1873, and 52 miles were completed to Ontario in 1873-74. The ailing line was purchased on the "block" by the Rome, Watertown, and Ogdensburg line and roadbed and tracks were completed through Wilson to Lewiston in 1876.

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OVERSIGHT: When we attended the Niagara-Wheatfield Commencement at Artpark, we learned that Dean Hutchison, son of Mr. and Mrs. Jack Hutchison of Sanborn, was a member of the graduating class. The Hutchisons are members of the society and Mr. Hutchison is also a member of the Niagara Wheatfield Board of Education.

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TOP SCOUTER: Earning the award of Eagle Scout is no easy task so it is a pleasure to note that Howard Hunter, Jr., attained this high rank as a member of troop #66. We trust that Howie, like the American Eagle, will soar to new heights when he enters Hilbert College.

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STUDY GROUP: George Linnabery has agreed to chair a group interested in the study of architectural design and detail of structures in the Wilson area. Photos would be taken and prints kept in a picture file for reference in the museum. Anyone interested may call George and learn more about it from him.

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EASTMAN FAMILY: John Eastman of Rochester and his son, Mark, and wife, Monica, of Hilton, have joined the society upon learning that their ancestor, John Eastman, came to Wilson with Reuben in 1810. The pioneer Wilson and Eastman families brought their families to these shores in April that year, and with the help of Gilbert Purdy, built cabins on Lot #82 near the present intersection of Maple Rd. and route No.18. After the Eastman and Wilson cabins were built, Purdy built one for himself on lot #26 along 12 Mile Creek.

John and Clarissa Eastman had several children and one of them, Henry, was born in Wilson July 5, 1815. The Eastmans of Rochester and Hilton are descended from this son. The pioneer John Eastman family lived in Wilson for eight years until John traded his property for land owned by James Cole of eastern Hartland. He later moved to Chautauqua and died 9/12/1862.

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MUSEUM COMMITTEE: Lois Jennings, Chrm., has announced that there will be a meeting of the museum comm., wednesday, September 3rd, at 1:00 PM. Plans for exhibits will be discussed at that time.

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GRIM LESSON: Prior to the landing of the Pilgrims in 1620, the Neuter Indians were well established in the lands extending from Lake Michigan to the Genessee River. Their name was derived from their ability to remain neutral and live in peace with the Hurons on the west and the Iroquois on the east. In 1651, however, the warlike Senecas attacked the peace-loving Neuters, annihilated them, and took over their villages and lands. Two of these villages were within the present borders of Niagara County. One occupied the site of present Lewiston and another stood on the mountain ridge about one mile west of the city of Lockport.

The demise of the Neuter Indians is a grim reminder that no nation, no matter how peace-loving, can long endure without proper defenses against warlike neighbors.

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COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN: Dr. John Argue, Pres., has appointed the following work area chairmen for 1980-81: Acquisitions, Lois Jennings; By-Laws, Karl Wright; Caboose, Bob Rose; Country Fair, (pending); Genealogical, Celeste Crawford; Grounds, Elwin Upton; Historic Sites, Jan Sporleder; Tours, Dorothy Thilk; Housekeeping, Betty Stimson; Library, Carole Schnoor; Membership, Christine Kelman; Memorial, Millie Croop; Museum, Lois Jennings; Nominating, Wirt Wakeman; Planning, Art Schnoor; Program, Dorothy Linnabery; Publications, Don Croop; Publicity, Dorothy Linnabery; Quilt, Florence Schultz; Refreshments, Marietta Goodman; Sunday Hostesses, Margaret Wilson; and Ways and Means, Nettie Stimson. A sincere note of thanks to those who served the society well in the past: Whit Barnum, Planning; Edna Rose, Hostesses; Eleanor Myers, Country Fair; John Myers, Nominating;

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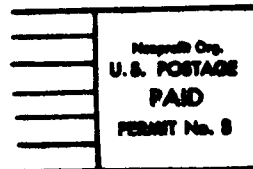
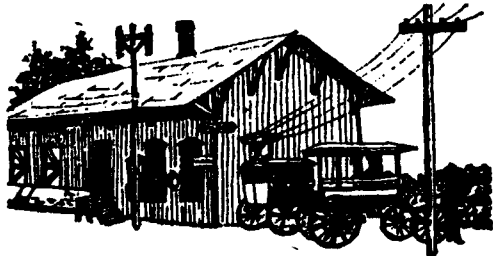
SEPTEMBER PROGRAM: The selection of interesting programs for our regular monthly meetings may well be one of the most difficult tasks we ask of one of our members. Dorothy Linnabery, however, has agreed to accept the challenge for another year, and a preview of her proposed programs suggests we have an interesting year ahead.

The Ward family, Wally, Peggy, Bud, and Norma, will start off the season at the September meeting on the subject of "Early Motoring in Wilson". Marietta Goodman has announced that refreshments will be served by Edna Martin, Chrm, Eva Zortman, and Marion Pettit.

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SAD FACT: Our legislators might be more inclined to do something about inflation if they didn't have the power to vote themselves a pay raise whenever they fall behind.

