

January 1996 through December 1996

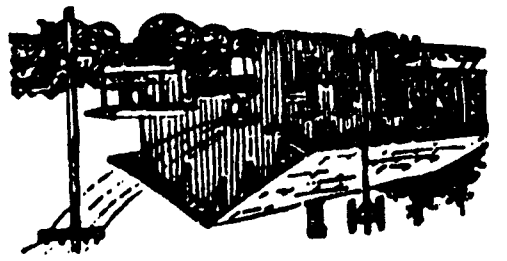
WILSON HISTORY

Veterans Organized American Legion 1-96
Wilson had Opera House for 25 Years 2-96
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Gertrude I. Marks 5-96
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Marietta Goodman 8-96
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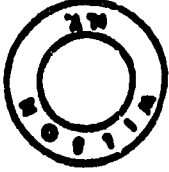
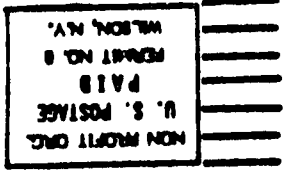


(Coleman Printing)
January 1996 VOL. 25 NO. 1

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

NEWSLETTER

Wilson Historical Society
Wilson, New York 14172-9763



January 1996

VETERANS ORGANIZED LEGION;

On December 31, 1919, a charter application was sent to the Department of New York, American Legion, and on February 3, 1920, a charter was issued for Wilson's Martin F. Jennings American Legion Post #836.

Charter members of the newly organized Post were: Harold Warden, F. Clare Coe, Rahph H. Biggins, Harry L. Biggins, Harold L. Teague, Roy E. DeNeau, Herman W. Smith, Ralph K. Giles, Morton H. McClellan, Stanley F. Giles, Carl F. Abel, Albert W. Johnson, Eugene W. Erhart, Leslie F. Marks, and Hyman Einstein.

Past Commanders of the Post, which now numbers nearly 35 members, were Edward Allgeier, Don Luff, Don Kerwin, and Floyd "Red" Clark.

Today, the Post Commander is John Demmin, and other officers include Howard Hunter, adjutant, Wendell Strubing, Gerald Smith, Randall Galgen, and Jack Linnenbank.

Other prominent members of the community who belonged to Martin F. Jennings Post #836 were Mayor Robert Horton, Supervisor Harold Mosher, Sony Stapf, Norm Sherrie, Bill Scheffler, and Gordon Hausman.

The local Post has conducted Memorial Day services for veterans at Greenwood Cemetery for many years, and more recently a second service has been conducted around noon at the Veteran's Memorial Marker on the museum grounds.

The Legion also places American Flags on the graves of the men and women who served their country in the armed forces.

The American Legion was born at a caucus of 1,000 members of the American Expeditionary Forces of World War I at Paris, France, on March 15-17, 1919.

The Legion is a patriotic, non-political, non-military organization, and was incorporated by an Act of Congress on September 16, 1919.

The organization first included veterans from World War I, World War II, and Korea, but later, both men and women who served honorably in Vietnam, Granada, Beirut, Lebanon, and the Gulf War, became eligible for membership.

Some noteworthy activities engaged in Nationally by the American Legion include sponsorship of candidates for Boy's State; loaning Hospital Equipment to those in need; building athletic fields for Little League, girls' softball, and soccer league teams; providing meeting places for Senior Citizens; and making donations to disabled veterans in VA Hospitals at Christmas.

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NEW MEMBERS:

The latest new members to join the Wilson Historical Society are, Jamie E. Moxham of Wilson, and junior members Brennan and Zachary Moxham; also, Dana Druckenmiller of Dallas, TX, Richard and Sharan Heximer of Lockport, NY. and Ann Marie Brogan, of West Seneca, NY.

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RECENT ACQUISITIONS:

Mabel B. Burrows of Burt, NY, has donated two Pantaloons; 3 Aprons; Ladies Velvet Hat; Black Shawl; Long White Petticoat; Black Slippers; Long Ladies Gloves; Old Postcards; 1895 Board of Education Book; Items from Phoebe Campbell, g-g-grandmother of Mabel Burrows.

Phylis Gifford Stewart, Lockport: Bible Birthday Book owned by Anna Gifford--contains many birthdays and happenings of many old Wilson residents. Also Bible, 1930; and 3 Wise Old Owls, early to mid 1930's.

Elton Kropp: Early electric heater and early wood box (Acme Soap Adv.) also Railroad Calendar (1948); Pettit Coal Thermometer; and Earl Brydges Campaign Pens and Matches. Historical Society Fair pitchers; Lions Club production programs of "Fiddler on the Roof" and "King and I."

Oscar Munch, Jr., FL: Original Tax List for East Wilson School District #7, Chestnut Road. Beatrice Rockwood, Newfane: Five Books on the American Revolution. "The Torch is Passed"; Photo of Townline Road School (1890); Wilson High School Commencements and Class Day Programs, 1935, 1936, 1937, and 1981. Harpers Weekly, 1801; Buffalo Courier Express (1895); Christian Advocate, 1885, 1901; Union Sun & Journal Scrapbook (1980): "The Mail Express"; 1901 "Sing Out".

Don Croop: 27 Photos of Museum and Historical Society events; Newsletters, indexed with plastic covers, Jan. 1992 through Dec. 1995.

Robin Kopacz, Ransomville: Algebra Book, 1866; and School and Field Book of Botony, 1869.

Floyd Clark: 1969 Convertible Ford Mustang in good condition.

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BON MOT: Some people have the right aim in life but never pull the trigger.

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IMPORTANT MEETING NOTICE:

The Wilson Historical Society will discontinue monthly program meetings during the winter months of January, February, and March. Monthly meetings will resume in April, 1996.

The museum is also closed to visitors during January, February, and March, but the public will again be welcome when the museum re-opens Sunday, April 7th, from 2 to 4 p.m.

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NEW LIFE MEMBER:

It is a real pleasure to welcome Naomi Beutel Tompkins, who has joined the Life Membership Class of the Wilson Historical Society.

Naomi was born in Wilson September 13, 1912, the daughter of Henry and Mary Trippensee Beutel. She attended the District #13 schoolhouse, and graduated from Wilson High School in 1930.

She is a Past Noble Grand of the Rebekah Lodge in Sanborn, and attends the Sanborn Methodist Church and the First Presbyterian Church at Vero Beach, FL.

She married Ralph J. Tompkins, and they had three children; Keith Tompkins of Chesterland, OK; David Tompkins of Michigan City, IN; and Robert (deceased) and Katherine DiMare of Vero Beach, FL.

* * * * *

WOMAN WON WAGER:

In an 1893 edition of the old Buffalo Courier, a construction engineer for the Lockport & Niagara Falls Railroad, Stephen Sult, recalled an incident that occurred back in the 1830's when the old steam trains were't too speedy.

It seems that a lady by the name of Mrs. W. Storrs of Lockport, challenged the train crew and told them that if they would give her an hour head start, she could beat the train to Niagara Falls by walking the 24 mile distance.

The Crew, confident they could reach the Falls first, accepted the challenge, with the wager being one handkerchief.

The race started as planned, but much to their chagrin, when the train pulled into the terminal at Niagara Falls, Mrs. Storrs was sitting on the steps of the Cataract House waiting for them.

Fourteen years later, the old shortline between Lockport and Niagara Falls was abandoned and graded over.

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STRING QUARTET PERFORMS:

The Cantible String Quartet, with Peter C. Smith, guest clarinetist, gave a two hour concert at the Wilson museum recently.

Peter Smith, first chair clarinet with the Niagara Symphony Orchestra, is also organist-choir director of Riverside Presbyterian Church in the Falls, and plays organ at Niagara University and St. Mary of the Cataract R.C. Church.

The musical program was sponsored by the Friends of the Wilson Free Library, and was well received by an appreciative audience. Mrs. Shirley Evans is President of the Library Assoc.

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WHY WORRY?

Have you ever noticed how some people start acting old when they reach eighty? Many of them start taking shorter steps, or even "grunt" a little when they sit down or get up. Some even spill food on themselves, or fall asleep while you're talking to them.

In spite of this, the over eighty group are mostly active and have a positive attitude. For instance, when you're an octogenarian you may say to yourself, "I've had a wonderful life, and there's no reason why the next half can't be as good."

People are funny--they want to live a long time, but no one wants to get old, even though getting old is inevitable.

There is some hope, however, we are living in a great scientific age. If your body wears out you can get replacements such as spare parts for the heart, metal sockets for the hips, or steel caps for the knees.

So, instead of worrying about getting older, perhaps we should worry about getting "rusty".

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OFFICERS ELECTED:

Art Schnoor, Chrm. of the Nom. Comm., presented the following slate of officers to be voted upon at the Dec. meeting. No nominations were made from the floor. Officers for 1996 will be:

Don Burrows, Pres; Gary Fitch, 1st Vice-Pres; Norm MacAskill, 2nd Vice-Pres; Richard Schmidle, Rec. Sec; Wanda Burrows, Cor. Sec; Jim Waldron, Treas;.

Trustees to Dec. 31, 1998: Milton Clark, Floyd Clark, and Wally Goodman.

Chairmen elected: Lois Jennings, Acquisitions; Celeste Crawford, Genealogy; Virginia Strablow, Sun. Hostesses; Janet Sporleder, Historical Sites; Shirley Evans, Library; Lois Jennings, Memorial; Anne Faery, Membership; Miles Linnabery, Programs; Dorothy Linnabery, Publicity; Judy King, By-Laws; Don Croop, Publications; Norie Desso, Refreshments; and Mary Schultz, Ways & Means. Chairmen to be appointed by the Board of Directors and Fair Comm. for 1996 will be announced as soon as the Board takes action.

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BOARD OF DIRECTOR MEETINGS:

January 10: February 14th: and March 13th. All winter meetings of the Board will be held on these dates at the Wilson Museum, 7:30 p.m.

Sunday visitation and monthly Program Meetings will be suspended during Ja., Feb., and March.

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SOUNDINGS:

It's better to sleep on what you plan to do than to be kept awake by what you've done.

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SENIOR CITIZENS FETED:

On December 12, 1995, Senior Citizens of the Wilson Central School District were served a delicious breakfast in the school cafeteria with students and teachers cooperating to make it one of the nicest tributes ever to Wilson's aging population.

The Wilson Teachers Association gave generously toward the breakfast which was put on with the support of Superintendent Richard Zipp, and principals Dr. Fraser and Wallace Goodman.

Registration was handled by Mrs. Porter and members of the BA/BAC classes, and the breakfast was served under the direction of Mrs. Donna Kuriel, Mrs. Monroe, and the cafeteria staff. Others contributing valuable assistance to the event included Mr. Johannes and the custodial staff; also Mrs. Woodard, Mrs. Ashford, and Mrs. Linnenbank.

Students escorted Senior Citizens to the registration area, and placed their coats and hats on nearby racks. Seniors then assembled in the cafeteria where Betty Maines gave the Blessing.

During the breakfast, a well-prepared program was presented by the Girls Concert Choir; a Flute Choir; a solo by Tina Ashforth; a duet by Nicole Mills and Christie Goodman; and selections by the Senior Ensemble with Mrs. Williams directing.

Several readings, poems, and songs were presented by the the 2nd grade classes of Mrs. Watts; Mrs. Lash, and Mrs. Cruickshank, and of special interest was the singing of Silent Night by Mrs. Watt's pupils who adeptly used sign language during their presentation.

Following the program, Senior Citizens were invited to take guided tours of the school and enjoy over three dozen exhibits displayed by students in the Library.

"Take-home" gifts for the Seniors included Poinsettias donated by the O'Connor Greenhouse; Christmas pine cone trees provided by Rainbow Connection; Cloth Bags made by students in Home and Career Skills and 8th graders; Paper ornaments from the Art Classes at Thomas Marks, Jeannette Schull-Heasley, teacher; also copies of the Lakemen "Spirit", school newspaper edited by Shannon Bohlman and advisor, Mrs. Porter.

For the many Senior Citizens who graduated in the 30's or 40's, the breakfast, exhibits, and demonstrations provide a revealing and exciting look at how the modern generation is progressing and mastering new ideas and skills for tomorrow.

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SPECIAL NOTICE:

For anyone who may have not renewed their dues for 1996, a third and last application for renewal is attached to the bottom of this page. Anyone in arrears may not receive the February issue of the Newsletter. Anne Faery, Membership Chrm., thanks all who renewed dues promptly.

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IN MEMORIAM:

Helen French, 89, a former English teacher at Wilson High School, died Nov. 27, 1995, at the Harborview Health Care Center in Moorehead City, NC.

She was a member of St. John's Episcopal Church in Wilson, and an Honorary member of the Wilson Historical Society. In 1978, she served as museum librarian.

She is survived by a son, Anthony (Sharan) French of Moorehead City; 3 grandchildren and 4 great grandchildren.

Memorial Services were held in December at St. John's Episcopal Church in Wilson with Rev. Allison Martin officiating.

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Joanne Wiltse of Wilson died Dec. 5, 1995, after a long illness. She attended the Exley United Methodist Church, and joined the Wilson Historical Society in 1972.

She was active in youth organizations, and the first woman in the former Lewiston Trail Council, B.S.A., to receive a Boy Scout Wood Badge Beads. She was a Den Mother for Cub Pack 21, and advance chairman for troop 67, Boy Scouts. She was a member of the Lakeshore Mothers Club, and was awarded an Honorary Life Membership in the Thomas Mark's PTA. She was well known in the Wilson Lion Club Plays, and gave a memorable performance in "Fiddler on the Roof."

She is survived by her husband, Donald Wiltse; 3 sons, Merle (Amy) Wiltse of Wilson; Richard Wiltse of Boynton Beach, FL; and Mark (Karen) Wiltse of Raleigh, NC; one brother, Dr. William (Janice) Johnstone of Richmond, VA; one sister, Mary (Wayne) Smith of Silver Springs, MD; five grandchildren, William and Nicholas Ketch; and Samantha, Nathan, and Devyn Wiltse.

A Memorial Service was held at Exley United Methodist Church with Rev. Sue Kaiser officiating.

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It was also brought to our attention that Ruth Moore of Clarence Center died recently. She was the wife of John Moore who died in April, 1990. They joined the Wilson Society in 1985.

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FINAL THOUGHT: I can keep a secret, but those I tell it to never can.

1996.....MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION.....1996

NAME..... Ph:()..... NEW..... RENEWAL.....

ADDRESS..... P.O. Box..... CITY.....ZIP.....

COUPLE \$8.00..... SINGLE \$5.00..... JR.(under 18) \$1.00..... LIFE \$150.....

LIFE (COUPLE) \$250..... ENDOWMENT FUND \$..... BUILDING FUND \$..... HONORARY (FREE).....

(85 yrs. plus)

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$.....

Please make all checks payable to the WILSON HISTORICAL SOCIETY and return to:

ANNE A. FAERY, P.O. BOX 731 WILSON, NEW YORK 14172

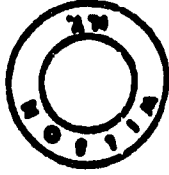
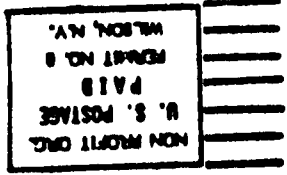


February/March 1996 Vol. 25 No. 2
(Coleman Printing)

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

NEWSLETTER

Wilson Historical Society
Wilson, New York 14172-9763



Feb/March 1996

WILSON HAD OPERA HOUSE FOR 25 YEARS:

In 1893, the former Methodist Wesley Chapel, which was moved to the lot next to the former Luther Wilson house at the southeast corner of Young and Lake Streets, was purchased by William Albright who opened up a farm implement business there.

A little while later, Mr. Albright decided to remodel the building and constructed a second floor where the Albright Opera House got its start.

The only thing left on the former Chapel to show that it had once been a House of Worship, was the distinctive stained glass church window centered above the implement shop.

Entrance to the second floor was gained by an outside stairway that Albright built along the north side of the building. Just inside the entranceway was a ticket office where tickets could be purchased and ushers showed you to your seats.

There was a balcony along the west side of the opera house which ran parallel to Lake Street, and the building was lighted with large kerosine lamps suspended from the ceiling. When electricity became available, the lamps were electrified, and footlights installed along the stage.

The stage was at the east end of the theater with a piano and bench at the north wing, and several curtain drops showed various things like spring, fall, or living room scenes.

Over a period covering about 25 years, a variety of entertainment was enjoyed at Wilson's "Old O'pry House", and local organizations such as the Delphic Circle sponsored many home talent plays there. The star of their productions was usually Dessie Tugwell, mother of Rex Tugwell of political fame.

Many of the home talent plays were directed by Mrs. Alma Farrel, and short skits were often enjoyed between acts. A tap-dancing team starring Tommy Costello, son of a local barber, was very popular at the time.

Traveling Circuits were booked through a theatrical agency, and generally scheduled as main attractions.

One show, "Uncle Tom's Cabin", created quite a stir one day when the two Great Danes who were supposed to rescue "Little Eva" when she crossed the river over floating blocks of ice, came up missing. It was feared the show would be unable to start on time.

Fortunately, the dogs were found running loose around the Wilson Boathouse, and were returned to the Opera House shortly before curtain time.

The late Harold Albright recalled one time when he was a boy, that medicine shows were often held during regular performances. He remembered how they used to make their "medicine" at Borngraeber's well which stood behind their house between the Methodist Church and the Opera House. He said they would add a few herbs to a lot of water, bottle it up, then peddle it to gullible customers.

The performances that Harold liked best were the hypnotist shows. One time a member of the cast was put in a trance and, as he lay there, the hypnotist placed his hands over his body. Then, raising his arms the body would rise from where he laid. The hypnotist would then pass a large hoop around the length of the actor's body while the audience clapped and cheered.

While helping to clean up the place the next morning, Harold noticed two thin wires hanging from the ceiling, and narrow slots in the hoop which allowed the wire to pass through it. He said, however, that even though he knew the secret of the "floating body", he still thought it was a great show.