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Wilson Historical Society

WILSON, NEW YORK 14172

NEWSLETTER

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

OCTOBER 1980 Vol. 9 No.9

(Coleman Press)

THE NIAGARA AUTOMOBILE: The Wilson Automobile Company got off to a rough start in Aug., 1901, when Stanley Dwight and George Brooks completed their first "Niagara" automobile. It was clear from the start that Wilson would never become a second Detroit as opposition to the venture became apparent when the Village Board passed a resolution forbidding Brooks to run an auto fast through village streets. In fact, many persons felt he shouldn't be allowed to drive it at all as it scared their horses.

Brooks countered that there were many horses on the streets that were more dangerous than his auto since they weren't properly broken by their owners. He contended that his cars, at least, were always under perfect control and obeyed his every command.

Stanley Dwight, owner and manager of the company, along with George Brooks, chief mechanic, made several cars. The first was built in 1901 at Brook's machine shop located next to the old grist mill on West Young Street. In 1903 the "Niagara Runabout" was manufactured in the old Creamery building near the Methodist Church. Although several cars were built and sold, their dream of having a large auto company in Wilson was not to be. The community had little interest in the project and, unable to arrange financial backing, Dwight and Brooks were forced to close their doors.

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IN MEMORIAM: Donald G. Southard, 81, passed away at Inter Community Hospital, Newfane, Aug. 29 following a short illness. He resided in Wilson for 53 years and retired in 1965 as a field engineer for the Army Corps of Engineers. He married Lydia Berlin of Wilson and their one son, Richard, is attorney for the Town of Wilson. Mr. Southard was a member of St. John's Episcopal Church and a member of the society since 1974. Sincere condolences are extended to his wife, Lydia, their son, Richard, and other family members.

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OUR INDIAN HERITAGE: Many of our customs and way of life have been effected by the American Indian. A number of highways follow old Indian trails; towns, counties, states, rivers, and mountains bear the names of Indian tribes; and even our love for hunting, fishing, and the out-of-doors has felt the influence of the red man. The game of Lacrosse is regaining popularity in the sporting field; modern snowshoes are patterned after early Indian types; and many farmers corncribs are copies of those styled by the Senecas. The Iroquois Long Houses, built with poles and covered with bark, may have been the forerunner of our modern apartment houses since they were divided into compartments in which up to 20 families sometimes shared living quarters. The list could go on and on for much that surrounds us today can be tied to the customs or legends of the American Indian.

The late Eber Russel, father of Bessie Cole, spent most of his life as a crusader for the preservation of the Seneca Indian culture. While living at Perrysburg, N.Y., he dug into some of the ancient burial mounds, carefully preserved artifacts, and recorded many tapes on the life and customs of the Senecas. Results of his work may be seen today in the museum at Little Valley, and a rare Indian map hanging in the Patterson Room of the Wilson museum, is one of several drawn by Mr. Russel.

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RANDALL CEMETERY: An interesting project being undertaken by the society is the search for tombstones in the old Randall Rd. Cemetery next to Bill Strassburg's home. The cemetery, started in 1845, was the burial ground for some of Wilson's early pioneers including Asa and Mary Randall, after whom the road was named. We also have proof that Timothy Bachelors is buried there and probably some members of the Sherman family.

The cemetery, located on town property, was not kept up and growing over with brush so the Hauseman family obtained permission to level off the plot. Markers were covered over but apparently no one was interested enough to record the names of the deceased. The property has been mowed and cared for by the Strassburgs over the past years.

Dorothy Thilk, Town Historian, has sparked the effort to identify the persons interred, and has been assisted in the venture Joe Higgins, William Wilson, Elwin Upton, Lloyd Albright Whit Barnum, George Linnabery, and Art Ness. If they are successful in determining who is buried there, it is expected that the historic sites comm. will have a marker erected with the names of these early pioneers on it.

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BE SURE TO VOTE: Election is the time of year when candidates run for public office, and America becomes the land of promise.

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EVERYONE CAN HELP: If you wish to be active in the society we suggest that opportunities to do so are unlimited. The great number of functions outlined in the following committees illustrates how everyone's talents may be put to use to help the society.

The Acquisitions Comm., composed of Lois Jennings, Chrm., Carole Schnoor, Joe Higgins, and Dora Wakeman, accepts or declines articles offered to the society, issues transmission slips, and records acquisitions in the accession book.

The Antique Cars with Bob Rose, Chrm., is responsible for the care, upkeep, and display of all cars owned or on loan to the society.

The By-Laws Comm., Karl Wright, Chrm., composed of 5 members, shall review and update the Constitution and By-Laws as regularly as necessary.

The Caboose Comm., Bob Rose, Chrm., will be responsible for the care, upkeep, and renovation of the old caboose.

The Country Fair with Millie Croop and Gwen Heidenfeldt, Co-Chrm., are responsible for selecting persons to take charge of various Fair activities and co-operate with them in planning and operating the annual Fair.