The Opera House was closed when it became hard to engage traveling troupes of actors, and William Albright sold the Opera House and Farm Equipment business to Arthur Loomis and Clyde Putnam. They operated the business for about 3 years, then sold out to Frank Howell.

Mr. Howell opened up a Ford Agency on the first floor, and rented the second floor to Little & Perry who opened up a printing shop. They unsuccessfully tried to compete with the Wilson "Star".

The Opera House era ended in the early 1930's when fire of undetermined origin burned down the building that was originally known as the Wesley Chapel.

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1996 QUILT READY:

Betty Stimson has reported that an "Irish Ring" quilt has been completed for this year's Memorial Day Fair which will be held Monday, May 27, 1996. Drawings will also be held for an Afghan, Woodcarving, "Sketch Book" and Historical Society Cookbooks.

If you would care to participate in this year's event, please fill out the coupons enclosed with this Newsletter, and mail or give to: Betty Stimson, Box 162, Wilson, NY 14172.

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BON MOT: Don't let your possessions possess you.

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NEW LIFE MEMBER:

Dennis Brydges of Reston, Va., has joined the Life Membership Class of the Wilson Historical Society. Dennis is the son of the late Senator Earl W. and Eleanor Mahoney Brydges of Wilson.

Dennis graduated from Wilson High School in 1957 and received his BA and MA at the Universities of Syracuse and North Carolina.

He was married to Evelyn L. (Olson), and they have two children, a son, D. Todd Brydges who was born June 28, 1967 at Kathmandu, Nepal, and a daughter, Cristina L. Brydges, who was born in San Salvador on November 13, 1970.

The Brydges attend the St. Thomas A. Becket Church at Reston, Va., and are members of the Bretton Woods Club in Germantown, Maryland.

Dennis graduated from the Officer Candidate School at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, and served two years as an artillery officer. He also received infantry training at Fort Riley, Kansas.

He has worked for the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) for the past 30 years and has received assignments around the world.

The FAO promotes international agricultural development, improved nutrition, increased food production, and international cooperation on matters pertaining to food standards, fair trade, environmental management, and conservation of genetic resources.

The FAO serves 171 member nations with worldwide headquarters in Rome, Italy. The North American Office in Washington, DC, is where Dennis is currently assigned.

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BOARD REPORTS-December:

Don Burrows, Pres., reported that the town of Wilson has agreed to pay all expenses to tile drain the town's five acres of land which was donated for the use of the Wilson Historical Society by Dr. and Mrs. George Badger of Lockport.

Lois Barnum read a letter from Jan Sporleder regarding the need for supplies in the Barnum Building, and Lois will report back to Jan. Jan will be allowed to buy necessary items.

A motion was made to spend up to \$500 for stone to make driveway to new storage building. Roger Mawhiney did the job for less than \$400.

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RECENT ACQUISITIONS:

William Munch of Gibsonton, Fl., has donated following publications: U.S. & J. editions, 11/10/15, & 12/29/15; 1943 "Crest"; Fair Premium List, 1950-51; Wilson Fire Co. #1 Field Day Bulletins, 1947, 1949, 1953, (for Bill & Evelyn); 1927 Niag. Co. Fair Driver ticket; 1939 Exhibition card; Henry Munch Life Membership card in Niag. Co. Agricultural Soc. and fair exhibit tickets for Evelyn Munch.

Barbara Ingeram Eggert, Barker: School desk for Randall Road Schoolhouse.

Jean Carrigan Richards, Lockport: Bushel apple measure; and a silk handkerchief sent by Harry Biggins to Pearl Biggins Carrigan from France during World War I.

Diane and Peter Zable: Boy's White Satin two piece suit.

Lois Barnum: Tool and Rings to place in pig's nose to keep them from rooting; also top for sprinkling bottle.

Mrs. Barbara Cowan, Arizona: Hamilton & Clark give-away Flour Sifter that belonged to Ruth Gale.

Cynthia Wilson: Three zerox copies of "Wilson House Holds Link to the Past", 1947; "Restoration of Wilson House and Opening under Dwight Wilson". Wilson in 1869 by Dwight Wilson, and Gazette article on Wilson House, 1947.

Terry and Mitch Stevenson: Christmas card, 1916; 7 vols. Encyclopedia of Etiquette; Oxford Bible; Washington Irving's Sketchbook, 1909; Emerson's Essays, 1922; 5 Spiritual Books; Panama Canal, 1919; and 5 booklets of Wilson High School Programs.

Dorothy Maxfield: Small Boy's Yellow Suit, ca. 1930.

Anne Argue Faery: Case of Medical Supplies used by her father, Dr. John F. Argue.

Eleanor Myers: Three Wilson High School Awards, cloth; Box Ration Tokens; Ration Stamps; 2 sheets of gas ration stamps; 1984-1985 Desk calendars; Wm Ganshaw Insurance Advertisements, 6 pens, 3 pencils; 5 photos of Museum Buildings; 29 photos showing construction of Storage Bldg.

Wilson High School Library: Girl Scout Handbook, 1948; G. S. International Handbook, 1957; Brownie and Junior Girl Scout Handbooks, 1977; and Girl Scout Badges and Signs, 1980.

Thomas E. Marks: Little Leaf Linden, tribute to Gertrude and Edward Marks; Crimson King Maple, tribute to Lawrence and Charlotte Pease; and Master Locust Tree, tribute to Marion and Leonard Tabor.

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BALL DROP AT "LITTLE APPLE":

New York City claims the name of "Big Apple", but Wilson is perhaps better named the "Little Apple" since it is located in the heart of one of the biggest and best apple-growing counties in New York State.

However, there is nothing little about Wilson's apple which may be seen each year at the Wilson House where it is dropped on New Year's Eve from Floyd Clark's large crane. Thousands have braved the elements to watch the "apple" as it slowly drops to the ground to light up the New Year.

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NEW MEMBERS:

It is a pleasure to welcome the following new members into the Wilson Historical Society; Daniel T. Richards of Wilson; Donna Huehl of Huron, South Dakota; Denise Barlow of Rapid City, South Dakota; and Mary Lynn Barden of Watertown, NY.

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BRIDGE COLLAPSE:

In 1938, the Falls-View Bridge, completed in 1898, gave way under a tremendous ice-jam that undermined its foundations. The bridge was believed indestructible by local inhabitants, but lasted only forty years.

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SOUNDINGS: Sometimes it's good to pause in the pursuit of happiness, and just be happy.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS:

The Board of Directors approved the following appointments at the January 10th meeting: Dorothy Maxfield, curator; Dan King, finance chairman; Eleanor Myers, Barnum Building Chrm., Ed Allgeier, Fittro Shop; Elton Kropp, grounds; Gary Fitch, construction; Hoyt and Norie Desso, Railroad Depot; Art Schnoor, planning board Chrm., and Nominating Comm. Chrm.; Wally Goodman and Clark Stimson, Dr. Argue Memorial Car Building; Darrel Smith, Caboose; Micky Hunter, Breezeway and Shelter; and Dan King, New Storage Building.

Members of the 1996 Memorial Day Fair Committee will be: Lois Barnum, Chrm., Gary Fitch, Nettie Stimson and Darrell Smith.

Trustees to Dec. 31, 1996 are: Anne A. Faery; Arthur Schnoor, and Darrell Smith; trustees to Dec. 31, 1997 are Nettie Stimson, Carole Schnoor, and Lois Barnum; trustees to Dec. 31, 1998 are Ollie Clark, Floyl Clark, and Wally Goodman.

Other officers and chairmen selected by the Nominating Committee were in the January letter.

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SCHOOLHOUSE GETS GREEN LIGHT:

A \$4,000 dollar check, the first of three, has been received to move the Randall Road Schoolhouse to the museum grounds, and it is hoped to have the school moved by this Spring. The \$12,000 grant, originally approved over two years ago, was recently released by the State.

The historical society has agreed to have the foundation put it, and the Farley Riggers of Lockport have been engaged to move the building and put it in position.

The schoolhouse committee, chaired by Jean Figura and Wanda Burrows, has not been idle while waiting for the grant to come through. They have been busy raising funds, collecting books, old school desks, and other related materials needed to furnish the schoolhouse.

They have also applied for and received a \$500 grant from the Council on Arts to purchase books, supplies.

Some teachers have already expressed an interest in holding special classes there when the building is fixed up so that youngsters may experience first hand the conditions under which their grandparents were taught many years ago.. At one time, Wilson had 18 school districts in the township.

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GENEROUS RESPONSE:

There was a very good response to the society's recent appeal for funds to help build the new storage building. Sixty-two members and friends sent in contributions, and the total received as of December 31, 1995 was \$3,005.00 dollars.

We thank the following persons who made cash donations, and for their interest in helping to preserve the museum complex in Wilson: (Names listed in order donations were received.)

James Harold; J.E. Scherrer; Calvin Schultz; Norman O'Brien; Earle Charles, Jr; Neil Arnold; Katherine Hayes; Ernestine Walpole; Rev. Ernest Kerrison; William Teiper; Marie Hewitt; Richard Schmidle; Lloyd Evans; Blanche Wilson; Gertrude Marks; Pamela Groff; Thelma Patterson; Ruth Phillips; Charles Horton, John Eastman; Donald Croop; and Walter Moxham, Jr.

Lee Bickford; Arthur Schnoor; George Collins; A.H. Gale, Jr; Veronica Ransom; Bill Fritton; Mary Lou Young; Rebecca Hill; V.P. Cummings; George Cruickshank; Robert Thomas; Beverly Woolson; Frank Rodgers; Robert Haley; Joseph Geiser; Ronald Zauner; Elton Kropp; Donna Fritton; David Donner; Janet Naslund; Harry Brown; and Norman MacAskill.

Also, Elma McGrath; LaMont Ridley; Howard Parker; Leah Bigalow; John Cowan; Fenton Cole; Pauline Kurtz; Lester Clark; Mark Singer; Lee Ann Hoffman; Ralph Austin; Eloise Culverwell; Janeta Fredericks; Winifred Fischer; Celeste Crawford; Robert Zortman; John Young; Anonymous.

(If anyone is omitted we will try to include them in the next Newsletter.)

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THUMBNAIL SKETCH:

Hiram B. Tabor, M.D., was born Nov. 21, 1813, at Topham, VT., and attended the Woodstock Medical College where he received his degree. He first moved to Grand Isle, VY., then to Wilson where he opened up a medical office at 240 Lake Street.

His first wife, Charlotte Gifford, died with typhoid fever in 1839, and he remarried Sarah J. McNitt. They had five children, Elbertine, 1842; Justine, 1845; Eldridge, 1849; Corienne, 1853; and Fred, 1855. His 2nd wife, Sarah, was born in Somerset in 1818 and died in Wilson in 1893.

Dr. Tabor acquired land from Simon Sheldon and built his home adjoining the Creek on the northwest side. He practised medicine at this site for about 45 years, however, medicine was not his only interest. He was one of the of the founding trustees of the Greenwood Cemetery Association when it was organized in 1850. He was also a member of the Board of the old Collegiate Institute, and was instrumental in having it closed and consolidated with Union Free School District No. 1.

He was a member of the Niag. Co. Medical Association and once served as its President. He a;so served as Coroner of Niagara County, and was a member of Ontario Lodge #376 F&AM of Wilson.

He was also Wilson Postmaster from June 2, 1855 to Dec. 24, 1859, and was Secretary of Exley Methodist Church when the present church was erected under Rev. F.D.T. Bickley.

In 1848, a bridge was built over the branch of 12 Mile Creek where it crosses Lake Street, but on old maps the stream was referred to as the State Ditch. Since the bridge was in close proximity to Dr. Tabor's home, it was soon referred to as the Tabor Bridge.

In 1976, a historic marker was placed next to the bridge by the Wilson Historical Society, and former Mayor Kenneth Welker of Wilson spoke at the dedication.

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MEETINGS:

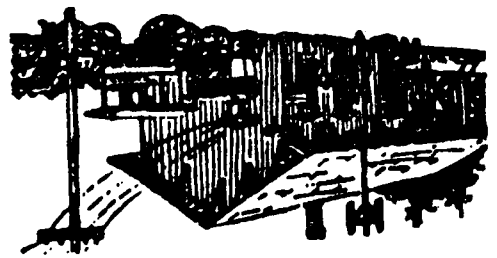
The Board of Directors will meet Wednesday evening on Feb. 14th and March 13th, museum, 7:30.

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FINAL THOUGHT:

There is no good advice you can give to everyone...other than to always remember to put the shower curtain inside the tub.

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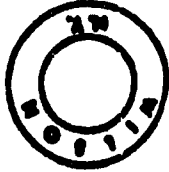
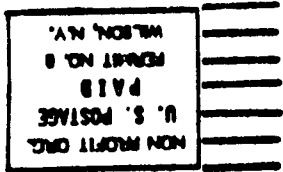


(Coleman Printing)
April 1996 Vol. 25 No. 3

DONALD W. CROPP, Editor

NEWSLETTER

Wilson Historical Society
Wilson, New York 14172-9763



April, 1996

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS:

The year 1996 marks the 25th year that the Wilson Historical Society has been operating in the town of Wilson, and many persons feel that a lot has been accomplished in those years. Hundreds of donors have filled the museum with thousands of artifacts and memorabilia that reflect the history of the local community and, though some displays may not be up to par with those exhibited in larger, better financed museums, it is apparent that most visitors to the Wilson Museum are well pleased with what they see.

The continued success of the museum, however, depends on the initiative of our officers and museum committee which is headed up by Dorothy Maxfield, curator. Other staff members include Hoyt and Norie Desso, depot; Ed Allgeier, Fittro Shop; Eleanor Myers, Barnum Building; Micky Hunter, Breezeway & Shelter; Clark Stimson & Wally Goodman, Argue Car Building; Darrell Smith, Caboose; Elton Kropp, Grounds; Lois Jennings, Acquisitions; Shirley Evans, Library; Mary Schultz, Ways & Means; Dan King Storage Barn; and Wanda Burrows, Schoolhouse.

Every year, the cost of maintaining the museum complex has gone up and, as new buildings and lands have been added, the additional upkeep has placed a heavy burden on our volunteers.

Thanks to an active Memorial Day Fair Committee, many successful fairs have helped to keep the historical society solvent, but it has been the dozens of members and friends throughout the community who have pitched in to make the fairs a success. With their continued support, it will be possible to hold another successful fair on May 27, 1996.

When the historical society was organized in 1972, Dr. John Argue donated the old 1912 depot to the town as a museum and meeting place for the historical society. When Whitney Barnum, town supervisor, accepted the property for the town, he pledged that the town would work with the society to maintain the premises. That pledge has been kept, and when the society has needed assistance, the town has provided it with special grants and services.

The donation of 4½ acres of land from Dr. George Badger of Lockport, made it possible to erect the transportation buildings needed to house the antique cars donated by Dr. Argue. The society was also given a generous boost on these projects when Ed Hastings, local contractor, provided the labor for the cement work at no cost. Labor for erecting the roof was also provided at no cost through the efforts of Ollie Clark and members of the Carpenter's Union.

The donation of the extra land also provided for an enlarged park which was tile drained, seeded, and planted to Memorial trees, making it an excellent place to hold an expanded "flea" market on Memorial Day. Also, a new, larger car building was constructed with a breezeway connecting it to the original car building. The recently constructed Shelter was financed by the Town and constructed with labor donated by B.O.E.C.s. Other improvements included re-siding and painting the Caboose; re-siding and putting new roof on Fittro Shop; installing cement flooring in both Fittro Shop and Shelter; replacing roof shingles on depot; and erection of a new storage barn. The latest project pending will be to accept, from the town, the old Randall Road Schoolhouse.

Obviously, the historical society needs everyone's help to keep going, and with your continued participation the job can be done. If you are a member of the society, paying your dues promptly is very important. Even if you do not get involved in society activities, payment of dues gives a much-needed boost to the treasury. Other ways you can help is to support the Bake Sale on election day, and participate in the annual quilt-drawing at the Fair--please return your ticket stubs to Betty Stimson promptly. The beautiful quilt is on the wall in Town Hall.

Perhaps the most important way you can back the society is to volunteer a helping hand at the Fair. There are dozens of things you could do such as selling concession tickets, dispensing foods and drinks, cleaning tables, checking supplies, restrooms, etc., or being a museum "sitter". If you are willing to help out an hour or two, we've a place for you.

If you're available to help, please call Lois Barnum, Chrm., (751-6665) and let her know.

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A GENTLE REMINDER:

The visiting season will soon be upon us--two busloads are already scheduled. The museum will re-open Sunday afternoon, April 14th, so now is the time to clean up and get rid of the clutter. When out-of-town visitors and area residents visit the Wilson Museum, we should try to put our best face forward. A little time spent straightening up will not only improve the museum's appearance, but will also improve the impression visitors have of Wilson.

It is suggested that all museum chairmen inspect their areas now, and make sure that the premises you are in charge of don't fall short of expectations.

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BON MOT: If leaders don't lead, nothing happens.

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BASKETBALL RECOLLECTIONS:

Mr. Harold Donner of Ithaca, N.Y., recently sent a framed "W" to the Wilson Museum--one of the first athletic letters ever awarded by the Wilson High School for basketball. It was in 1927, after Principal McIlroy retired, that the new Principal, Arthur Blemaster, decided to organize a high school basketball team. The team joined a local league consisting of teams from Barker, Lyndonville, Youngstown, and Wilson. Each team played the other school teams twice, and the Wilson home games were played in the old hall back of the former Middleton Drugstore, (Now Okie's). Harold Donner was Manager of the Wilson team, and some of the players were Al Wilson, "Stu" Welker, "Dutch" Cornell, Howard Pease, Kenny Welker, and Clarence Johnson. Wilson lost all its games that first year except the last one played with Lyndonville, All members of the team were awarded letters, however, like the one just sent to the Wilson Museum by Mr. Donner. Harold's job as Manager consisted of keeping score at the games, as well as writing reports for the local papers, and other duties. He recalled that the girls in Wilson also had a basketball team coached by Lydia Southard, but he is not quite sure the year it was organized.

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NEW LIFE MEMBER:

We welcome Carol Fenn Tabler of Fort Myers, Florida, who recently joined the Wilson Historical Society as a Life Member. Carol is the daughter of Frank and Katherine Bigelow Fenn, and was born October 21, 1920 at Rodman, Iowa. She graduated from Wilson High School with the Class of '37, and received her R.N. in 1941 at the School of Nursing at Myer Memorial Hospital, Buffalo. She also attended the University of Buffalo, and the Utica College Div. of Syracuse University. Her first husband, Joseph Burek, died in 1952 and she remarried Kenneth A. Tabler, PHD, who did research in Genetics for the Dairy Industry. He was also a statistician for the Dept. of Education in Washington, DC. The Tablers attend the Covenant Presbyterian Church in Fort Myers, and do volunteer work for the Southwest Florida Symphony. They are also members of Friendship Force, the world wide organization founded by Rosalyn and Pres. Jimmy Carter to provide peace and friendship throughout the world. Carol is also a member of the Lawrence Kearney Chapter, D.A.R., and Lee County Genealogical Society and New England Genealogical Society. She has two children, Mary Katherine Burek Cardinale, who graduated from Syracuse University. She received her MA at the College of St. Rose, Albany, NY., and is currently studying for her doctorate. Carol Lynne Burek Smith, PHD, does research and teaches at John Hopkins University in Baltimore. Her grandchildren, Nicholas Cardinale, MD, is a Lieut. in the Navy and currently stationed at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Christopher Cardinale is a professional pilot and corrosion specialist for Phillips Petroleum at Pampas, Texas. Michael Cardinale, is a senior at Albany Law School.

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1996 MEMBERSHIP ROLL:

A new membership roll for active members of the society has been compiled by Anne Faery, Membership Chrm., and all dues-paying members should have received a copy by now. In order to get your roll up to date, please add the following: Nan and Wes Johnson, Leesburg, FL; Janet Welch, Santa Cruz, CA; Norma Ward, 751-9887; and Donald and Ruth Weaver, 751-6440. As of March, 1996, there are 515 members in the society, and 400 copies of the Newsletter are mailed out each month--one to a family.

* * * * *

BITS & PIECES:

Congratulations to Life Member, Florence Schultz, who says that she is a "cool" 94 now. Incidentally, Florence's phone number was incorrect on the membership roll--you may call her at 434-8147. This goes double for Mabel Burrows, Honorary Member, who has celebrated her 92nd. Carol Tabler of Fort Myers, Fl., writes, "It is really fantastic the way the museum is growing. I would not be at all surprised in the future to see it become, at the very least, a major state museum." Marj Stockwell Ivanek of Dunnellon, FL., writes, "The Newsletter brings me back to Wilson time and time again--even if only in memory."

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MEMBER IN THE NEWS:

Dr. James Hohensee, a Life Member of the Wilson Historical Society, has been elected 1996 president of Inter Community Memorial Hospital's medical staff. Dr. Hohensee has an office at 335 High Street, Wilson, and specializes in family practice medicine. He received his medical degree from SUNY at Buffalo School of Medicine, and is a member of Family Practice Physicians, American Medical Association, and the Medical Society of Niagara County. Dr. Hohensee has been a member of the historical society since June, 1992.

* * * * *

Carole Schnoor, a trustee of the Wilson Historical Society, was awarded an Honorary Life membership in the Thomas Marks PTA at the Founder's Day celebration held in the school recently.

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MUSEUM TO RE-OPEN:

The Wilson Museum will re-open Sunday, April 14th, from 2-4pm, and Virginia Strablow, Hostess Chrm., has announced that June and Elton Kropp will be on duty to greet visitors. On April 21st, John and Jane Demmin will be host and hostess, and Elton Kropp will be responsible for opening the museum. On April 25th, Ollie Clark will open the museum, and he and Helen will greet visitors.

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SOUNDINGS: Spring is wonderful. It makes you feel young enough to do all the things you're old enough to know you can't.

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BASILS DONATE LAND:

The Basil Co. property, which joined the museum property on the south side of the Wilson Historical Society grounds, has been donated to the society by Donald and Mary Ann Basil of Wilson. As with other property acquired by the historical society, the land has been accepted by the Wilson Town Board.

The society is especially grateful to the Basils, because the land donated comes to within one foot of the railroad depot.

In appreciation of their generous contribution, the society's Board of Directors voted unanimously to give Mr. and Mrs. Basil Life Memberships in the Wilson Historical Society.

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UPDATE:

The following names were omitted from the list of donors to the building fund in the last Newsletter: Gary Pettit, Sara Berry, and Marj Ivanek.

In order to bring your membership roll up to date, you should add the following names: Nan and Wes Johnson, Leesburg, FL; Janet Welch, Santa Cruz, CA; Norma Ward 751-9887; and Don and Ruth Weaver, 751-6440.

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IN MEMORIAM:

Dr. George W. Badger, formerly of Wilson, died Jan. 29, 1996, at Lockport. He received his D.V.M. at Cornell University, Class of '35, and practised his profession in Wilson & Lockport.

He was a Life member of the Wilson Historical Society, and made two generous donations of land to the society totaling nearly 10 acres. This provided space enabling the society to erect two large display buildings as well as a larger area for their annual "flea" market.

Dr. Badger leaves his wife, Rosemary Gaffney Badger, Lockport; a son, James (Bonita) Badger of Lockport; and daughters, Margaret (Raymond) Magno of Cambridge, MA; Lucia Kathryn Badger of Boston, MA; and Kristen Elizabeth Badger of Cambridge, MA, also 6 grandchildren.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated at St. John the Baptist Church, and interment was in Greenwood Cemetery at Wilson.

* * * * *

Franklin Bickford, 80, of Aiken, SC, died Jan. 30, 1996, after a long illness. He was a native of Wilson, the son of Edgar and Evelyn Carrigan Bickford.

He was a grape grower on the Ridge at Ransomville for over 40 years, and moved to Aiken a year ago. He was a member of the Dickersonville U.M. Church, and Past Pres. of the Ransomville Lions Club. He joined the Wilson His. Soc. in 1987. He was also an army veteran, World War II, and received the Bronze Star with Oak Leaf Cluster while serving with the 45th Infantry Div. in the European Theater, North Africa, Sicily, and Italy.

He is survived by two sons, Dennis (Barbara) Bickford of Aiken; William Bickford of Ransomville; also a brother, Lee Bickford of Niagara Falls, and 3 grandchildren.

Burial was in North Ridge Cemetery with Rev. Lionel McCauley officiating.

* * * * *

Claude E. Lampman, 75, died at home Feb. 24, 1996, after a long illness. He was an army air force veteran of World War II, and retired as a machinist from Dupont after 40 years service. He later taught adult classes in stained glass design and crafting in area schools.

He was a member of Concordia Lutheran Church of Wilson; the Newfane Golden Age Club; the Gasport Jet Set; Squares That Care Dancing; and bowled with the rural retirees, Townline Bowl. He joined the Wilson Historical Society in 1986.

He is survived by his wife, Ruth Arfmann Lampman; a son, Rev. David (Linda Lowery) Lampman of Cincinnati, O; and a daughter, Cristina Lampman of Olcott; also 2 grandchildren.

Services were conducted at Trinity Lutheran Church, Lockport, with Rev. Otto Struckman and Rev. Wayne Jago officiating. Burial was in Trinity Lutheran Cemetery, Lockport.

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APRIL PROGRAM:

One of the nicer programs given last year at the museum was a presentation by "Kindred" on the history and melodies of old Irish songs. Miles Linnabery, Program Chrm., has arranged for David and Felicia Meyers of Williamsville to return again on April 15th when "Kindred" will present another program encompassing a later period of Irish songs and melodies.

This program will be the 1st one in 1996 after a three month shut-down for winter, so it is hoped that everyone will throw off the winter "blahs" and start the year off right.

We also wish to emphasize that all meetings of the Wilson Historical Society are open to the public, so remember the date, April 15th, 7:30 Pm. at the Wilson Museum.

Following the meeting, lite refreshments will be served by Sue Cruickshank & Celeste Crawford.

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THUMBNAIL SKETCH:

Donald J. Munch, a Life Member of the society, was born Aug. 27, 1934, the 3rd son of the late Ernest and Evelyn Munch, Chestnut Rd., Wilson. He was delivered by Dr. John Burns at the Evelyn Bickford home on route 425.

Don attended the Dist. 7 schoolhouse on Chestnut Rd., and was taught by Dorothy Swick Halstead. He went to Wilson Central School when Dist. 7 was closed, and graduated from Wilson High School in 1952.

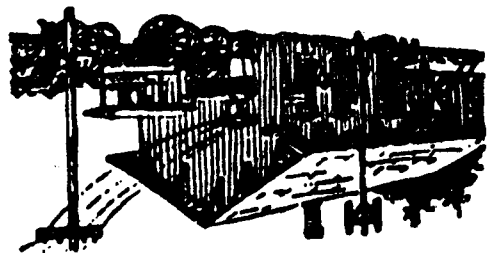
He served 2 years in the U.S. Army, and then became a State Trooper serving at various posts throughout the state. During his 25 years with the State Police he was a Senior Investigator in charge of the Bureau of Criminal Investigation in Chautauqua County. He was later employed in the security department of Niagara Mowahk.

Don married Retha Bates of South Plymouth, NY, and they brought up 4 sons at their home on Lake Shore Drive, Irving, NY. Their youngest son was Valedictorian at Lakeshore High School in 1987.

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LIONS CLUB EASTER EGG HUNT: MUSEUM GROUNDS: SATURDAY; APRIL 6th: 12 NOON: MEET "EASTER BUNNY".

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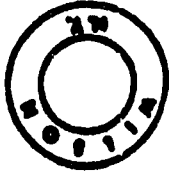
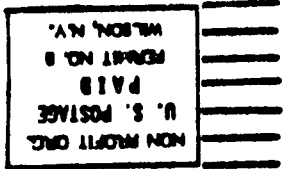


May 1996 Vol 25 No 4
(Coleman Printing)

DONALD W. CROOK, Editor

NEWSLETTER

Wilson Historical Society
Wilson, New York 14172-9763



May 1996

1996 MEMORIAL DAY FAIR:

The time is growing close at hand for the 24th annual Memorial Day Fair which will be held on the Wilson Historical Society museum grounds, Rt. 425, on Monday, May 27th, from 9 to 5PM.

Good food has always been a top priority at the annual fair, and this year Chiavetta's delicious Chicken Bar-B-Que will be served from 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Another favorite, Beef on Weck, will be featured along with Homemade Pies.

There will also be a variety of snack foods available such as "Dutch Country" Funnel Cakes; Hot Dogs; Cotton Candy; Popcorn; Lemonade; Sno Cones; Coffee and Donuts; and Pepsi.

Two hundred fifty Vendors are expected this year, and they should be set-up for business when the fair officially opens at 9:00 AM.

Special entertainment will feature the Niagara Experience Players, a musical hit at last year's fair; the adroit music of Jim Waldron at the piano; and, if weather permits, one or two jumps by the Frontier Sky Divers.

Dave Marmon, WLVL Lockport, will again broadcast from the grounds in the morning with his timely comments and interviews with fair-goers.

Since Memorial Day is the time designated each year to honor the servicemen and women who gave their lives for their Country, members of Wilson's Martin F. Jennings American Legion Post #836, will have a ceremony at Noon by the Veteran's Monument and Flagpole. Post Commander, John Demmin, will conduct the service, and the public is invited to participate in this solemn occasion. The Wilson High School Band is also expected to be present.

Attractions for the children will include free balloons; pony rides; petting zoo; and a special "Moonwalk/Bounce". Pony rides and zoo will be provided by Ken and Debbie Hill of Sanborn.

In the depot, regular exhibits will be on display, also a rug weaving demonstration by Winnie Fischer, our loom expert. In addition, Eleanor Myers, town historian, and Marian Campbell, will display old copies of the Wilson High School "Crest" so oldsters can turn back the pages of time and see what they looked like when they graduated.

A special display of gas powered engines has been arranged for by "Skippy" Pettit of Wilson, and will include a wood-planing unit, belt powered by a tractor; a gas powered washing machine; water wheel; miniature Hay Baler; gas powered water pumps; eight miscellaneous farm gas engines, and possibly a Log Saw (drag saw).

There will also be an antique car show including the society's models in the Dr. Argue Memorial Building.

The annual quilt drawing has been one of the society's more popular projects, and this year's "Irish Chain" was quilted by Betty Stimson of Wilson. The 2nd prize will be a beautiful white, hand crocheted Afghan made by Blanche Wilson of East Wilson, and other prizes will include a "Wilson Sketchbook", Woodcarving, and two Cookbooks.

The society will provide free shuttle bus service from village parking areas at the schools, Exley United Methodist Church, and town and village parking lots. Visitors may flag down a bus anywhere enroute.

Fair goers may rest easy because a Wilson Volunteer Ambulance Crew will be parked on the grounds to administer first aid should anyone require their services.

Planning and arranging for the fair has mostly been directed by the society's appointed Fair Committee: Ron Zauner, Lois Barnum, Nettie Stimson, Gary Fitch, and Darrell Smith, however, bringing the fair to a successful conclusion will also depend on the following area chairmen: Shirley Hunter and Shirley Linnenbank, Chicken Bar-B-Que; Althea Montgomery, Beef on Weck; Pam Groff, Homemade Pies; Dale Schlyer, Hot Dogs; Darrell and Sally Smith, Funnel Cakes; Sara Berry, Coffee and Pepsi (Barnum Building); Linda and Joe Moran, Sno Cones; Bob and Mary Savigny, Pepsi; Melinda Hutchison, Cotton Candy; Dick and Sue Schultz, Popcorn and Lemonade; Judy Zauner, Coffee and Donuts; Nettie Stimson and Lois Barnum, Publicity; Gary Fitch, Tickets; Anne Faery, Memberships; Mary Schultz, Ways and Means; Dorothy Maxfield, Museum; Nettie Stimson, Vendors(754-7815); Ron Zauner, Vendor Spaces; Clark Stimson, Entertainment; Eleanor Myers, Displays; Winnie Fischer, Loom; Don Burrows, Shuttle Buses; Dan King, Parking; Bill and Jan Cyphert, Antique Cars; Ed Hastings, Cleanup; and Frank Massing, Night Watchman.

Traffic control will be handled by the town and village constables and the Niagara County Emergency Services.

The Wilson Historical Society thanks everyone for their cooperation and invites everyone to come to the fair on Memorial Day and have a great time.

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BON MOT: You never see a "U-Haul" behind a hearse.

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NEW LIFE MEMBERS:

Mary Ann Pietrowski Basil was born in Buffalo on April 17, 1937, the daughter of Frank and Pauline Czarnecka Pietrowski.

She attended the Bishop Colton High School and the S. Buffalo Mercy School of Surgical Technicians. Following her marriage to Donald Basil, they had six children, Donald, Marianne, Francine, David, Catherine, and Paul.

She and her husband attend Our Lady of the Rosary R.C. Church in Wilson, and Mary Ann is a former President of the Parism Council, and Founder of the Parism Folk Group.

From June, 1977 to January, 1991, Mary Ann was Executive Vice-President of the Basil Equipment Corporation in Wilson.

* * * * *

Donald J. Basil was born June 12, 1933, the son of George and Marion Lindeneau Basil of Buffalo, NY. He attended St. Agnes Grammar School; the Buffalo Technical High School; and took evening courses at E.C.C.C and Buffalo University.

He joined the U.S. Army and is a member of AALAS, American Legion Post #159, Venice, CA., and is a member of the Mission Valley Country Club.

From 1970 to 1977, Mr. Basil was Vice Pres. and Founder and 25% owner of Edmunds Manufacturing Co. of Wilson who designed washing equipment for hospitals, Universities; also soft drinks.

In 1977 through 1991, he was owner of the Basil Equipment Corp., world-wide manufacturer and designer of washing equipment for Pharmaceuticals, hospital research facilities, and at its peak the company had 110 employees and a capacity of 9,000,000 sales.

Mr. Basil sold his Co. to Amsco in January, 1991, then managed the company for Amsco until he retired, July 1, 1993. In 1992, under his management, Amsco had sales of 13,000,000 units.

Donald and Mary Ann currently spend 7 1/2 months at their home in Venice, Florida where they play a lot of golf and duplicate bridge.

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EASTER EGG HUNT:

The day before Easter may have been cool and breezy, but it didn't dampen the spirits of over 300 smiling children and their parents who showed up for the Lion Club/ Business Association Easter Egg Hunt held on the museum grounds.

Chairmen of the event were Jill Phillips and Kevin Cornell, and the well-organized "hunt" went off without a hitch. Children registered and received instructions in the Barnum Building and, after the hunt, returned there to turn in their "special" eggs for prizes.

Lions Club members, who did a fine job setting-up in the morning and cleaning up in the afternoon were: Steve Clark, Jim Brady, Doug Day, John Carpenter, Fred Lampman, Don Wiltse, Ernie Grenville, Ray Forsythe, Chuck Mircurio, and Terry O'Reilly.

Historical Society members attending were Eleanor Myers, Chrm. of the Barnum Building; Elton Kropp, Grounds Chrm.; also, Don Burrows, Pres., Darrell Smith, Ollie Clark & Don Croop, trustees.

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ROLL UPDATE:

To bring your membership roll up to date, add the names of Tim Schmiele, Ithaca, NY; Frances Gnage, Winter Haven, FL; and Diane Albright, 751-9920.

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IN MEMORIAM:

Lucile Campbell Kirchoff, 94, a native of Wilson, died at her home in Sanford, FL Feb. 11, '96. She was born June 9, 1901, the daughter of Daniel and Etta Hatch Campbell of Wilson.