The Genealogical Comm., Celeste Crawford, Chrm., will arrange for distribution of genealogical forms or record sheets. All family records to be kept in alphabetical file in museum.

The Grounds Comm., Elwin Upton, Chrm., shall take charge of grounds and plantings and see that lawns are mowed in summer and driveway and parking lot plowed in winter.

The Historic Sites Comm., Jan Sporleder, Chrm., will establish authenticity of sites proposed for markers, order markers, and arrange for their installation and upkeep.

The Tours Comm., Dorothy Thilk, Chrm., shall arrange and organize historic tours.

The Housekeeping Comm., Betty Stimson, Chrm., will see that museum is cleaned each week, replenish necessary supplies as needed, and arrange furniture for monthly meetings.

The Library Comm., Carole Schnoor, Chrm., shall collect, repair, and arrange all books, manuscripts, newspapers, pictures, and collections of a like nature, for easy reference.

The Membership Comm., Chris Kelman, Chrm., shall conduct membership drives, maintain an up-to-date list of all members, and supervise membership regulations, dues, etc.

The Memorial Comm., Mildred Croop, Chrm., Lois Jennings, Museum Chrm., Arthur Schnoor, Planning Chrm., and appointee, Ernie Walpole, is mandated by By-laws. Committee acknowledges memorial gifts, records them in Memorial Book, and makes recommendations for use of funds.

The Museum Comm., Lois Jennings, Chrm., accepts, cleans, repairs, and stores all gifts. Arranges permanent and special displays with identification when feasible.

The Nominating Comm., Wirt Wakeman, Chrm., Present slate of officers and three trustees at May meeting to be voted on at annual meeting in June. Assist President in selecting Committee Chairmen as needed.

The Planning Comm., Arthur Schnoor, Chrm., will recommend plans to develop or renovate museums and grounds, and implement plans with approval of Board of Trustees.

The Program Comm., Dorothy Linnabery, Chrm., will arrange for guest speakers, entertainmet, etc., at all meetings of the society

The Publications Comm., Don Croop, Chrm., shall arrange for publication of a monthly Newsletter, bulletins, booklets, membership lists, or other items relevant to the society.

The Publicity Comm., Dorothy Linnabery, Chrm., shall arrange for publicity of all meetings, special events, etc., in local newspapers, TV, or radio.

The Quilt Comm., Florence Schultz, Chrm., may meet at their own convenience to sew quilt for annual Country Fair. Encourage and instruct new quilters.

The Refreshment Comm., Marietta Goodman, Chrm., will provide a minimum of 3 persons to serve light refreshments at monthly meetings.

Sunday Hostesses, Margaret Wilson, Chrm., shall contact members to provide hostesses to serve at the museum Sunday afternoons from 2:00 to 4:00 PM.

The Ways & Means Comm., Nettie Stimson, Chrm., shall devise ways and means to raise funds to operate the society. Committee will be in charge of implementing programs approved.

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MUSEUM EXHIBIT: The September-October display features "Ladies Finery of the 19th Century", a theme that gave the museum committee an opportunity to show some of the womens paraphernalia acquired by the society during the past eight years. The November-December theme will be in keeping with the Holiday Season.

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GIFT IDEAS: Looking ahead to the Yuletide Season the age old problem pops up, "What shall I buy for Christmas?" You're in luck this year as the Ways and Means Comm. has provided a good supply of note paper, "Dairy of a Deadman", several autographed copies of "When Being a Boy was Fun", and other miscellaneous items. There is also a good supply of the society's own booklets as well as the ever popular, "Cookbook". All are reasonably priced and excellent for exchange gifts or that hard-to-please relative or friend.

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PIONEER DAY: The Cambria Hist. Soc. will hold their 9th annual "Open House" at the Cambria Fire Hall, Sunday, October 19th. It's a good date to mark on your calendar.

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HARVEST FESTIVAL: The Newfane Hist. Soc. will hold their Harvest Festival, Sunday, Oct. 5th from Noon to 5:00 PM. Chowder, Apple Butter, Cider, Flea Market, Displays.

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SCHOOL CALENDAR: Some of Wilson's historic dates have been included in the new school calendar mailed to town residents recently. Dorothy Thilk, Town Historian, provided the material to Mr. Stephen J. LaRock, Director of Curriculum, Wilson Central School.

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BAKE SALE: A bake sale will be held by our society at the Town Hall on election day, Nov. 4th. Please be thinking about furnishing pies, bread, cookies and preserves. Voter turnout may be large so try to help. Time, 10:00 AM until sold out.

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ACQUISITIONS: Hazel LeVan, Ransomville: The historic school bell from the former Randall Road schoolhouse; also an "In Memoriam" card dated 1893.

Adorno Johnson: An early 1900 milk cooler that belonged to the late Burt Ward.

Wilford Bennett: A wood smoothing plane over 100 years old.

Marilyn Allgeier: Bible presented to Samuel Kittinger in 1881, also his photograph, and Buffalo Evening News papers dated 1918 & 1945.