She graduated from Wilson High in 1919, and taught Junior High at Lewiston and Wilson prior to marrying William Kirchoff. They moved to Sanford where she was a member of the Holy Cross Episcopal Church. She joined the Wilson His. Soc. in 1984 and became an honorary member in 1987.

Her husband, William, predeceased her in 1987, and she is survived by a son, William (Carole) of Sanford; 2 daughters, Nixie (Philip) Coleman of Oak Ridge, NC; and Gretchen (Ramsey) of Alexandria, VA; also a sister, Dora C. Wakeman of Ransomville, NY.

* * * * *

Gertrude Imson Marks, 92, an Honorary member of the Wilson His. Soc., died at home 3/15/96. She and her late husband, Edward T. Marks, operated the Marks Nursery in Wilson. She was a member of St. Andrews Episcopal Church; Past Matron of the Wilson Chapter, Order of the Eastern Star; Past Grand Officer of the N.Y. State Order of the Eastern Star; and member of the Executive Comm. of the Home Department, Niag. Co. Extension.

She is survived by a son, Thomas E. (June) Marks of Wilson; a daughter, Eva Lou (Earle) Charles of Tonawanda; also 3 grandchildren and 2 g. grandchildren.

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Lorine E. Allgeier, 77, died April 2, 1996, at Inter Community Hospital, Newfane. She was born in 1918 at Tonawanda, the daughter of John and Laura (Kibler) Kraus.

She was a Life Member of the Wilson His. Soc., and joined in 1982. Her husband, Ray, predeceased her in 1980, and she is survived by 2 sisters, Janet Kinzley and Pauline Delisle; also a brother in law, Edward (Marilyn) Allgeier of Wilson.

Funeral services were conducted by Rev. Sue Kaiser of Exley United Methodist Church, and burial was in Elmlawn Cemetery, Tonawanda.

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CONGRATULATIONS.....TO Jeanne Nablo & Richard Kennedy who were united in marriage at the Exley United Methodist Church in Wilson on May 4, 1996 at 2:00PM.

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SPECIAL FAIR NOTICE:

Sunday, May 26th, is the last day to get ready for the Memorial Day Fair in Wilson. Any donations of baked goods or home-made pies should be left at the Barnum Building, Museum grounds, Sunday afternoon, April 26th.

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SOUNDINGS: Everyone can take a lesson from the weather. It pays no attention to criticism.

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MAY PROGRAM:

Miles Linnabery will give a talk at the May 20, 1996 meeting of the Wilson Historical Soc., and his topic will be on the history of the Civil War unit, Battery M, 1st Regt., N. Y. Light Artillery. Following the talk, light refreshments will be served by Kathy Frerichs and Janet Naslund. Looking ahead, Miles reports that the June Dinner meeting will have a military theme.

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CENTENARIAN:

Frank Fenn of Ransomville, an Honorary member of the Wilson His. Soc., celebrated his 100th birthday on April 5, 1996.

Frank, along with his brother and two sisters, were raised on their grandfather's farm in Iowa which Frank later worked when his Dad died at an early age.

When he moved to Wilson he was well equipped to operate the Randall Road farm that he and his wife shared for over 60 years. It was there that they raised their three children, Carol, Francis, and Ward.

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LOOKIN' GOOD:

Wilson's Greenwood Cemetery looked very nice during the winter months with its many Christmas wreaths set-off with bright red bows. The Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Committee, Lions Club members, and town workers are to be complimented for the inovative way they have been improving the general appearance of the cemetery.

In March, the Wilson Town Board appointed the following residents to a one year term on the Cemetery Advisory Committee: Barbara Mosher, Chrm., Floyd Clark, Jean Figura, Marlene Martin, Dorothy Linnabery, Eleanor Myers, Rena Rohring, Donna Fritton, and Shirley Evans.

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HISTORICAL REPORTS FOR MARCH:

The Wilson Historical Society Board of Directors voted to give Elton Kropp authorization to purchase a two-wheel cart for use behind the society's lawn tractor. Money for the purchase was provided by Mr. and Mrs. Elwood Schultz of Ransomville who recently donated \$100 to the society in recognition of the fine work Elton has done supervising and helping to care for the society's ten acres of grounds.

It was also reported that two busloads of visitors plan to visit the museum. One group, the Oil City Tours of Pa., is expected June 1st, and the Camper-Niagara group from Lockport is expected Sept. 5th.

* * * * *

CABINET NEEDED:

Dorothy Maxfield, curator, would like to locate a china cabinet which would be of great use for arranging one of the exhibits at the museum. If anyone reading this has an old oak china cabinet that you would like to donate or sell to the Wilson museum, we would like to hear from you. Dorothy may be reached at 751-6311.

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MEMBERS IN THE NEWS:

Dr. David Gnage, who graduated from Wilson Central School in 1963, has been named Senior Officer of Finance and Administration at the International Campus, University of Arizona. Arizona International is a new public 4-year Liberal Arts Institution in Tucson, and will open for the fall 1996 semester. Dr. Gnage is the son of Donald and Frances (Carrigan) Gnage, long time residents of Wilson, now residing in Florida.

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Ruth Thomas was honored in April at the annual Laity Banquet of the United Methodist Church as one of the outstanding lay persons in the Batavia District.

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William McLaughlin, a trustee of the Ransomville Free Library and Life Member of the Wilson Historical Society, spoke on behalf of all libraries in Niagara County when he thanked members of the Niagara County Legislature for their continued support of the 11 libraries in the county.

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At a recent meeting of the village Board, Milton "Ollie" Clark was appointed deputy mayor of the village of Wilson; Berna Kent and Ann Horton were appointed to the Zoning Board of Appeals; and Charlton Bulmar and Norma Ward were appointed to the Planning Board..

* * * * *

MUSEUM HOSTS & HOSTESSES FOR MAY:

Virginia Strablow, Chrm., has announced that Art Schnoor will open the museum on May 5th, and that Melva and Ted Bull will greet visitors.

On May 12th, Don Croop will open museum and Tom and Helen Rodgers will be host and hostess.

May 19th, Hoyt Desso will open museum and Bill and Maxine Jones will be greeters.

Fair workers will open the museum on May 26th, and Cheryl Brown and Donna Fritton will watch the museum and greet any visitors. Museum hours on Sunday afternoons are always 2 to 4 Pm.

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GOOD OLD DAYS:

In response to an item in the last Newsletter, Marion Pettit said that she substituted on the 1926 Girls Basketball Team coached by Lydia Southard. She recalled that they also played in Middleton's Hall, and one time one of her opponents on the Youngstown Team got pretty rough. Marion noted that the girl had a real long pigtail, so, in retaliation, she yanked real hard on it. Needless to say, "scrappy" little Marion had a foul called on her.

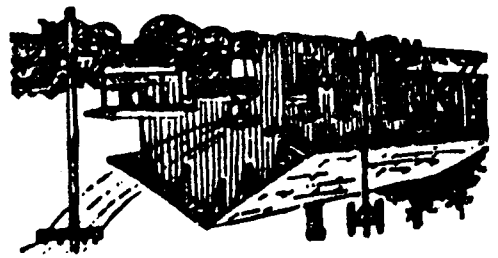
The following year, 1927, the girl's squad was composed of: Manager, Beatrice Demmin; Captain, Grace Waterman; Laura King; Lucille Treichler; Beatrice Geartz; Dorothy Schultz; Wilma Dunkley; and Coach, Marion Evans.

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FINAL THOUGHT:

Quarrels would not last long if the fault were only on one side.

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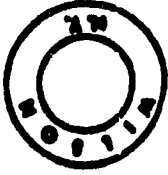
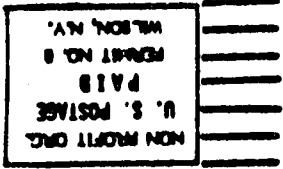


June 1996 VOL. 25 NO. 5
(Coleman Printing)

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

NEWSLETTER

WILSON HISTORICAL SOCIETY
WILSON, NEW YORK 14172-9763



June 1996

COMMUNITY BACKS SCHOOLHOUSE PROJECT:

A group of residents in the Wilson Community initiated the plan to see the old 1861 Randall Road Schoolhouse moved to the historical society museum grounds where it would be preserved as one of Wilson's most treasured traditions--the rural one room schoolhouse.

Most of the school houses that served children in the rural area have been converted into houses with the exception of the Randall Road School which was spared when it became a Community Centre.

Since the building belonged to the Wilson Central School District, the school board was approached by the community committee and the Board agreed to turn the building over to the Town of Wilson.

In order to move the building to the museum grounds, a steering committee composed of Jean Figura, Chrm., Wanda Burrows, Secy., Janet Sporleder, Cor. Secy., and Ed and Marilyn Allgeier, Ways & Means, was organized to direct operations. Other members were Hazel Salisbury, Nina Mowell, Ellen Hibbard, Don Burrows, Patricia Rice, Denise Orzell, Martin Miller, Carol Fenn, and Richard Schmidle.

Since funds had to be raised to move the building, an application to the State Parks and Historic Preservation was drawn up by Jean Figura and Wanda Burrows, and later approved for \$12,000 through the offices of Assemblyman Joseph Pillittere of Niagara Falls.

Money raising events were held to raise funds for the school's renovation including an auction at the historical society grounds which netted \$4,000 dollars. Auction workers were Ed and Marilyn Allgeier, Don and Wanda Burrows, Jane Figura, Jean Figura, Harry Figura, Anne and Eric Henry, Karen Huguenor, Dorothy Maxfield, Dennis Meier, Bruce Muck, Denise and Norman Orzel, Tony Orzel, Nancy Perry, Ellen Truesdale, Bill and Shirley Urtel, Dave Warsocki, Don Wiltse, Janice and Kammy Zahno, Elizabeth Held, and members of the Wilson Lions Club.

Cash donations were also received from Edgar and Eloise Culverwell, William R. Reese, Marilyn Allgeier, Hazel Salisbury, Diane Albright, Don Croop, Janice Zahno, and Marlene Schotz.

Contributions from schoolchildren, businesses, and individuals realized about \$1500, and other fund raisers were held by the Wilson Mothers Club, the Gnostic Guild, Thomas Marks 4th graders, W.H. Stevenson Elementary PTA and 6th grade students, the Wilson Lions Club, and town of Wilson 5K Race and the "Salmon Run".

The Wilson Junior High PTSA also wanted to be involved in the project and sponsored a contest to find a logo for the "Save the Schoolhouse Project". The contest was chaired by Denise Orzel, and the winner was Nicholas Hageman. His winning logo appears on materials distributed by the Steering Committee.

A low bid of \$13,400 was submitted by Farley Riggers of Lockport to move the schoolhouse to the museum grounds and place it on its new foundation. An experienced carpenter also offered to reconstruct the belltower on the school.

Renovation of the school to its original condition was agreed upon, and the committee also proposed that it should be a "working" schoolhouse rather than just a museum type. For instance, teachers would be encouraged to hold classes there in order to allow children to experience first hand what it was like to attend a rural school.

The Randall Road Schoolhouse project appears to be widely supported in the community, and this is born out by the number of services and donations that have already been provided. Some examples are: Modern Corp., dumpster service; Giusiana Architects & Engineers, architect drawings; Henschell Farms and Incarceration program of the Niagara County Sheriff's Dept., clearing schoolhouse grounds; Diane Albright and Nettie and Clark Stimson, locating items for schoolhouse; Bill and Shirley Urtell "Auction Auction services; Bruce Muck, auction service; Ed Allgeier, Jane Figura, and Mark Williams, video work; and Anne Rohring, painting of Randall Rd. Schoolhouse. (to be kept in school).

A list of furnishings already donated include school desks by Eloise Culverwell (1); Roger Nelson family (4); Annabelle Freatman (1); Barbara Eggert, (1); Diane Albright, school wastebasket; Robert Hedrick, picture of George Washington and child's Slate; and Anne Rohring's schoolhouse painting bought and donated by Judith King, Fred Beutel, Marilyn Allgeier, and Wanda Burrows. Many other items have also been donated to the Historical society for use in the schoolhouse such as school bells, books, desks, and items purchased by Schoolhouse Comm.

Much study and thought were given to selecting a site for the schoolhouse and the society's Planning Board felt the school should be near existing buildings, close to restrooms, parking, Handicap accessibility, as well as gas, water, and electricity if needed. Their suggestions were approved by the society's Board of Directors, general membership, and Town Board.

More donations received recently will be listed in the next Newsletter.

(Continued on page 2)

The schoolhouse is expected to be on the museum grounds sometime in June and, when it is, a historical society committee chaired by Wanda Burrows will be in charge of its renovation.

Wanda's committee will be working in close harmony with the steering committee, the museum curator, Dorothy Maxfield, and the Wilson Town Board.

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THE FORGOTTEN REGIMENT:

It is rather remarkable that during the Civil War, a small community like Wilson was able to supply 385 volunteers into 39 different branches of the military service.

In 1917, Levi Gilman Pettit, who served in the 8th New York Volunteer Heavy Artillery, made up a list of the Wilson men who served in the Civil War from Wilson. Thanks to Bessie Cole, we were able to read a copy of the book "The Forgotten Regiment", which describes in detail the exploits of one of those military units in which Wilson men served, the New York 151st Volunteer Regiment.

It seems that the regiment was organized at Camp Church in Lockport, and was mustered into service on October 22, 1862. They left New York the following day to serve in the 8th Corps near Baltimore, MD; South Mountain, MD; and West Virginia.

The 151st was engaged in battles from Petersburg, VA in 1862 to the Appomattox Campaign and surrender in April, 1865. Their ranks were so depleted by December, 1864, they were consolidated into a Battalion of 5 Companies, and continued in service until June, 1865, when they were mustered out at Washington, DC.

During the war, 80 men of the 151st were killed in action, 26 died of wounds, and 91 died of disease. Of the total men killed, 23 died while in the hands of the enemy.

According to the records of Levi Pettit, 13 men served in the 151st Regiment from Wilson: Henry Ballow; Christian Decko; Lemuel Foote; James Harris; Henry Hutchins; Enoch Pettit; George Scouten; Edwin Stockwell; George Sturgis; Lambert Sturgis; Loren Warren; John Wilkens; and Luren Wilson.

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IN MEMORIAM:

Winifred Helwig Fischer, 77, a charter member of the Wilson Historical Society, died suddenly at home, May 3, 1996.

She was born in Tonawanda, and graduated from Kibler High School, and also attended Millard-Fillmore College and the American Banking Institute. She was a long time resident of Wilson and a member of Exley United Methodist Church; American Legion Auxiliary; Delphic Circle; United Church Women; 4-H Sponsors Committee; Environmental Management Council, and the South Wilson Volunteer Fire Company Auxiliary.

She served the historical society as Refreshment Chairman in 1976 and 1977; Chairman of the Ways & Means Committee in 1987 and 1988; and Hostess Chairman in 1995. She also enjoyed demonstrating how to operate a loom at the society's annual Memorial Day Fair.

She is survived by three daughters, Sharon (Joseph) Rico of Tonawanda; Shirley (Larry) Novak of Syracuse; and Gail A. Fischer of Rochester, also two grandchildren, Jennifer and Hanah Novak.

Services were held in the Exley United Methodist Church with Rev. Sue Kaiser officiating, and burial was in Greenwood Cemetery, Wilson.

* * * * *

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE:

You may bring your membership roll up to date by adding the following persons: Malcolm and Sylvia McCuaig, 751-6749; Tom and Gail Walder, 751-9679; Maynard Pettit, 751-9122; Kathleen Peckenpaugh, Cheektowaga, NY; Steve and Karen Mendes, Portland, CT; and Jonathon and Valerie Walder, Argyle, TX. We extend a special welcome to Kathleen Peckenpaugh of Cheektowaga, NY--a recent new member.

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MEMBER IN THE NEWS:

Emma Schrader, 93, was featured in the recent edition of "Pride" published by the Union Sun & Journal. Emma was described as the "Cookie Lady" who loves to bake and donate her delicious creations at many meetings of local organizations. As many will testify who have been lucky enough to enjoy her tasty cookies, her ability as a top notch baker is unquestioned.

Emma is an Honorary member of the Wilson Historical Society, and we don't find it unusual that she was Refreshment Chairman from 1985 through 1991.

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PROMOTE COMMUNITY:

One organization that is working for the best interest of the local community is the Wilson Lions Club. They donate much of their time and resources to help Wilson-related projects, and foremost amongst these is their support of eye examinations and glasses for the needy. Greenwood Cemetery has also been on their list of "good turn" projects as well as their support for D.A.R.E., Blind work, Buffalo Eye Bank, Community and Citizens Awards, the Wyndam Lawn Home for children, Hallowe'en parties for the kids, and the recent Easter Egg hunt held at the Wilson Museum.

Since most of the funds raised by the Lions come back to the Wilson Community in one way or another, it would seem that if you believe charity begins at home, the Lions Club would be a good place to start.

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YOU'RE GETTING OLDER.....

When everything hurts and what doesn't hurt doesn't work.....your children look middle aged.....your mind accepts contracts your body can't meet.....you know all the answers but nobody asks you anything.....or you feel like the morning after, and you haven't been anywhere.

* * * * *

SOUNDINGS:

To err is human, but to really foul things up, you need a computer.

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MUSEUM ATTENDANTS:

Museum attendants for June have been submitted by Virginia Strablow, Chrm., as follows:
June 2nd: Open Museum, Art Schnoor; Hostesses, Dorothea Mark and Gerry Swann.
June 9th: Open Museum, Celeste Crawford; Hostesses, Marion Campbell and Alice Davenport.
June 16th: Open Museum, Lois Barnum; Hostesses, Helen Horton and Helen Stevens.
June 23rd: Open Museum, Richard Schmidle; Host & Hostess, Fenton and Bessie Cole.
June 30th: Open Museum, Don Croop; Host and Hostess, Sidney and Donna Pettit.

Museum hours are from 2-4PM, Sunday afternoons, and the public is invited. No admission fee but donations will be gratefully accepted.

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MEMBERSHIP ROLL UPDATE:

Doris (Swick) Fraser, Honorary Member, has new address: Goodman Gardens, 8 N. Goodman St., Rochester, NY 14607. Omitted from Roll, Patricia Nunaley, Yuma, Arizona.

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ARBOR DAY TREE PLANTING:

A large sunburst locust tree was planted on the museum grounds on May 4, 1996, by members of the Tri Town Clan 4-H Club under the leadership of Shirley Harper and Linda Staselavage. The tree was supplied by the Niagara County Arbor Day Program administered by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Niagara County with additional funding given by Niagara County 4-H Sponsors, Inc., OxyChem of Niagara Falls, the Niagara County Federation of Conservation Clubs, and American Refuel of Niagara Falls.

The tree was planted by Sharon Staselavage, Alicia Zeitz, Betty Zeitz, Albert Strasburg, and Katelip Smith. Historical Society representatives attending the ceremony were Town Supervisor, Walter Evans, Don Burrows, President, Elton Kropp, Grounds Chrm., & Wanda Burrows, Cor. Sec.

* * * * *

5K SALMON RUN & 1 MILE FUN RUN:

The 11th annual 5K Salmon Run will be held in Wilson Saturday, June 15, 1996 starting at 5PM. A one mile Fun Run will start at 4:30 PM. The Salmon Run is a USA Track and Field sanctioned event.

The 5K route commences at Krueger Park on Rt. 18 on the shores of Lake Ontario, and runners travel the shoreline to Wintergreen Island in Tuscarora Bay. After looping the island, they leave the picturesque yacht club area and proceed through the pretty village of Wilson streets back to the Park.

Entree fees for this year's race will benefit the Wilson Optimist Club and the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation, Western New York Chapter.

The major sponsor for this year's race is CYRK, a national corporation and manufacturer of high quality apparel, accessories, and promotional items for recognized brands such as Marlboro, Fila, Timberland and their own CYRK sport label. All participants will receive a specially designed high quality CYRK shirt.

Other sponsors include Milk for Health on the Niagara Frontier, Marine Midland Bank, M.H. White Siding and Roofing, McIntosh & McIntosh, P.C., Seaway Insurance Associates, Walter E. Moxham, Jr., Atty. at Law, Wilson's Lakeside Market, and the Town of Wilson.

Applications can be obtained by calling 751-6704. A Post Race Party will be held at Krueger's

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FROM THE MAILBAG:

Harold Donner of Ithaca writes that his son, David, was unable to find back numbers of the 1928 Wilson "Star" when he visited the museum recently. He suggests that some of these issues might be located if people would check their attics. Sounds like a good suggestion because that's probably the only way these copies could be located.

* * * * *

JUNE DINNER MEETING:

A Civil War garrison meal will be served at the annual dinner meeting of the society on June 17th at 6:00 o'clock.

Mrs. Janet Sporleder is in charge and is expected to be assisted by Shirley Evans, Barbara Mosher, Lucille Upton, Emily McAvoy, and Janet Naslund.

Following the dinner, Miles Linnabery, program chrm., will present a program about Battery M, 1st New York Light Artillery.

The public is invited and tickets will be available at the door.

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DIARY OF A DEADMAN:

A new supply of "Diary of a Deadman" have been purchased from the National Park Service, and copies are now available at the Wilson Museum.

Diary of a Deadman was compiled by Jean P. Ray of Waverly, Iowa, who is also a member of the Wilson Historical Society. The book contains the unedited letters from the personal diary of Ira Pettit, who grew up on the Maple Road in the town of Wilson.

The historical society has placed a historic marker in front of the cobblestone house on Maple Road which was built by Ira's father, Clinton Pettit, in 1835.

When the Civil War started, Ira enlisted at Lockport and served in Co. F, 11th U.S. Infantry of the 5th Army Corps.

He was captured on June 2, 1864, and died in the infamous Andersonville prison on the 18th of October, 1864.

While researching her book, Jean Ray visited Wilson, and obtained valuable information from the late town historian, Dorothy Thilk, and Lawrence Pease.

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DID YOU KNOW.....

That Joseph Ellicott established the 12" foot measurement, and laid out the City of Buffalo as well as many county roads? He died in a mental hospital in N.Y. City, poor and forgotten.

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TO MAKE A GOOD SPEECH, have a good beginning and a good ending--and put them as close together as possible.

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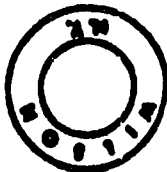
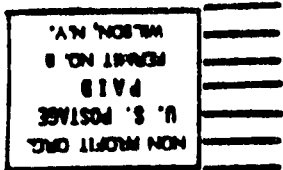


July 1996 Vol. 25 No. 6
(Coleman Printing)

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

NEWSLETTER

Wilson Historical Society
Wilson, New York 14172-9763



JULY - 1996

SUCCESSFUL FAIR:

The 1996 Memorial Day Fair was perhaps the biggest and best ever held in Wilson since its inception 24 years ago. Large crowds, generated by beautiful weather, milled around the grounds all day, and everyone seemed to enjoy the huge flea market, antique cars, gasoline engine displays, museum exhibits, musical entertainment, and fine foods.

Veterans of Wilson's Martin F. Jennings American Legion Post #836, lined up at noon to honor the servicemen and women who gave their lives for their country, and later a special fly-over and jump by 8 members of the Frontier Sky Divers brought added pleasure for the crowd.

Visitors were parked from the Ide Road to the village where the society's free shuttle bus service transported many of them to and from the museum from 9Am. to 6Pm.

The Historical Society readily concedes that putting on the fair would be very difficult without the cooperation of supportive non-members and friendly business organizations who "pitch in" to make the fair a success.

Several area chairmen who were not included in the last newsletter were Marge Williams, who did a fine job on advertising, and the Union Sun & Journal for their timely coverage both before and after the fair.

Doug and Julie Smith drove to the fair from Pennsylvania, and volunteered to run the balloon concession. They handed out hundreds of free balloons to the youngsters and didn't stop until they had used up 2,000 lbs. of gas.

One of the youngest fair chrm., Joshua Smith, was in charge of childrens' games. He and his helpers were able to turn over \$100 to the Cub Scouts, plus another \$100 to the historical soc.

The fair committee consisting of Lois Barnum, Ron Zauner, Nettie Stimson, Gary Fitch, and Darrell Smith, wish to thank all area chairmen and their workers for a great job, well done--also all local businessmen and organizations who helped.

One organization for which the society is deeply grateful is the Wilson Volunteer Ambulance Crew who parked their ambulance across from the entranceway to the grounds. Always ready for any emergency, they do a great job for the Wilson Community and, when the time comes to give them your support, we also should be ready.

Parking is very essential for a smooth-running fair, and the society wishes to thank Larry Kieffer, Resident Engineer of the Department of Transportation, Lockport, for lending us over 100 red cones to control parking on Lake Street. We are also grateful to the Niagara County Emergency Service who supplied men to help with parking.

Basil/Amsco permitted the society to use their parking facilities for our many workers and chairmen, and it might also be noted that one parking spot was roped off so that a mother Kildeer could remain on her nest undisturbed.

Other parking facilities were provided by Pfeiffer's Foods, Home and Garden Center, and Ontario Orchards, and operation of the free shuttle bus service was enhanced because of parking facilities provided by Wilson Central School, Exley United Methodist Church, and the Town and Village parking areas.

We also would like to acknowledge and thank Hank Brummer of Newfane who loaned us the use of ten tables; Bob Schearer of Wilson who donated the wood carving for the quilt-drawing; The Upstate Milk Co-op for the donation of one case of coffee creamers; the Rainbow Connection of Wilson for displaying the society's quilt; and Merritt Thilk of South Wilson for hooking up and wiring a line for the funnel cakes--also removing freon from an old refrighator.

Setting up for the annual fair is generally a two-day operation, and we especially thank Mr. Damiani and the young men in the school wrestling club for their help. They helped Ron Zauner mark off over 370 spaces for the Vendors, but with a dozen strong young wrestlers doing the job, they actually made it look easy.

"Micky" Hunter deserves a pat on the back for spending most of the day painting the shelter--needless to say, on fair day it looked great.

After the fair is over, everyone is tired, but everyone stuck it out until their work areas looked spick and span--in fact, by 9PM, it was hard to imagine that a fair had been held on the grounds that day.

Ed Hastings kept things moving during set-up and clean-up, and, at the risk of leaving someone out, Ray Groff, Ron Zauner, Dick Scmidle, Darrell Smith, Carl Jennejohn, Micky Hunter, Calvin Schultz, Don Burrows, Gary Fitch, and all fair chairmen worked hard.

The new storage building proved to be a big "Plus", and under the supervision of Dan King, tables, chairs, ticket booths, tents, and a variety of other materials will be stored neatly and be easily accessible.

* * * * *

POW MOT. The smallest good turn is better than the grandest intention.

MUSEUM VISITATIONS:

Some historical society officers do their jobs so well and quietly, others aren't always aware of what their duties entail. Which brings to mind the society's tours chairman, Lucille Upton, who makes all the arrangements for visiting tour busses or school children. She has also written up extensive guidelines for hostesses to refer to when they greet visitors on Sunday afternoons.

On Saturday, June 1st, about 38 members of an antique car club in Oil City, Pa., stopped for a visit and were greeted by Lucille Upton, Celeste Crawford, Sara Berry, Hoyt Desso, and this writer. Although they were mainly interested in the Dr. John Argue Car Building, they also spent time visiting the other buildings. Cool Aid and Coffee was provided, along with cookies, and everyone appeared to have a good sociable afternoon.

Everything seemed to go smoothly on June 10th and 12th, when 2nd grade youngsters from the Thomas Marks School walked to the museum. They arrived at 9:45 AM with one class going to Pfeiffers while the other remained at the museum. All classes arrived with their teachers and several parents from each group with Mary Watt and Pat Lash arriving on Monday, and James Bryer and Sue Cruickshank coming on Wednesday.

Lucille Upton and Celeste Crawford greeted the youngsters who were divided into small groups. A teacher or parent accompanied each group as they moved from one room to another, including the caboose, which was a hit with most of the youngsters.

Mrs. Upton made the tours more interesting by providing each group of children with a list of special items for them to find. While searching for these, they saw other artifacts which prompted a lot of questions for their leaders to answer.

After the two grades visited Pfeiffers and the museum, they assembled at the Shelter where tables and chairs were set up so they could have a picnic lunch, and for this we thank Micky Hunter and Elton Kropp.

Accompanying the 2nd graders, in addition to their teachers, were: Bill Dykstra, Ken Hyde, Charlene Higgs, Amy Hulburt, Mrs. Don Kline, Brett Sippel, Debra Diez, Norm Grubbs, Jeff Monroe, Georgeann Busch, Robert Roeser, Susan Rademacher, Nina Gagnon, Ruth Ann Bradley, Dennis Gorman, Deborah Zastrow, and Pat Harvey.

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OUTSTANDING STUDENTS:

Michelle Savigny, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Savigny of Wilson, was Valedictorian of this year's Senior Class at Wilson High School. Michelle is a member of the National Honor Society, and received a Wendell Foundation Scholarship. She will continue studies at Buffalo.

Nathan Groff, son of Ray and Pam Groff of Wilson, was Salutatorian of the Class of '96, and is also a member of the National Honor Society. He was Captain of Golf and Tennis teams, and CO-Captain of the Championship N/O Baseball Squad. Nate will continue his studies at Allegheny College on a Presidential Scholarship. He also received the Burns and P.A.L. Scholarship awards.

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CLASS NIGHT AWARDS:

The Historical Society annual awards for scholastic achievement and community service were given this year to John Fitzsimmons and Michele Savigny, Senior Class '96, Wilson High School. The presentation of \$100 to each student was made by Don Burrows, Pres., Wilson His. Soc.

* * * * *

MEMBERS IN THE NEWS:

Pretty hats and pretty ladies made a pretty picture in the Union Sun & Journal recently when members of the Keenan Center Arts Council posed for a photograph at a luncheon held in the Lockport Town and Country Club. Council members from Wilson were Pam Groff, Donna Fritton, Shirley Evans, and Eleanor Myers.

At a recent vote on the school budget, Jean Figura, Pres. of the Board, was returned for a three year term, and Berne Kent, Vice-Pres., was returned for a one year term. All incumbents were re-elected and the \$13,610,001 budget was overwhelmingly passed.

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SUNDAY HOSTS AND HOSTESSES:

- July 7th: Lucille Upton will open museum; Lucille and Frances Dietz will be hostesses.
- July 14th: Wally Goodman, open museum; Host & hostess, Wally and Chris Goodman.
- July 21st: Darrell Smith, open museum; host and hostess, Neva and Harold Benedict.
- July 28th: Carole Schnoor, open museum; Host and hostess, Calvin and sue Schultz.

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QUILT-DRAWING RESULTS:

The beautiful "Irish Chain" quilt sewn by Betty Stimson of Wilson, was won by Patti Eick of Lakeland, Florida.

The delicate hand-crocheted white Afghan made and donated by Blanche Wilson of East Wilson was awarded to Pam Groff of Wilson.

The Woodcarving designed by Bob Schearer of Wilson, was won by Frank Offenhauer of Niagara Falls., NY.

A Wilson "Sketchbook" History of Wilson, was won by Frank Massing of Wilson, and a Historical Society Recipe Book was won by P. Stackhow of Youngstown, NY.

The Wilson Historical Society is very grateful to all who supported the Quilt project, and a special word of thanks to Betty Stimson, Dick Schmidle, and Mary Schultz for helping to keep the records straight.

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MEMBERSHIP ROLL UPDATE:

We welcome the following new members who signed up at the Memorial Day Fair: George and Joyce Banagis (751-3613); Bruce and Bonnie Muck (751-9835); Julia Dulkiewitz (751-9146); Mildred L. Neville (751-6791); and Kathleen Neville of Eastchester, NY.

Renewals include Miles Linnabery (751-6567); Bob Brooks, Red Creek, NY; Dale Schlyer (751-6319); and Robert and Ann Botzer (751-9086).

* * * * *

SOUNDINGS: If you can't have the best of everything, make the best of everything you have

RECENT ACQUISITIONS:

Diane Williams Johnson of Beccue Island, Wilson, has beautifully restored a Cutter which was donated to the Wilson Historical Society by the late Jack Williams. It is in mint condition, and we understand Diane devoted over two years of her spare time renovating it.

The Cutter originally belonged to Kathryn Williams of Ransomville, Jack's aunt, and a plaque on the Cutter reads, Donated by Jack Williams--Restored by Dianne Williams, and the inscription: "This is the sled I rode on as a little girl. Kathryn Williams, 1910".

The Cutter is on display in Micky Hunter's Carriage Room which connects the Barnum Building to the Dr. John Argue Car Building.

New carpeting was laid on the floor by Carl Bodie, and between he and Micky, the Carriage Room is fast taking shape as an attractive exhibit area. In addition to the cutter, the room now has a Democrat Wagon, Thomas Marks Buggy and early two-wheel Fire Hose Cart.

A Child's Top, handcrafted at a recent meeting by Miles Linnabry, has been donated to the society for exhibiting in the schoolhouse.

Maxine Jones has donated a size 4 Homemade Boy's Cotton Suit with button wasteband.

Floyd Clark donated a picture of the Harris Cottage; Registration for '69 Mustang; 14 snapshots of the car; Print of the John Diez home taken from Niagara County History, (bought at flea market); and "Wonders of Niagara Booklet" printed for the Shredded Wheat Company.

* * * * *

IN MEMORIAM:

Frank Fenn, 100, an Honorary Member of the Wilson His. Soc., died at home May 21, 1966, after a short illness. He married the former Katherine Salome at Des Moines, Iowa, in 1919, and they moved to their Randall Rd. farm in Wilson in 1941. He celebrated his 60th wedding anniversary in 1979, and he retired from farming in the late 1980's.

He is survived by a son, F. Ward (Carol Ann) Fenn of Ransomville; a daughter, Carol (Kenneth) Tabler of Fort Myers, FL; eight grandchildren and; 12 great grandchildren; and one great-great grandchild.

Services were held at Exley United Methodist Church in Wilson with Rev. Sue Kaiser officiating. Burial was in Elmlawn Cemetery, Kenmore.

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CELEBRATE WILSON HISTORY:

On Tuesday, June 11th, the 4th graders at Thomas Marks School assembled in the gymnasium where they celebrate the Erie Canal and Wilson.

Miss Andritz Class presented "The Ghost of Clinton's Ditch", a one act play by L. Don Swartz, and a "Gift to Wilson" was presented by Mr. Water's Class. Mr. Corbin and Mr. Neauman's class made a special citizenship presentation. A certificate of appreciate reads as follows:

"We, the 4th grade Class of 1995-96, do hereby present this certificate which states, a Snow Drift Flowering Crab Tree will be planted on the Wilson Historical Society grounds next to the schoolhouse. This tree is given, as a sign of our appreciation for all the work and effort the Town of Wilson and Village does on our behalf., and to further enhance the environment. Sincerely, Fourth Grade Class 1995-96.

* * * * *

TOP FOR '97 QUILT:

The fair is over for 1996, but the historical society is already looking for a new top for next year's quilt. Always two jumps ahead, Betty Stimson is looking for a quality top so that the Wilson Historical Society can continue its tradition of having a rare or priceless quilt for its annual quilt drawing.

If you think you have or know of a quilt top that could be used for the 1997 Fair, please give Betty a ring at 751-6839.

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STUDENT PUBLICATIONS:

Marion Campbell and Eleanor Myers, town historian, have sorted out the society's collection of student publications and found that a number of year are missing. If anyone would like to donate any, a list of missing copies follow:

"Wise Owl": All publications needed except the years 1831, 1856, and 1927.

The "Clairvoyant": All years except 1938.

"Wilson Crest": Copies needed for 1946, 1976, 1983, 1984, 1987, and 1989. We also need recent copies for 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, and 1995

A 1996 copy of the "Crest" was accepted by Wally Goodman for the society at recent Moving Up exersizes held at the school.