Jean Argue: "Metropolitan Fashions" by Butterick Publishing Co--good reference book for clothing clarification.

Dr. John Argue: 1695 map of the world.

Jean Capen, Burt: Black and white 1914 photo of the Wilson Depot.

Eloise Culverwell: Silver Coffee Service that belonged to Flora Pettit Blood.

Elizabeth Duxbury and Yvonne Smithson, Ransomville: Photo of Wilson Main Street. Date not yet established.

Florence Everett, Ransomville: 1915 picture postcard of Wilson Union School.

Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Hedley (via Dr. Argue): Advertising Fan; "666" Cure-All, parts of old Edison cylinder phonograph.

Alonzo Hosey: Parker, Ransomville Milk Bottle; Plaque (Lockport Exchange Trust Co.); and 1905 N.Y. State map of all operating steam railroads, postoffices, townships, etc.

Herbert Kahler, Newfane: Horse-drawn excavating scoop.

Mary Meahl Kleinhaus, Newfane: Wooden crate stamped Niagara County, Pres. Corp., Wilson. Crate was on the former Oscar Munch farm in East Wilson.

Phyllis Gifford McCarthy, Lockport: Wicker suitcase filled with Doll Clothes, skirt, petticoat, gloves, and pillow top.

Marion Mudge: Top of "Ribbon Quilt".

Alice Nelson, Oriskany: Large photo of the Wilson Senior Class of 1923 at Washington, D.C.

Kathy Pearce: Three vinegar bottles from the former Hinchliffe Vinegar Works, Rt. 425.

Melvin Shippy (via Dr. Argue): Hand carved walnut scale (ca. 1930).

Nettie Stimson: Band uniform jacket; Picture postcard of houses on North Lake St.; and Yearbooks from Newfane, '37, '39, '40, '42, '45, '54, '56, '65, and '67; Lockport, '09, '38, '40; Barker, '68; and Niagara University, '40 and '42.

Betty Stimson: 1915 Doll dishes in box; and small framed mirror advertising "Town Dinette" Dinette was owned by Jack Ruble in area of present library; also Lace bed coverlet and Baby Bonnet.

Janet Sporleder: 1 Delft Plate from Stokes, Eng.; "Gainsborough" Tureen; and small Amethyst bowl.

Garnette Upton: Dress form.

Doris Tarr: Tortoise hair comb with green stones.

Joseph Stearns (via Herb Kahler): Raccoon coat and ladies undergarments.

Museum Committee: Set of dishes acquired from the Flora Pettit Blood estate.

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SOUVENIR CABINET: Nettie Stimson, Chrm., Ways & Means, acquired an old oak cupboard and display cabinet which will be used to show the booklets and souvenirs sold by the society. Burt Jennings spent several days cleaning and re-finishing the piece which is expected to facilitate distribution of our saleable items.

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MISSING: A popcorn scoop was borrowed from the Wilson Volunteer Fire Co. to dispense corn at the "Country Fair". The last time it was seen was when it was being washed in the kitchenette. If anyone knows of its whereabouts, please have it returned.

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AUTUMN DANCE: The Ways & Means Comm. will sponsor another dance, Saturday, October 25th, at the Thomas Marks School. There will be Round & Square dancing to the lively music of the "Rhythm Aires". There will be a pre-sale of tickets until Oct. 24th at \$2.50 a person. The price will be \$3.00 at the door. Tickets will be available at Okie's Pharmacy and the Barn Shoppe on Lake St. Junior members will be given a chance for free admission if they can sell 4 tickets. There will be door prizes and light refreshments available.

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NEW TOUR: Members & friends are invited to take a ride on the "Maid of the Mist", Tuesday, Sept. 30th, at 5:00 PM. We will meet at the museum at 3:30 PM to form car pools, and if one person in each car has a "Golden Park Pass", parking will be free. The cost will be \$2.75 per person and 25¢ to enter the tower. Those who choose may have dinner after at the nearby John's Flaming Hearth Motor Inn, or Howard Johnson's Restaurant. If interested, call Dorothy Thilk or Millie Croop or Dora Wakeman.

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SUNDAY HOSTESSES: Margaret Wilson has announced that Sunday Hostesses for October will be as follows: Oct. 5th, Marietta Goodman and Mary Hoople; Oct. 12th, Gary and Lynn Greenwald; Oct. 19th, Elton and Janis Kropp; and Oct. 26th, Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Fare.

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CALENDAR: Sept. 30th: Maid of the Mist Tour at Niagara Falls.
 Oct. 15th: Planning Comm., 7 PM at museum. Trustees, 8PM at museum.
 Oct. 20th: Regular monthly meeting, 7:30 PM at museum.
 Oct. 25th: Autumn Dance at Thomas Marks School. 8:00 to 12:00 PM.
 Nov. 4th: Bake Sale at Town Hall on Election Day. 10:00 PM until sold out.