* * * * *

RECENT SCHOOLHOUSE DONATIONS:

The following items were donated recently for the Schoolhouse Project: Nettie and Clark Stimson, Framed Picture of George Washington; Marilyn Allgeier, Chair for Teacher's Desk; Niagara Council of the Arts, \$500 Grant for Books and Teaching material; Tri-Town Clan, Historic Gettysburg Sycamore tree for the Schoolyard; Fourth Grade Classes at Thomas Marks School, (1995-'96), Snowdrift Flowering Crabapple Tree for the Schoolyard; Also, Waldo Beutel helped purchase Schoolhouse picture donated by Anne Rohring. Picture to be hung in schoolhouse.

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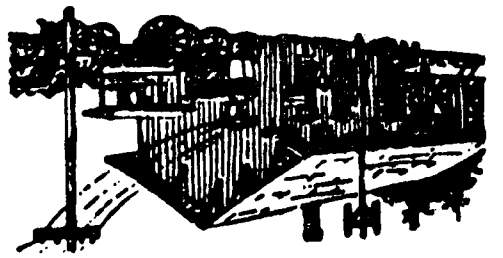
JULY MEETING:

There will be a regular program meeting at the museum on July 15th, 7:30 PM. Carol Murphy of Murphy Orchards, Newfane, will be our guest speaker. The subject for her talk will be; "Our Setting in History." Refreshments will be served.

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ICE CREAM SOCIAL:

The annual Band Concert and Ice Cream Social will be held at the Museum grounds on Sunday, August 4th from 1:30 to 3:30 PM. Entertainment this year will be provided by Niagara County Sheriff Association's Pipe and Drums and the Irish Step Dancers. Darrell and Sally Smith will be co-chairmen in charge of serving ice cream sundaes for the Historical Society. The free pro-

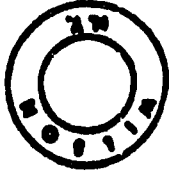
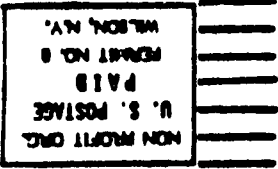


August 1996 Vol. 25 No. 7
(Coleman Printing)

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

NEWSLETTER

WILSON HISTORICAL SOCIETY
WILSON, NEW YORK 14172-9763



August 1996

GREENWOOD HAS NEW LOOK:

The front entrance to Greenwood Cemetery has a new look thanks to Clark's Riggers and members of the Wilson Lions Club. With help from Rigging employees Mike Horn, Gene Joseph, and John Clark, a new Greenwood Cemetery sign was put in place over the entranceway. Then, while Richard Zipp painted the flagpole, other Lions helped clean up and straighten headstones-- including Mike McAvoy, Ray Forsyth, Fred Lampman, Don Wiltse, Peter Zabel, Steve Clark, Ernie Grenville, Jim Aikers, Mike Moyer, Kevin Cornell, Terry O'Reilly, and Mike Randazzo.

Greenwood Cemetery is now 146 years old, and it was organized October 25, 1850 at a meeting presided over by Nathaniel Davis and Alfred Ransom. Luther Wilson offered to donate 8 1/4 acres of land for a burial site and his offer was accepted by the newly organized Greenwood Cemetery Association.

Trustees of the new association were elected by ballot and consisted of Luther Wilson, Robert McChesney, Simon Sheldon, Morgan Johnson, Curtis Pettit, John Onderdonk, Nathaniel Davis, Hiram B. Tabor, and Enoch Pettit. Five years later on December 27, 1855, the land was actually deeded over to the Association by Luther and Sarah Wilson.

In the early days of Wilson, a number of people were buried in private plots, and one of these was behind the Ness property on West Lake Road where markers for a Williams family have practically disappeared through the ravages of time and vandalism.

At the site of the former German Lutheran Church on Nelson Road, several other headstones were found for members of the Bobzein family and a son of Mary and Fritz Smith.

The first mention of a regular burial site in Wilson is noted in the "Illustrated History of Niagara County" which states, "The 1st depository for the dead near the village was made in 1822 at the east end of the peninsula northeast of the village."

Later, some burials were made at the location known as "Battery Hill" on West Young Street just south east of 12 Mile Creek. This burial site was abandoned in 1846 when Nathaniel Davis set aside a 2 acre plot of land for a cemetery on his farm just across the road from the present Wilson Historical Society museum.

In 1872, when grading work for the Rome, Watertown, and Ogdensburg Railroad was started through Wilson, the tracks were surveyed to go through the old cemetery started by Nathaniel Davis in 1846.

Since it was necessary to move those buried there, a removal committee was appointed consisting of Eldert Dox, David Barnum, and Harvey Johson. Records were kept according to State Law of all those removed to Greenwood Cemetery, so families would be able to find where their loved ones were buried.

Trustees of the old Greenwood Cemetery Association were able to keep firm control over the cemetery up to the 1920's when conditions began to deteriorate. In 1923, an article in the Wilson "Star" stated, "Attempting to make a more workable organization, some residents, having no knowledge of the forgotten incorporation of 1850, applied for and received a new certificate of incorporation on July 2, 1923."

The newly reorganized cemetery appeared to do well for a time, but a \$7,000 trust fund in a Lockport Bank was unable to generate enough interest to provide the funds necessary to maintain the graves.

By the 1950's, care of the cemetery had become very difficult, so at a general election in 1957, residents voted to place Greenwood Cemetery under the care of the Town of Wilson.

Upkeep and the general appearance of the cemetery has greatly improved since then, and continues to function quite well under the supervision of the Cemetery Advisory Board appointed by the Wilson Town Board.

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NEW MEMBERS:

It is a pleasure to welcome the following new members into the Wilson Historical Society: Karen G. Beals, Principal, Thomas Marks School, whos current address is East Amherst; also W.R. Reese of Williamsburg, Va., and Ralph Seefeldt of S. Glens Falls, NY; also, Mr. and Mrs. Donald Hammond of Orlando, Florida; Mrs. Marge Craig of Wilson; and John Stone, Jr., Sarasota, Florida. Renewal: Virginia Coe Pursell, 305-B Evans St., #3, Willamsville, NY 14221.

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ICE CREAM SOCIAL:

The annual ice cream social and band concert will be held on the museum grounds, August 4th, from 1:30 to 3:30 PM. Entertainment will be provided by the Niag. Co. Sheriff Assoc. Pipe and Drums and the Irish Step Dancers. Darrel and Sally Smith are in charge of ice cream suncaes.

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BON MOT: When the truth is in your way, you're on the wrong road.

GOOD NEWS/BAD NEWS:

The good news is that during the past couple years, a number of local residents have become members of the Wilson Historical Society. The bad news is that we don't hear from many of them after they join.

Perhaps it is the society's fault they are not asked to help out--obviously they wouldn't join if they weren't interested--or is it that they would prefer to limit their activity.

Whatever the reason, it should be made clear that there are many activities open to all members, and we'd appreciate it if you would let us know if you care to be active in anyway.

If you have a special interest, we are sure there is an area in the museum complex where your talents could be used. Dorothy Maxfield, our Curator, and all area chairmen could use help. For instance, there is a special need for persons with the ability to arrange exhibits in the depot, and the antique car building is in dire need of persons willing to care for the valuable antique cars. The cars will deteriorate if we can't find anyone willing to volunteer some time, and Wally Goodman, Chrm., says that he really could use some interested persons to work on his committæe.

The Board of Directors feel that every effort should now be made to take care of the exhibits and building we already have, and since there are no plans for future capital improvements, all efforts should be directed to keeping things in good shape.

Generally speaking, this will involve repair, upkeep, and painting of all present facilities, where needed, so if we are to maintain and preserve the town's fine museum complex, there will be plenty of opportunities for members to get involved.

If your interest is in cars, call Wally Goodman 751-6583; Barnum Building, Eleanor Myers 751-6053; Carriage Room, Micky Hunter 751-6825; Schoolhouse, Wanda Burrows 751-9703; Caboose, Darrel Smith 751-0102; Library, Shirley Evans 751-6461; Depot, Hoyt and Norie Desso 751-6624; Fittro Shop, Ed Allgeier 751-6763; Acquisitions, Lois Jennings 751-9783; Grounds, Elton Kropp 751-6460; and Dorothy Maxfield, Curator 751-6311.

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MEMBER IN THE NEWS:

Christopher Schultz, son of Sue and Calvin Schultz, Chestnut Rd., Newfane, was selected recently by American Legion Post #830 of Ransomville, to attend Boy's State at SUNY, Morrisville.

Boys who are selected elect their own officers and learn to become members of a government in action.

Chris's performance in school and community have been outstanding. He was Vice-President of the Junior Class and has been a three year member of the school band. He also was a member of the PTSA; the student Council, and Varsity football and baseball teams.

He is a member of the North Ridge United Methodist Church where he volunteers his services at church dinners, and helps with nursery care during church. Chris is also a Boy Scout in Troop #67 where he is working for his Eagle Badge. He also participates in the Adopt-a-Highway Program; the Wilson Youth Soccer League; and is an active member of the Wilson His. Soc.

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PROGRAM FOR AUGUST:

Miles Linnabery, Program Chrm., has announced that the "Kindred" Irish Singers will present a musical program at the museum on August 18th titled, "Irish Music Comes To America". David and Felicia Meyers of Williamsville have appeared here before.

Norie Desso, Refreshment Chrm., has asked Winnie Terry and Yvonne Smithson to serve refreshments after the meeting.

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IN MEMORIAM:

Marietta McClellan Goodman, 96, died July 1, 1996 at the Beechwood Nursing Home in Gettsville. She graduated from Wilson High School in 1918, and continued her education at the University of Buffalo. She worked a number of years as a Secretary at the Carborundum Company, and retired in the early 1930's.

She was a member of Exley United Methodist Church; Womens' Society; Wilson's Martin F. Jennings American Legion Post; Inter Community Memorial Hospital Auxiliary; Delphic Circle; Niagara Falls Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution; and a Charter member of the Wilson Historical Society.

She is survived by a son, Wallace (Christine) Goodman of Wilson; also three grandchildren, Aaron D. Goodman of Los Angeles; Mathew P. Goodman of N.Y.C; and Timothy Goodman, Wilson.

Services were conducted by Rev. Sue Kaiser, and burial was in the Wrights Corners Cemetery.

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Hazel D. Salisbury, 91, died at home July 1, 1996 while doing yardwork. A native of Wilson, she was the daughter of Henry and Mary Felton Derrmin. She graduated from Wilson High School and the Teachers Training Class at Middleport, and taught from 1919 to 1945 at Pekin, Burt, and the Randall Road Schoolhouses.

She was a member of Exley United Methodist Church, Past Pres. of Community Ambassaor of Wilson; WNY Womens Federation; Delphic Circle; and Elberta Mothers Club.

She is survived by a daughter, Diane (Sabastian) Lane of Wilson; five grandchildren; and one great grandchild.

Services were conducted by Rev. Sue Kaiser, and burial was in the N.Ridge Cemetery.

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CONGRATULATIONS:

Ora Pettit celebrated his 90th birthday recently. Proprietor of the General Electric appliance store in Wilson for many years, Ora is now an Honorary member of the historical society which he originally joined in 1972.

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SOUNDINGS:

Any man can be a father, but it takes a special man to be a Dad.

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VALUABLE HELPERS::

Prior to the recent fair, Gail Walder accepted the tough job of calling members and asking them to furnish baked goods. She also asked persons to help out at various concessions where they were short of help. We thank Gail for performing this important function, because her super effort helped make things run more smoothly.

At former fairs, Gail used to handle the fishpond for the children, but since she wouldn't be in town this year, she gave willingly of her time before the day of the fair.

Thanks are also in order to Janet Sporleder who has been a strong supporter of the society since 1972. In 1979 she was elected chairman of the historic sites committee--an office which she continues to hold to the present day.

Jan not only orders all markers used to identify historic sites in Wilson, but also arranges with the town to have them erected. Most of the signs have been hand-painted by her, and she keeps a sharp eye out to see that all markers are legible and standing in place.

Janet has also been one of our prominent members who helps to put on the annual dinner each year. You can always depend on Jan to do a great job, and this year was no exception. Before the fair, she requested that the society spend \$100 to purchase needed equipment for the Barnum Building kitchen. Jan also spent a hundred dollars of her own money for extra items.

We thank Gail and Jan for their interest and dedication--it's gals like these that help make the annual fair and dinner such a great success.

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RECENT ACQUISITIONS:

Elmer Bannick, Clarence, NY: POW 1st Aid Kit--World War II.

Richard Schmidle: Humphrey's Remedies--list of medications.

Celeste Crawford: Back desk chair for Schoolhouse.

Bessie Cole: Wilson Centennial Cane.

Harold Donner, Ithaca, NY: Framed "W". 1st Wilson High School letter awarded to members of the first High School Basketball team.

* * * * *

BOARD OF DIRECTOR REPORTS:

Don Burrows, Pres., reported at the July meeting that the tile drainage is completed on the five acres of land donated to the society by the late George Badger of Lockport. The tile installation was sponsored by the Town of Wilson.

The foundation on the museum grounds for the Randall Rd Schoolhouse has been completed and paid for by the historical society. Moving the schoolhouse in June as planned was not done because it was necessary to allow the foundation to set for a few weeks before placing the schoolhouse on it. Cost for the foundation was between four and five thousand dollars.

Publications Chrm., Don Croop, reported that 500 copies of the Cobblestone brochure have been printed up, and 100 copies of the Valiant Men of Battery M is also being printed.

A motion was approved to have a de-humidifier purchased for the Dr. Argue Car Building. A mildew problem exists on some of the cars, and suggestions were made on how to cure it.

* * * * *

IN MEMORIAM:

Frances Landy, 96, an Honorary Charter Member of the Wilson Historical Society, died 6/28/96. She was the daughter of Thomas and Harriet Francis Marks, founder of the Mark's Nursery.

She graduated from Wilson High School in 1919; attended the Buffalo Normal School; and taught in the rural school on Wilson-Burt Road. In 1921, she married Roy Landy and in 1928 they purchased the Tugwell farm on Lake Street and operated it until 1973 when Mr. Landy died. During the war years, Mrs. Landy worked in the offices of Harrison Radiator, retiring in 1962.

After her husband's death, she moved to Bellevue, WA, to be with her daughter, Esther, and spent her time studying oil painting and watercolors.

She is survived by two daughters, Harriet (late John) Nolan of Payson, AR; and Esther Leppich of St. George, Utah.

At her request, no funeral services were held, and burial was in the family plot at Wright's Corners Cemetery, town of Lockport.

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BRAVE ENCOUNTER:

The story is told how a group of Lewiston boys, prior to the War of 1812, fired the first shot on the Niagara Frontier. The young men, led by Alex Miller and James Barton, (in anticipation of war) built some cannons made from hollowed out logs fitted with beetle rings and mounted on blocks. Their ammunition was a large pile of clay balls which could be fired from the cannon thanks to Alex's father, who supplied the boys with gun powder.

One day a British schooner came into view, and disregarding the boys shouts to "strike its colors", started to sail past the battery. The boys opened fire and the clay balls made a convincing sight as they splashed in the water around the ship.

The ship hove about and didn't make it to Queenston that day, and for days after, many a laugh was had in Lewiston how the boys defeated a British ship.

* * * * *

SUNDAY HOSTESSES:

Aug. 4th: Open Museum, Hoyt Desso: Greeters, Hoyt and Norie Desso.

Aug. 11th: Open Museum, Richard Schmidle: Greeters, Jeanne and Richard Schmidle.

Aug. 18th: Open Museum, Daniel King: Greeters, Judith and Daniel King.

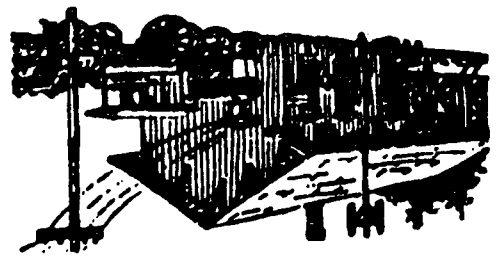
Aug. 25th: Open Museum, Don Croop: Greeters, Ruth Lampman and Norma Ward.

* * * * *

DID YOU KNOW....THAT Grand Island is larger than Manhattan Island by 300 acres:...that wind-mills and hand-pumps supplied most of Niagara County's early farms water...and the straits of Niagara drop some 326 feet in their 35 mile flow from Lake Erie to Lake Ontario.

* * * * *

REMEMBER WHEN the only training parlor in town was the woodshed?

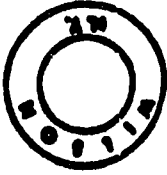
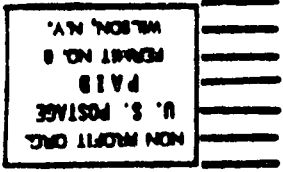


September 1996 Vol. 25 No. 8
(Coleman Printing)

DONALD W. CROOK, Editor

NEWSLETTER

WILSON HISTORICAL SOCIETY
WILSON, NEW YORK 14172-9763



September, 1996

MILLER AND BROWN:

You're no kid if you remember the old Miller & Brown grocery and drygoods store that once stood at the corner of Young and Lake streets--where Scheffler's Restaurant and Hardware store stands today.

The building was divided in two with groceries on one side and drygoods on the other, and the walls were about 12 foot high with shelves loaded with all kinds of groceries and household items. There were also two counters extending the length of the store separated by a five foot aisle.

Candy was contained in a quarter round glass display case, and penny candies included bubblegum, butter scotch wafers, licorice, suckers, and other one cent varieties.

Cookies and crackers were displayed in glass front cases, and you could reach in and pick out what you wanted. There were many kinds such as fig newtons, oatmeal and molasses cookies, also elephant toes--a sugar cookie covered with peanut halves.

Items such as kerosene, salted cod fish, and lard, were sold from the back of the room as well as potatoes, onions, and bananas. Along the west counter, oranges, grapefruit, farm grapes, and other fruit was available. There were no red meats sold at Miller and Browns, but a good supply could be had next door at Newt Hackett's store.