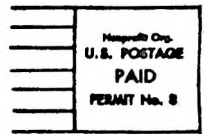
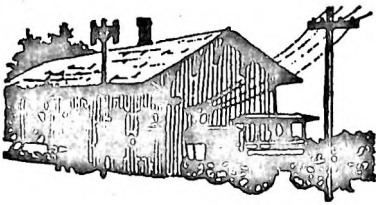
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OCTOBER PROGRAM: Our guest at the regular meeting will be Larry Lash, Physical Education Director at Thomas Marks School. Light refreshments will be served by Gertrude Schnoor, Chrm., Leona Beutel, and Helen Dinse.

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BON MOT: About the only thing that comes to us without effort is old age. (Gloria Pitzer)

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Wilson Historical Society

WILSON, NEW YORK 14172

NEWSLETTER

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

MR. & MRS. DONALD CROOP
4559 CHESTNUT ROAD
WILSON, NEW YORK 14172

NOVEMBER 1980 Vol.9 No.10
(Coleman Press)

WOMENS SUFFRAGE: A lady who did much to change the life style of women throughout America (and Wilson), was one of Rochester's most famous and controversial citizens, Susan B. Anthony. During her lifetime she experienced many battles and many defeats, but 14 years after her death the cause for which she campaigned most, Womens Suffrage, was realized when the 19th Amendment to the Constitution was adopted, August 26, 1920.

Susan was born in 1820 at Adams, Mass., and grew up to become a schoolteacher. In 1845 she moved to Rochester with her family on a canal packet boat, where she picked fruit and scrubbed floors on her father's farm near Genesee Park Boulevard and Brook's Avenue.

She later took up the cause for Womens Rights and in 1852 won the privilege of addressing a State Convention of teachers where previously only men had been allowed to speak. One of her comments will be long remembered:

"Do you not see that so long as society says that woman has not enough brains to be a lawyer, doctor, or minister, but has plenty to be a teacher, that every one of you who condescends to teach admits he has no more brains than a woman?"

Unwavering in her quest for Womens Suffrage, she also crusaded for temperance and freedom of the slaves, and helped Clara Barton found, in Rochester, the 2nd Red Cross Chapter in America. During her declining years, in 1900, she led the fight to admit women to the University of Rochester.

As Election Day approaches, we are reminded that the right to vote is one of our most cherished democratic privileges and shouldn't be tossed aside or treated lightly. Your vote does count, and whether you exercise your voting privilege or not, you must still assume responsibility for the men and women who take office after November 4, 1980.

When you ladies enter the voting booth, you might give a word of thanks to Susan B. Anthony, because if it wasn't for her, you might still be trying to tell your husbands how to vote on Election Day.

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VETERAN'S DAY: It is perhaps fitting that Veteran's Day is celebrated November 11th, the same month as our National Election. It helps to remind us that, but for them, we might not have the privilege of free elections. Many of the Veterans to be honored on that day are under medical care---they should not be forgotten.

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RANDALL CEMETERY: Several stones were uncovered in the old Randall Road Cemetery last month laying the foundation for erecting a marker in memory of some of Wilson's earliest pioneers. About 70 years ago, the markers were covered and the plot leveled off thus wiping out all signs of a cemetery having been there. The tedious task of finding the markers and identifying some of the persons interred, was accomplished by Dorothy and Norm Thilk, Joe Higgins, George Linnabery, Art Ness, Dora Wakeman, Dianne and Lloyd Albright, Millie Croop, Whit Barnum, and Ethel and Bill Stassburg.

The markers for Asa and Mary Randall, after whom the road was named, were located and revealed that Asa died June 5, 1858, at age seventy. Mary was 59 when she died and the date May 17, 18-- was on her stone. Also located was their 12 year son, Asa, who died 12/13/1834.

The first stone identified was for Timothy Bachelder, 45, who was born August 21, 1788, and died July 11, 1834. No dates were available for Marion W. Parker, however, a three month son of George T. and Ermina M. Parker died December 30, 1850. Also identified was 2yr. 6mos. old Miron M. Morton who died April 29, 1835.

The information obtained reveals that burials were made as early as 1834 thus making the cemetery much older than previously thought. It is planned to erect a historic marker at the site with the names of those interred on it. If anyone reading this can definitely prove that others are buried there, please notify Dorothy Thilk, Town Historian, so that their names might also be included on the marker.

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FLEAS NEEDED: Edna Rose, Chrm. for the society's "flea market" at next year's "Country Fair", would appreciate it if everyone would start collecting "fleas" now and bring them to the regular monthly meetings. She feels this will help eliminate the last minute rush and allow more time for checking and carefully marking "fleas".

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JOB OPPORTUNITY: Invest now. Work for the Lord. Pay is not much, but the retirement plan is out of this world. Apply upstairs. (Sign in office of Ben Franklin Homes, York, Pa.)

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NEW MEMBERS: It is a pleasure to welcome eight new members into the society this month: Mr. and Mrs. Matt Myers, Wilson; Mrs. Kathleen Kraatz, Wilson; James "Dutch" Cornell, Wilson; also, R. Charles Phillips, Rochester, N.Y.; Raymond Kellick, Simi Valley, California; and Mr. and Mrs. Harold Donner of Ithaca, N.Y.