Kenny Welker and the late Willie Rockwood were clerks and, at the time, both had the reputation of being "quick as lightning" when serving customers.

According to Lester Clark, when he was a youngster, Sam Brown hired him to do light chores like shoveling snow or cutting asparagus from a patch at Sam's home on Lake Street. He recalled that Sam was short on talk and seldom spoke except to ask him how he was doing. He said that Sam liked to smoke cigars but had one problem--he never seemed to be able to keep from losing his glasses from his forehead where he usually wore them.

Kenny and Willie wrapped and sold a lot of cheese which they cut from thirty pound wheels of cheese which were delivered to the store. Coffee was ground on a large coffee grinder with three foot wheels, and the ground coffee was a premium item wanted by everyone. The coffee grinder itself was painted red with gold filigree which made the machine look like a work of art. It, like many other rare antiques such as stoves were given in scrap metal drives by patriotic Americans during World War II.

Another rare item that people might not recognize today was a "Clapster" which was used to retrieve items from top shelves, and it was hung from a hook in the ceiling when not being used.

A large pot-bellied stove with isinglas windows was used to heat the store, and one similar to it may be seen in the Wilson Museum. According to current plans, this stove may be moved into the schoolhouse which was moved to the museum grounds recently.

Old Timers may remember the large stand-up scales that stood outside the store. Next to it was a place where the Newsboy could fold his papers before delivering them. If the weather was bad, both the scales and the newsboy were brought inside.

Les recalled that Sam Brown helped quite a few young people in his day, and remembered how he himself used to spend a couple hours in the store every Thursday afternoon reading Life Magazine. He believes this helped him brush up on current events and topics of the day.

Miller and Browns had a wide door separating the grocery store from the dry goods section, which permitted customers to easily patronize both. One interesting item in Mattie Miller's dry goods store was a carousel that displayed "Coats & Clark" threads in a variety of sizes, strengths, and basic colors.

Produce such as farm eggs and butter were considered "barter" items, and many farm wives used to bring them into the store where they exchanged them for staples such as salt, sugar, spices, and other household items.

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SEPTEMBER HOSTS & HOSTESSES:

- Sept. 1st: Open museum, Virginia Strablow: Greeters, Virginia and Gordon Strablow.
- Sept. 8th: Open Museum, Floyd Clark: Greeters, Micky and Shirley Hunter.
- Sept. 15th: Open Museum, Wallace Goodman: Greeters, Jack and Winnie Terry.
- Sept. 22nd: Open Museum, Don Burrows: Greeters, Bill and Margaret Fritton.
- Sept. 29th: Open Museum, "Ollie" Clark: Greeters, Ruth and Bob Thomas.

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SOUNDINGS:

A split second is the time between the light changing and the driver behind you honking his horn.

* * * * *

MURPHY'S ORCHARDS:

In past issues of the Newsletter we have mentioned area attractions that are within easy driving distance from Wilson. Our focus in this issue is Murphy's Orchards which is located on the McClew Road in the town of Newfane.

The old home on the 65 acre farm was built by Charles McClew around 1850, and it has been operated as a fruit farm since the early 1800's.

The Murphys purchased the farm in 1978, and have since been gradually restoring the buildings and opening up the place to the public seven days a week, from May to January.

There are a variety of interesting family attractions including an underground room beneath the barn which is believed to have been used from 1850 to 1860 as a station in the "Underground Railroad."

There is no admission charge, and visitors may pick their own fresh fruits as they mature, or purchase them already picked.

There is also a farm animal petting zoo and a Country Barn Store featuring home made jams, jellies, fruit butters, and herb vinegars.

In the fall you may see an antique, hand-operated cider press in operation, or pick your own pumpkin in the pumpkin patch. Also, tractor-drawn wagon rides may be taken through the orchards.

Visitors may bring their own picnic lunch or visit Murphy's unique sandwich bar. There is plenty of parking space, and you might even discover that Murphy's Orchards is a pleasant place to visit, relax, and enjoy the day.

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RECENT ACQUISITIONS:

Lester Read of Sanborn, NY, has donated copies of pictures of William Gaskill, Eli Hamblin, and Truman Goodenough, volunteers from Wilson in the 28th Infantry Regiment during the Civil War, Army of the Potomac.

Donald Wiltse: 1994 Olympic Games Guide; 1941-42 Constitution & By-laws of Niagara Ski Club; Two Lewiston Trail Council Boy Scout Decals. (Lewiston Trail is now part of the Iroquois Trail Council of Batavia.)

Eleanor Desso: Early Curling Iron.

Richard Schidle: 1964 Wilson "Crest".

Dorothy Maxfield: Black Lace and Satin Jacket (ca. 1890).

Cynthia LaUER: 19 Childrens' Books; 12 Boy and Girl dolls of Swiss, Greek, Scottish, Romanian,, Laplander, and two oriental. Also, Saw with Papoose, and Chinese Weaving Doll,

John Fitch: Two Straight Razors and 1 Strop that belonged to Ray Fitch.

Ada Nickerson, Lewiston, NY: Beaver Hat Mermac of California; Beaver Hat, Williams Bros., Lkpt. Early Fur Cape.

Beatrice Lort Hedley, Olcott, NY: Flag, case, and Certificate in memory of Leroy William Lort.

Robert Volls, Cheektowaga, NY: Centennial Issue of Wilson "Crest" 1964; Paper on History of Wilson and Niagara County.

Shirley Harper, Tri Town Clan, 4-H Group; Ornamental Tree planted on museum grounds 5/4/96.

Dorothy Parker, Newfane: 8 books, 1839, 1858, 1900's; 2 Bibles, 1871, 1874; First Thru Way Map; Newspapers; Newspaper Clippings; Brochure on Willys Knight; Fall Dansville Nursery Bul.

Vee L. Hausman, Lewiston, NY: Centennial Crest (1846-1946; Ourselves, Class of 1922; also Postcard, Wilson High School.

Estate of Hazel Salisbury: Rural School Textbook (1890 to mid 1930's) used by Hazel.

Neal Wixon, Buffalo, NY: One Grand Rapids Carpet Sweeper, One porcelein Pan; and one painted copper boiler.

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NEW MEMBER:

We welcome new member, Paul Robitaille of Sykersville, MD, also recent renewals, Charles Gerstung of Port St. Lucie, FL; and Atty. Richard Southard of Lockport.

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ICE CREAM SOCIAL:

Beautiful weather and a large crowd combined to make the recent Ice Cream Social held on the museum grounds a great success.

Root beer floats and generous helpings of ice cream sundaes with the choice of a variety of toppings including strawberries, butterscotch, hot chocolate and whipped "cream" were served by Sally Smith, Chrm., Mary Schultz, Wanda Burrows, Darrell Smith, Lois Barnum and Don Burrows. Cashiers on Sunday were Renee' Weeks, a member from Afton, NY, and Don Croop.

Darrell Smith was in charge of preparations, and on Saturday two tents and dozens of chairs were set up between the Barnum Building and the Shelter where the program was held. Tables and chairs were also set up in the Barnum Building.

Helping Darrell were Ed Allgeier, Don Burrows, Joshua Smith, Lorraine Brady, Joshua Brady, Michael Brady, Daniel Brady, and Bill Smith.

Great entertainment was provided by the Niagara County Sheriff Association Pipe and Drums and the Irish Step Dancers.

All buildings were open to the public, and Hoyt and Norie Desso were host and hostess.

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SEPTEMBER PROGRAM:

Miles Linnabery, Program Chrm., has announced that the September 16th meeting of the Wilson Historical Society will be a surprise--and if you come, you'll be glad you did.

Refreshments will be served following the meeting. The Public is always invited.

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DID YOU KNOW...that the Great Gorge Trolley line was a popular Falls attraction for forty years, and that the road was abandoned after a massive rock slide demolished the tracks in 1935?

* * * * *

BON MOT: The more we grow up the less we blow up.

SCHOOLHOUSE IS MOVED:

The day many persons have been waiting for arrived on Aug. 6, 1996, when Farley Riggers of Lockport moved the Randall Road Schoolhouse to its new home on the Wilson Museum grounds.

The building was brought on flatbeds in two pieces via the Daniels Road, New Road, and Route 425 to Wilson. Everything went smoothly as the roof was carefully lowered in position.

Several members of the historical society were on hand to take pictures and watch proceedings including, Ollie and Helen Clark, Betty Hausman, Dick and Jeanne Schmidle, Jean Figura, Don Croop, Don Burrows, Sara Berry, Elton Kropp, and Ethel Strasburg.

The old rural school was built in 1861, and is the last one in the district that hasn't been converted to a home. It was used as a community centre for many years after the other districts were consolidated into the Wilson Central School system.

Now that the school is on the museum grounds, Wanda Burrows, Chrm. of the historical society schoolhouse committee, called a meeting on Monday, Aug. 12th, to discuss plans for the school's renovation.

It was decided that replacing doors, windows, and painting the inside of the building is a priority, also having a cupola built for the bell.

Chris Schultz, who is working for his Eagle Badge in Scouting, has volunteered to clean the desks as a community service project.

The Carpenter's Local 280, has also offered to help with some of the repairs, and Ollie Clark will act as liaison between the committee and the Union.

A handicap entrance will be built into the front southeast side of the building although this was not a part of the original building, naturally.

Attending the meeting were Wanda Burrows, Hist. Soc. Chrm., Jean Figura, Community Comm. Chrm., Dorothy Maxfeld, Ollie Clark, Richard Schmidle, and Don Croop.

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IN MEMORIAM:

We recently received word that Steve Mendes of Portland, CT, died June 21, 1996 following a heart attack. He is survived by his wife, Karen Walder Mendes, formerly of Chestnut Road, Wilson. The young couple had only been married about three years.

The society extends its condolences to Karen and members of the Mendes and Walder families.

* * * * *

HISTORY OF SCHOOL MURAL:

When one enters the front door of the Wilson Central High School, you may notice a large mural along the main hallway depicting the growth of the school district for 150 years.

Four historic attractions are shown in the mural including a log cabin representing the 1st three schools in Wilson--one of which was located in 1820 where the Wilson House Restaurant now stands; The Wilson Collegiate Institute, built in 1846, and the red brick Union Free School which was built on the site of the present town hall in 1900; also the new Wilson Central School opened in 1935.

The historic mural was completed in 1962-63 as an advanced art project under the direction of then art teacher, Berne Kent of Wilson. The student artists assisting were junio Veronica Sabey McNeil of East Rockaway, NY; and seniors, Sally Smith Hedley of Olcott, and Albert Waite of Belton, Texas.

The work was done mostly during class hours, and some after school hours. The high school Principal at the time was Richard Schmidle of Wilson, and the district Principal was the late L. Ernest Tarr.

The idea for the mural developed from discussions held between Mr. Tarr and Mr. Kent about removal of a worn wallpaper mural in the hallway. Mr. Kent suggested that an original piece of art be applied to the plaster similar to a medieval fresco, so the old wallpaper was scraped off and the surface thoroughly washed.

Sally Smith initiated the idea for the mural's historical theme, and the artists made use of the 1946 Centennial "Crest" as a basis for the mural portrayals. Enlarged pencil drawings of the buildings were transferred to the wall by use of a grid system, and scenery of students were placed around the structures to make them come alive.

Paint used was a water based latex from Sherwin Williams named Ken Tone, and was purchased from the the Pettit Electric Shop after consultation with Ora Pettit. The artists mixed the paints to arrive at the various shades found in the mural. The paint proved to be an excellent choice as it adhered to the surface of the plaster for over 30 years with no peeling or fading of colors

Perhaps the most amazing thing about the mural is that it has been exposed to activities in a busy high school for more than three decades with no sign of deterioration or destruction.

(Note: Information for the above item was submitted by Albert C. Waite, Jr., of Belton, TX.

* * * * *

AROUND THE MUSEUM:

Gary Fitch, Don Burrows, and Dan King have installed three concrete posts to mark the north boundary of the museum property....Pres. Burrows announced that a player piano has been donated for the schoolhouse....Darrell Smith has purchased a \$200 vacuum cleaner for the museum, with permission from the Board of Directors....Lois Barnum stated that the Barnum Building needs painting, and said it is possible for the society to obtain a cooler and stove from the South Wilson Fire Company. She was delegated to check into it and to purchase if reasonable.

On Sat., Aug. 17th, about ten members decided to clean-up the cars in the Argue Building. All car seats were washed with soap & water, then sprayed with armorall. The new dehumidifier has dried out the bldg., and Dan King put a new belt on the north wall fan. Things look 100% better. Thank you: Gary Fitch, Dan King, Lois Jennings, Lois Barnum, Anne Faery, Don Burrows, "Micky" Hunter, and Elton Kropp.

Lois Jennings has suggested we have an "Adopt-A-Car" program. Sounds like a great idea.

* * * * *

SOME PEOPLE ARE...like blisters. They don't appear until the work is done.

* * * * *

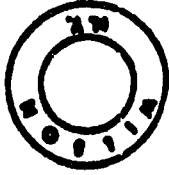
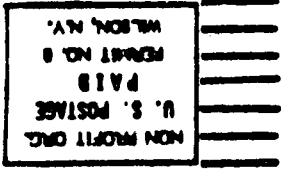


October 1996 Vol. 25 No. 9
(Coleman Printing)

DONALD W. CROOK, Editor

NEWSLETTER

Wilson Historical Society
Wilson, New York 14172-9763



(October 1996)

WINDMILL REPAIRS COMPLETED:

You may have noticed that the top section of the windmill was missing for several months, and for good reason--"Chuck" Messersmith had taken it down and was arranging for necessary repairs. Now the job is done, and once more the rare old windmill is in good working order again.

As many of you probably know, windmills have been around for a very long time, and possibly were one of man's first sources of energy.

They are believed to have originated in ancient Persia more than one thousand years ago, and were later adopted by the Chinese. From there they spread all around the world including Niagara County where they became an important source for providing water to early farm homes and thousands of domestic animals.

The windmill on the museum grounds originated in Ogden, Utah, where it was purchased from an Ogden farmer by James Reynolds. He brought it to Wilson and, after considerable urging by the late Dr. John Argue, donated it to the Wilson Historical Society.

Ed Hastings built a reservoir and covered it with a cement platform on which the framework was bolted into place.

"Chuck" Messersmith took charge of the project when it was discovered that the mechanism that drives the windmill was badly in need of repair to make it operable.

With help from Don Sinclair of Valair, Wilson, the Pitman arm bearings and main bearing were replaced, and the Air Motor center post was straightened with use of Don's hydraulic press.

Dan King, owner of King's Sheet Metal, Beebe Road, Newfane, also helped out by fabricating nine "Sails" and eleven Ribs, as well as making a new directional Vane and repairing the Furl Ring.

Fred Fowler patched a hole in the oil reservoir with fibre glass, and Carl Johnson made seven upper sail brackets and helped "Chuck" straighten the old sails and assemble them.

On May 4, 1984, "Red" Clark of Clark Riggers, Wilson, lifted the windmill into place with his crane, and "Chuck" Messersmith, Ed Seefeldt, Art Schnoor, Ray Allgeier, "Bud" Ward, and Sid Pettit bolted everything together.

Even though "Chuck" kept the moving parts oiled every spring, the windmill, like any other piece of mechanical equipment, finally gave out, and he found it necessary to take it down again this year for repairs.

He again obtained help from Don Sinclair who repaired and welded several vital parts. In the meantime, Art Schnoor replaced the wood flooring beneath the Fan.

Miles Linnabery painted the sails and vane, and John Davis, an industrial Arts teacher at school, built a new brake for the fan.

On August 29, 1996, following a display of physical fortitude and endurance, Don Farley and "Chuck" hoisted the fan into position and put everything together.

The society is very grateful to "Chuck" and all the other persons named for helping to repair the windmill and getting it back into good running condition again.

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WE REMEMBER 1934:

We recall that in 1934 the Country was trying to pull out of the "Great Depression", and, as though that wasn't bad enough, the weather wouldn't cooperate--and large areas of the mid-west were turned into dust bowls.

Crime, it seemed, wasn't much better than it is today but with one exception--law enforcing agencies didn't appear to be as "soft" on criminals. In fact, public enemies like John Dillinger, "Pretty Boy" Floyd, "Baby Face" Nelson, and "Bonnie and Clyde" were all gunned down, ending their reign of terror.

It was also the year that Bruno Hauptman was arrested for kidnapping the Lindberg baby, and that led to enactment of the death penalty for kidnappings over State lines.

Today, politicians talk a great deal about family values and the restriction of certain types of motion pictures or videos detrimental to young, developing minds. That was also tried in 1934 when the Catholic Legion of Decency put pressure on the movie industry by pushing for censorship.

In many ways, however, 1934 was a good year. Benny Goodman organized that first "Swing Band" and became known as the King of Swing...a couple classic movies drew crowds to the movies to see "It Happened One Night" with Clark Gable, and "Little Women" with Katherine Hepburn...last but not least, we moved to the town of Wilson.

* * * * *

BON MOT: Laugh a lot--a good sense of humor cures most all of life's ills.

* * * * *

DEDICATED VOLUNTEER:

For many, many years, Mrs. Burt (Lois) Jennings of Wilson has devoted her life as a volunteer at the Inter-Community Hospital at Newfane; The Wilson "Puppeteers"; the Exley United Methodist Church, and the Wilson Historical Society.

She was a member of the Hospital Auxiliary and Board, and also helped organize the "Puppeteers" who, to the present day, have sewn and furnished thousands of puppets for sick children at the Newfane Hospital.

At Exley United Methodist Church, Lois has devoted many hours as a member of the Administrative Board; the Altar Committee; and the Pastoral Relations Committee; as well as Making dozens of Christmas wreaths for the annual church bazaar.

She is also a charter/life member of the Wilson Historical Society where she served as Curator from 1977 to 1989. Many of today's fine museum exhibits were initiated under her guidance.

In 1989 she accepted chairmanship of the Memorial Committee which entails acknowledging and thanking all donors who contribute memorials to the historical society.