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DONNER GENEALOGY: Henry F. Donner, PhD, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, and cousin Harold L. Donner, B.S., of Ithaca, N.Y., have compiled an excellent genealogy of the Donner family dating back to their grandparents, Friederick and Friedericka Donner, who emigrated to America from Germany in 1862. They bought a 25 acre farm on the Northfield Rd. east of Millersport where they raised a large family.

Son Charles acquired the family farm from his parents; August settled north of Millersport off Transit on the Dunnigan Rd; and five other brothers, Fred, Ernest, William, Herman, and Lewis, settled in the township of Wilson on the Townline Rd. between Ide and Willow Rds. Henry acquired land on the Daniels Rd. between New and German Rds., while sister, Friedericka (Donner) Seeloff, settled on the German Road.

Of historical interest is the fact that Henry and Harold's great-great grandfather, Johan Donner, was a career soldier who fought under Field Marshall Van Elucher in the "Battle of Waterloo". Research also has revealed the interesting possibility of relationship to the leaders of the "Donner Party" who perished in 1846-47 while trying to cross the High Sierras. Today, the site of their ill-fated crossing bears the family's name, "Donner Pass".

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BAKE SALE: Election Day, Nov. 4th, is the date for the society's annual "Bake Sale" which will be held at the Town Hall from 10:00 AM on. This event, along with the Fair, are the society's two main money-raising projects, so all members are urged to support both to the extent possible. Out-of-town members, who are unable to participate in local activities, are invited to join with us to make the Bake Sale a financial success. Donations may be sent to Millie Croop, treasurer. Lois Barnum, Chairman, suggests that pies, breads, cookies, cupcakes and preserves will be welcome.

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NEW TOUR: Dorothy Thilk, Chrm., has scheduled another visit to the classic Riviera Theater in N. Tonawanda, Wednesday evening, Nov. 19th. A bus will leave the Wilson Museum at 6:30 PM, and transportation and admission will be \$5.00 per person. Bus capacity is 44 so sign up early with either Dorothy or Millie Croop.

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SUNDAY HOSTESSES: Margaret Wilson, Chrm., announces that the following persons have agreed to serve as museum hostesses: Nov. 2nd, Phyllis Hurst and Cheryl Brown; Nov. 9th, Jean Swanson and Edna Robinson; Nov. 16th, Peggy and Wally Ward; Nov. 23rd, Richard and Emma Lou Reppentine; and Nov. 30th, Donald and Jane Sinclair.

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NOVEMBER PROGRAM: Brian Dunnigan, Curator of Old Fort Niagara, will be guest speaker at the November 17th meeting. Under his guidance, the old Fort has experienced a full program of historic events and archeologic diggings pertinent to its history.

Marietta Goodman, Refreshment Chrm., has arranged for the following persons to serve after the meeting: Betty Stimson, Chrm., Garnette Upton, and Martha MacAskill.

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VISITORS: About 20 members of the Woman's Club of Clarence visited the museum on Oct. 14th and were greeted by Dorothy Thilk and Lois Jennings who showed them around and served light refreshments. The group later visited the "Cobblestone Trail" and Lois Barnum graciously opened her home so that the ladies might see the inside of the beautiful old "English cut" fieldstone house built by William Wilson in 1861.

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CONGRATULATIONS: M/Sgt. Howard D. Croop has retired from the U.S. Airforce (SAC) after having completed 23 yrs. service. He graduated from Wilson Central School in 1957 and resides in Rapid City, S.D. with his wife, Lucille (Nelson), and five children, Donna, 18, Denise, 14, Dianne, 13, Kathi, 9, and Casey, four.

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NEW FAIR CHAIRMAN: Millie Croop, temporary Fair Chairman, has announced that Sue Toenniessen has agreed to accept General Chairmanship for next year's big event on Memorial Day. Sue's acceptance of this important job is especially gratifying as it is yet another step in the effort to involve more young members in society projects. Millie Croop and Eleanor Myers, who have chaired eight successful Fairs, will assist Sue as well as Gwen Heidenfeldt.

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MUSEUM ACTIVITIES: A \$25 donation was received from the Wireless Association which made use of the museum for a meeting recently.....The Gnostic Guild has been granted permission to use the museum for a meeting December 16.....John Myers is installing heavy electrical cable to service the Transportation Building.....Bob Rose, Chrm., has been given authority to purchase felt to lay under the antique cars to stop condensation....The quilt for next year's Fair is almost completed with work being done at the home of Florence Schultz.The Wilson Brothers loaned the society some of their heavy equipment for grounds work.....

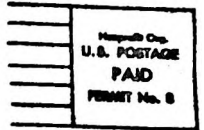
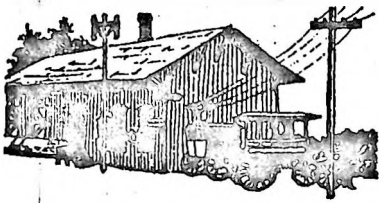
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CALENDAR: November 4th: General Election Day
November 12th: 7:00 PM, Planning Comm; 8:00PM, Trustees--both meetings at museum.
November 17th: 7:30 PM, Regular monthly meeting at museum.
November 24th: 1:00 PM, Museum Comm. meeting at museum.
November 27th: Thanksgiving.

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BON MOT: It's easy to overcome one's fear of flying once you realize that the airlines wouldn't allow people to use credit cards if flying wasn't safe.

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Wilson Historical Society

WILSON, NEW YORK 14172

NEWSLETTER

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

DECEMBER 1980 Vol. ¹⁰ No. 11
(Coleman Press)

OLD TIME MOVIES: Laura Alvers Eick recently researched the rise and fall of movie entertainment in the town of Wilson, and thanks to "golden agers" Paul Middleton, Margaret Wilson, Ida Erion, Elizabeth Duxbury, and Francis Tate, compiled an interesting history of the "flicks" in Wilson dating back to the early 1900's.

It seems that Timothy Wilson once supervised most of the amusements and events held at Tuscarora Park at the turn of the century, and the first silent movies were shown in the old open pavilion. Each time a showing was held, it was necessary to place canvas curtains all around the structure. A hand-cranked carbon-arc type projector was used, and Timothy's son, Floyd, helped with the operation. Floyd's wife, Margaret, recalls that when the operator's hand or arm got tired the images on the screen would appear in slow motion, and when he rested up, the action might be speeded up.

Later, movies were shown in Middleton's Hall behind the drugstore and benches were used for seats until folding chairs were installed. In 1910, the Conant and Bryant Power Company bought land across from Beatrice Salisbury's home on Harbor Street ushering in the new age of electricity. An electric projector was then purchased and Floyd, an employee of the power company, continued to operate the machine in Middleton's Hall.

One of the first movie news films shown at Middleton's was the Presidential Election of 1912. That was the year the Republican Party split with William Howard Taft the Republican Nominee, and "Teddy" Roosevelt the candidate for the new "Bull Moose Party". Woodrow Wilson, the Democratic Nominee, was elected to the Presidency in the three way race. Other features starred the rising young film star, Pearl White, and serials such as the "Perils of Pauline" were eagerly awaited by audiences each week. Laura Eick recalls that all the girls got a big thrill when Rudolph Valentino appeared at Middleton's Hall in the hit movie, "The Shiek".

In 1920, Seymore Erion and Henry Giles built a new theater, "The Gem", on the south side of Main Street between the present Postoffice and Hamilton and Clark's Furniture store. They purchased the movie equipment from Middletons and Floyd operated it for about a year when Benjamin Stone, another electrician, took over the job. Elizabeth Giles Duxbury recalls that her mother, Ida Giles, along with Mrs. Erion, sold admission tickets. Later a popcorn machine was added proving that this popular delicacy has long been a treat for movie goers. In addition to the movies, plays were sometimes presented on stage by High School Seniors.

Prior to the advent of sound movies, a very talented group of pianists set the mood for the audience by skilfully accompanying the changing action on the screen. The late Earl McCormick was one of the first to play at the "Gem", and others included Marjorie Crossman Hurlburt, her sister Frances, Helen Piggins Borngraeber, Alice Nelson, Laura Alvers Eick, and Florence Partington Porter.

Bob Horton related an experience he had when he attended the "Gem" as a youngster. A prankster, who sat behind him, jabbed him in the rear with a hat pin causing Bob to put up such a howl he was evicted from the theater. We suppose the moral to that story is, "There just ain't no justice."

Erion and Giles sold the "Gem" to Michael Radigan in the thirties and the building stood vacant for awhile. When Francis Tate moved to Wilson, he rented it for about a year. He had been in the movie business in Pennsylvania and proceeded to make a few repairs and purchased new seats. In 1938 he bought the building for \$1,000 and recalls that, as the new owner, the first film was shown February 22, 1938. Lena, his wife, also assisted him at the ticket window. The Tates promoted a very successful movie enterprise in the village for about 20 years during which time many fine feature films were shown such as "Kiss Me Kate", "Gone with the Wind", and "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs."

Wilson lost its popular movie theater in 1960 when Mr. Tate sold the property to Duane Hill. He converted it to a billiard parlor but the new business venture disappeared from the Wilson scene when the building burned down Saturday, November 18, 1967.

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MUSEUM HOSTESSES: Hostesses at the museum for Sunday afternoons from two to four will be as follows: Dec. 7th, Beryl Tovell and Florence Schultz; Dec. 14th, Bob and Ruth Thomas; Dec. 21st, Leonard and Marion Tabor; and Dec 28th, Norma Ward and Margaret Wilson.

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BON MOT: Snowflakes are one of nature's most fragile things, but just look at what they can do when they stick together. (Vesta M. Kelly)

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IN MEMORIAM: Harold E. Mudge, 77, a descendant of early Wilson families, died recently at Inter Community Hospital after a short illness. Mr. Mudge was a rocket technician at Bell Aerospace for many years, an Exempt Fireman of Wilson Vol. Fire Co. #1, and an active member of the Wilson Hist. Soc., and Lockport and Ransomville Senior Citizens. Deepest sympathy is extended to his wife, Marian Henry Mudge, his daughters Mrs. Evan Noreen Mascle of Williamsport, and Beverly Menchon of Lockport; also his sister, Mrs. Henry (Florence) Donner of Cleveland Heights, Ohio, and other members of the family.

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BAKE SALE: A good response from members and friends combined to make the recent bake sale a big success. Tasty homemade pies, cookies, and breads disappeared quickly proving that local residents know a good thing when they see it. The Election Day event netted over \$200 and the society is indebted to all those loyal members who took the time to furnish and bake. Nettie Stimson, Chris Goodman, Lois Barnum, and Millie Lonsbery dispensed the goodies.

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HOLLOWEEN DANCE: Attendance at the dance was less than hoped for, however, Carole Schnoor and her committee deserve a big "thank you" for making all the arrangements. The consensus of opinion from those who attended was that everyone had a good time.

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TOURS: The turbulent tour on the "Maid of the Mist" was one of the society's most exciting trips, but perhaps the return visit to N. Tonawanda's Riviera Theater was the most nostalgic. The beautiful sounds of the old Wurlitzer organ combined with old silent movies garnered up memories of another era of "past times and pleasures."

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GOOD BET: Don't forget the Wilson Hist. Soc. Cookbook when you make out your Christmas list. It's a perfect gift at \$4.50, and your friends will think of you everytime they prepare one of those delicious family recipes.

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NEW CARS: Dr. John Argue recently gave the society his beautiful 1957 Mark II Lincoln Continental, and also, through his generosity, has made it possible for the society to purchase a 1959 Cadillac Convertible. The Cadillac is in "like new" condition, and both cars will enhance the display in the transportation building. Bob Rose, antique car Chrm., suggests that now would be a good time to donate any old car equipment or parts.

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TASK OVER: The Randall Rd. Cemetery plot has been smoothed over with about 6 loads of topsoil, also raked and seeded marking the end to a worthwhile project. A marker listing the names of those interred is expected to be erected next year. Wirt Wakeman, "Chuck" Campbell, Elwin Upton, Whit Barnum, and Norm and Dorothy Thilk, pitched in to complete the job. Incidentally, Art Schnoor and Fred Berry raked at the museum the same day.

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NEW QUILT: The quilt for next year's Fair is completed and is, without doubt, the prettiest one to date. Florence Schultz, Chrm., says that it is oversize and suitable for a double bed. Tickets are being printed and will be available soon.

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GOOD TURN: When you drive out the Wilson-Burt Rd., take a minute to look at the "Billy Sherman" marker west of Ron Zauner's home. Boy Scouts of troop #67 and leader, Don Wiltse, did a fine job caring for it this past summer. Shrubs and flowers were planted and a cute fence was built around the actual gravesite. Ornamental evergreens were donated by Ron Schearer, Schearer's Nursery, Wilson-Burt Road.

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EXHIBIT PLANNED: The exhibit theme for December and January will be "Childrens' Old Fashioned Christmas" featuring antique furniture, toys, cradles, sleighs, etc. The display will be supervised by Nettie Stimson and Dorothy Knight.

On Sunday, Dec. 7th, a Christmas tree will be trimmed in the Patterson Room from 1PM on. Flossie Lortz, Chrm., invites everyone to come and help make the tree the prettiest ever.

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BY-LAWS CHANGE: At the regular meeting in November, it was voted to change Article XI of the Constitution and By-Laws to read as follows: The Wilson Hist. Soc., as an organization, is designed to exist in perpetuity and its existence in fact without termination. However, if for any reason, an interruption occurs, its possessions are intended to be transferred to the Town of Wilson, as successor, without restrictions and with the expectation that the meaning of Article I, section 2, in the broadest sense, will be observed.

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DECEMBER PROGRAM: The Dec. 15th meeting, "Step Backward into Christmas", will be another "make something" party. Eva Zortman has dipped into her childhood and remembered simple toys she made. Bessie Cole and Edna Robinson are planning taffy pulling, popping corn, cracking nuts, decorating cookies, etc. Eva will provide most of the materials needed for such toys as whirligigs, spool tractors, guess book games, "birdies", spool Knitting, bubble pipes, squirt guns, jumping jacks, etc. Members can bring large spools, large buttons, corn cobs, jack knives, large calendars, pictures suitable for paper dolls or any simple toy for "Show and Tell". Ladies are requested to wear ribbons in their hair and gentlemen to wear "Buster Brown" ties. Craft assistance will be provided by Senior and Junior members of the society.

Refreshment hostesses for the evening will be Edna Robinson, Chrm., Dianne Albright, and Gwen Heidenfeldt.

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FINAL TOUCH: Dora Wakeman's interesting "historic minute" at the November meeting covered Wilson's first Armistice Day celebration. Laura Eick, pianist, played songs from World War I, and "you ain't heard nothing yet", if you haven't heard our members sing!

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