From 1978 to the present time, Lois has been acquisitions chairman--one of the most exacting functions of the historical society. In this office her duties require that she record all acquisitions in an accession book, and also make out transmission slips to be kept on file or given or mailed to all donors--a truly herculean task.

Her dedication to her work, and the fact that she has always attended most of the society's regular meetings, has truly made her one of our most valued members.

Lois was born in Tonawanda, NY, and after early schooling, graduated from Skidmore College, and then taught nursing school at Childrens Hospital in Buffalo.

After her marriage to Burt Jennings, they moved to the beautiful Jennings Homestead on Maple Road, Wilson, where they raised their daughter, Wendy (Hayes) of Park Ridge, Illinois.

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IN MEMORIAM:

Christine Hutchison, 84, died August 30, 1996 at the Newfane Health Facility after a long illness. She was a member of Exley United Methodist Church, the Wilson Historical Society, and, for many years, was physical education teacher and cheerleading coach at Wilson Central High School.

She is survived by 2 sons, Gordon (Georgine) Hutchison of Parker, CO; and Roger Hutchison of Wilson; also a sister, Virginia (Robert) Gershback of Shortsville, NY.

Burial was in Greenwood Cemetery, Wilson.

* * * * *

AS OTHERS SEE US:

Everyone likes to get a pat on the back, and the society appreciates a note received from Linda Stevens, Coordinator of volunteer services, Compeer Niagara, following a visit to the Wilson Museum in September--and we quote:

"Many heartfelt thanks for the wonderful tour of your grounds and buildings in Wilson...the cars were an extra special treat. What a terrific collection you have...you have put a lot of hard work into your displays and it shows. Wilson should be very proud of you."

* * * * *

NEW LIFE MEMBER:

Harriett Landy Nolan, daughter of Roy and Frances Marks Landy, has joined the Life Membership Class of the Wilson His. Society. Born in Lockport, she graduated from Wilson Central School in 1940 and SUNY at Brockport in 1944. She also attended Miami Univ. of Ohio and received credits at Bellevue Community Wa; Byrn Maw, Pa; and E. Arizona College in Payson, Ar.

She had 2 children by her husband, John Nolan, who died in 1962, John K. Nolan, a Special Agent with the Baltimore City Police, Md; and Elizabeth Anne Nolan Pearlstein, BS, MA, who teaches Art in the Buffalo area.

Harriett was one of 6 founders and past pres. of the North Gila Co. Genealogical Society, and an active member of CASA (Court Appointed Surrogate Advocate for Children at Payson, Az.) She is a retired NYS Teacher and taught at N. Tonawanda Public Schools; NYS Dept. of Education Indian Schools; Niagara Falls, NY; and the Franklin and Middleton Schools in Ohio.

She retired to Arizona in 1980 and, since 1978, has done research and published family genealogies for immediate members of the families in WNY area--namely the Marks, Landies, Monohans, Butlers, Francis and Somervilles.

Of Special Interest: The electric car in the Wilson Museum was originally purchased by Harriett to drive back and forth while teaching in N. Tonawanda. In 1978 she sold the car to Dr. John Argue, who later donated it to the Museum. In her letter she notes: "I'm enclosing a check for \$100 to help keep "My" electric car shining." Which, incidentally, makes Harriett the first member to "Adopt-a-Car".

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OCTOBER HOSTS & HOSTESSES:

- Oct. 6th: Open Museum, Virginia Strablow: Greeters, Virginia and Gordon Strablow.
- Oct. 13th: Open Museum, Norman MacAskill: Greeters, Martha and Norman MacAskill.
- Oct. 20th: Open Museum, Don Croop: Greeters, Sara Berry and Don Croop.
- Oct. 27th: Open Museum, Bobbie Hull: Greeters, Bobbie and Robert Hull.

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OCTOBER MEETING:

Miles Linnabery has announced that the program on Oct. 21st will be on "The War of the World's Tape" from the old Orson Wells Radio program.

Refreshments will be served.

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MEMBER IN THE NEWS:

Supt. Richard Zipp has announced his intention to retire at the end of the school year. He has been Supt. of schools since 1977 and, prior to that, Prin. of Thomas Marks for 6 years.

* * * * *

RETIREMENT: The time we spend on jobs we don't get paid for.

Community leaders and numerous volunteers worked very hard to renovate the museum, and make it a unique place in which to preserve the culture of our community. In addition, many artifacts have been donated during the past 25 years that help to show the kind of life Wilson residents experienced in the early 1800's and the 20th century.

Acquisitions include the beautiful wood carvings of the late Walter Wilson; old telegraph keys, radios, and wireless sets from yesteryear; cases filled with old toys; Army and Navy artifacts; Wilson Fire Company memorabilia; dozens of wooden tools that helped build the barns and homes of the Niagara Frontier; also, old musical instruments; kitchen appliances, and a large collection of old dresses, uniforms, and other clothing.

Fine displays in the Barnum Building include a Country Store and Wilson's former Postoffice; and nice exhibits in the "Carriage Room" include the Mark's Buggy; Williams Cutter; Democrat Wagon, and early Firemens' Hose Cart.

The Dr. John Argue Memorial Car Building contains around twenty antique cars, trucks, and classic models, while in the Fittro Shop, Ed Allgeier has put together a large collection of old farm tools and equipment.

Nearby, the old 1903 Caboose, the last of its kind, stands as a symbol of that era when railroads were our country's main source of transportation.

The museum's latest acquisition is the 1861 Randall Road Schoolhouse which was moved to the museum grounds recently. It is planned to renovate the building in the near future, and eventually make it available to teachers and their classes who may use the tools and texts from the past.

It is said that each generation must have something to build on to improve the future-- perhaps that opportunity exists at the Wilson Depot Museum.

* * * * *

OLD BUSINESS:

One of Wilson's oldest businesses began in 1910 when Thomas Marks opened up a nursery on land which he purchased on East Lake Road and Maple from Arthur Pease. Thomas began to learn the nursery business when he was growing up in Canada, and earned enough money to put himself through the Hamilton Business College in Ontario, Canada.

He then worked about five years for the Ellwanger and Barry Nursery in Rochester, NY, and also another five years at the William Smith nursery in Geneva, NY.

During this time, he met and married Harriet Francis of Toronto, and their first child, Edward, was born at Rochester in 1903. Edward grew up in Wilson and graduated from the Wilson High School in 1921.

Thomas Marks, Sr., not only established an outstanding nursery in Wilson, but also became involved in Civic affairs. He was always a strong advocate for better education, and helped have the new high school built as well as an elementary school.

He was president of the Wilson School Board for 21 years, and also found time to serve as President of the old Wilsonian Club; President of the Wilson Free Library; and treasurer of St. John's Episcopal Church of Wilson.

He was also past master of Wilson's Masonic Lodge; Grand Steward of the N. Y. S. Grand Lodge; and was on the Farmers' Committee responsible for starting the Niagara County Farmers Co-op Market at Baily and Clinton in Buffalo.

Perhaps the high lights of Mr. Mark's career was when he was awarded the Master Farmers Medal by Governor Franklin Delano Roosevelt of New York; and the Thomas Marks Elementary School in Wilson was named in his honor.

Thomas Mark's son, Edward and his wife, Gertrude, operated the nursery until their retirement during which time they celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary together.

Today, Thomas E. Marks operates the nursery and continues the long tradition of supplying some of the finest nursery stock available. He is a Life Member of the Wilson Historical Society.

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FROM THE MAILBAG:

The society has received Thank You notes from John M. Fitzsimmons and Michele Savigny, recipients of the historical society awards presented on Class Night by Pres. Donald Burrows.

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THREE MONTH NOTICE:

All annual memberships in the Wilson Historical Society will expire December 31, 1996. It would be greatly appreciated if you would take the time now to renew your membership for 1997. Prompt renewals makes Anne Faery's record-keeping a lot easier. Thanks for your cooperation.

* * * * *

DEMOCRACY doesn't mean, "I'm as good as you are", but "You're as good as I am."

1997.....MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION.....1996

NAME..... Phone ()..... RENEW..... NEW MEMBER.....

ADDRESS..... P.O. BOX..... CITY.....Zip.....

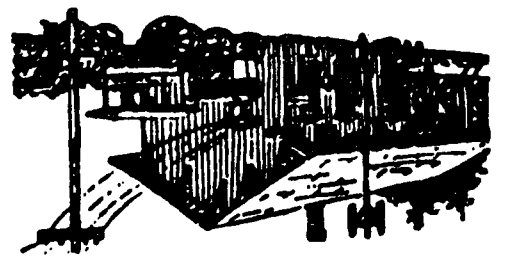
COUPLE \$8.00..... SINGLE \$5.00..... Jr. (under 18) \$1.00 LIFE (Single) \$150.00.....

LIFE (Couple) \$250.00..... ENDOWMENT FUND (Optional)..... BLDG. FUND\$..... HONORARY (FREE) (85 yrs +)

Total Amount Enclosed \$.....

Please make all checks payable to the WILSON HISTORICAL SOCIETY and return to:

ANNE A. FAERY, P.O. Box 731 Wilson, NY 14172

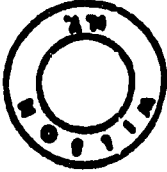
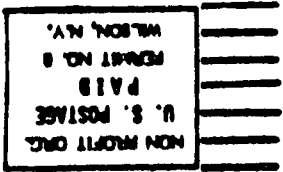


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DONALD W. CROOK, Editor

NEWSLETTER

WILSON HISTORICAL SOCIETY
WILSON, NEW YORK 14172-9763



November, 1996

NIAGARA FRONTIER BUILDER:

The late Walter Johnson, founder of the Johnson Construction Company, was 93 years old when he talked with us about his earlier days in Wilson. Being a member of the Wilson Historical Society he was quite willing to discuss conditions that prevailed around the beginning of the 20th Century.

He was born on the McClew Road in Newfane in 1887, but shortly after moved with his family to a small farm on the south side of Chestnut Road in South Wilson.

Through the influence of his mother, he attended the East Wilson Methodist Church, and he recalled that it was a time in his life when most people appeared to be honest, and seldom did anyone find it necessary to lock doors.

He attended school in Wilson for a few years but, like many others in his day, got most of his education in the "School of Hard Knocks." He did remember that one of his favorite teachers was Carrie Martin, and some of his schoolmates included Lee Hamblin, Jennie Bigalow, Doc Pratt, Rex Tugwell, Fay Campbell, Ronald Wright, Louis Swick, and the Carrigan brothers.

At age 15, he lived and worked on the farm of Edgar Bull at the corner of Chestnut and Irish roads. His bedroom extended off the west wing of the Bull home so he could come and go as he pleased. (The house is now the home of the Darrell Smith family.)

Franklin Bull, father of Edgar, lived next door on the east, and the Bull lands extended along both sides of Chestnut Road. Young Walter helped harvest large amounts of cabbage, apples, melons, "cukes", and tomatoes which were mostly taken to the market in Buffalo.

It was no easy task, and farmers like Fred Thilk and Edgar Bull often drove to market together. The roads were really rough and muddy and, since it was hard to climb the Cambria Center and Baker Hills, they'd usually hitch both teams to one wagon. After driving one load to the top of the hill, they'd return for the other wagon.

The wagons had wide racks with a capacity of 75 or 80 bushels of produce. They were built and assembled by "Hub" Stockwell and his four sons and, in addition, it wasn't unusual for them to shoe 25 or 30 horses in one day at their blacksmith shop at Stockwell's Corners.

The Lockport-Wilson Stagecoach was driven by "Jocky" Faery, and it stopped each day at the East Wilson Postoffice which was also located in the Stockwell Shop.

Walter Johnson was 23 years old when he decided to leave East Wilson to buy himself a farm on the Pletcher Road for \$1.00 down and "the rest when he was able." That move was what started him out as a builder because he had a lot of carpentry work to do before he could get the place in shape so he could get married.

He finally was able to "take the plunge" and eloped with Laura Wiseman, and their first son was born in their log cabin home with beams so low one could hardly stand up straight. After their first winter, he built a new house, and as his prowess as a builder became known, other farmers hired him to do work for them.

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

We asked Mr. Johnson what he believed to be the secret of his success and he replied, "Hard work, good credit, and hiring good men and treating them right."

We then asked him what he remembered most about Wilson and he said, "There is no better farming area, no better place to live, and no better people to associate with. I've always regarded Wilson people as hard working, energetic, and honest."

In view of Mr. Johnson's success as a builder, it was ironic that his father opposed it, and told his son to "Stick to farming--you don't know anything about construction."

He didn't live to see his son build shopping centers, hundreds of houses, and a number of schools including Gaskill Junior High. He also built the first surgical building at Niagara Falls Memorial Hospital, as well as a 201 apartment complex on Cedar Street. The Tower Apartments in Lockport were also erected by his company, and they also did work for companies like Carborundum, Union Carbide, Hooker Chemical, and Harrison Radiator.

Up to the time of his demise, Walter Johnson kept in touch with his former boyhood hometown through his membership in the Wilson Historical Society.

* * * * *

BON MOT:

In the good old days, the man who saved money was a miser--today he's a wonder.

* * * * *

VILLAGE EXPANSION:

Luther Wilson, son of Reuben, was believed to have been the driving force behind most of the early development of the village of Wilson, and he was very public spirited and energetic in his efforts to make improvements. He also served in the State Assembly at Albany.

In 1842, he started development of the village by having a portion of his lands surveyed into building lots by Jesse P. Haines at the southwest corner of Lot #9, township 15, Range 8, of the Holland Land Company Survey.

This section was bounded on the east by Lake Street; on the north by the lands of Luman Case; and on the south by the lands of Simon Sheldon. A map of the area was filed in the County Clerk's Office.

A short time later, Simon Sheldon had his farm divided into lots by surveyor William Woods, and his land was located on the northeast corner of Lot #8, township 15, Range 8.

There was further expansion of the village when Andrew Brown, who owned land at the corner of lot 90, township 15, range 7, decided to sell all his frontage with the exception of the lot on which he lived. This property was bounded on the west by Lake Street, and on the south by Youngstown Road east.

John Onderdonk, who came to Wilson ca. 1850, purchased a farm at the south west corner of Lot #90, township 15, Range 8, and quickly sold it off for village lots.

Eldert V.W. Dox made the first complete map of the village in 1889, and copies were filed with the State Comptroller's Office, Niagara County Clerk's Office, and the Village of Wilson. The village copy was believed to have been destroyed in the Masonic Block fire of 1890.

The village of Wilson was incorporated by an act of the New York State Legislature on May 11, 1858, and the corporation boundaries included 416 acres of land, and a population of seven hundred fifteen people.

The first officers of the newly incorporated village were, Luther Wilson, President; John Hosmer, clerk; and trustees, Luren D. Wilson, Reuben F. Wilson, Henry S. McChesney, and William P. Grout.

Today the village is 138 years old, and its officers are Charles Branch, Mayor; Emma Lou Reppentine, Village Clerk; and trustees, Milton Clark and Jerry Dean.

* * * * *

COOLER AIR AHEAD:

The political air will be cleansed this November when one of the most controversial election campaigns of recent years is resolved.

As always, the individual voter will have the last word, and somehow they always seem to be able to separate the chaff from the grain.

And should anyone think their vote doesn't matter, consider this: In 1776 one vote gave America the English language instead of German; In 1845, Texas came into the Union by one vote; In 1876 one vote elected Rutherford Hayes president of the United States; and just a few weeks before Pearl Harbor in 1941, one vote saved the Selective Service system. One vote can make a difference.

* * * * *

MUSEUM GREETERS FOR NOVEMBER:

- Nov. 3rd: Open Museum, Gordon Strablow. Greeters, Howard and Dorothy Parker.
- Nov. 10th: Open Museum, Lois Barnum. Greeters, Lois Barnum and Marlene Schoultz.
- Nov. 17th: Open Museum, Carole Schnoor. Greeters, Carole Schnoor and Helen Sherrie.
- Nov. 24th: Open Museum, Don Burrows. Greeters, Don and Wanda Burrows.

(Note: The museum will not be open to visitors during the months of January, February, and March, 1997, however, monthly program meetings and Board of Director meetings will be held as usual during those months.) Don't Forget: Veterans Day is Nov. 11, 1996.

* * * * *

NOVEMBER MEETINGS:

The Board of Directors will meet at the museum, Wednesday, November 21st at 7:30 PM.

On November 18th, a representative of the New York State Parks Department, will be the guest speaker, and the subject of the program will be "White Houses of the Seaway Trail".

Meetings all start at 7:30 PM, and the public is cordially invited to attend all programs. Light refreshments will be served

A special musical program presented by the Friends of the Wilson Free Library, will be held at the museum on Thursday, November 21st, at 7:30 PM

The program will be performed by the Cantabile String Quartet directed by James Flood, director of the Niagara Symphony Orchestra.

"Sandy" Stimson, former Wilson resident and graduate of Wilson Central High School, will be the guest soloist and will play several selections on the Oboe.

Sandy graduated "Cum Laude" from Ithaca College with a B.S. degree in Oboe performance. She has played with the Niagara Youth Orchestra, Ithaca Wind Ensemble, Binghamton Symphony, and Ithaca Opera Association Orchestra.

She received her Master's Degree in Music from Yale University, and has since performed with the Boston "Pops" and Boston Symphony Orchestras. She also played in residence at the exclusive musical centre at Tanglewood, Mass.

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BOARD REPORTS:

Wanda Burrows announced that the schoolhouse project has been delayed by poor weather, and that its renovation can not be started until Farley Riggers places it on its foundation.

Celeste Crawford reported that the Niagara Council on the Arts planning a tour of the museum on September 13, 1997 as part of a tour of homes in the Wilson area.

Loretta White and Chris Schultz requested use of the Barnum Building for a Senior Class "Haunted House" money raising event. The class event is being sponsored by the Optimist Club. Board approved request.

* * * * *

SOUNDINGS: When people say they "won't be a minute", they are usually right.

* * * * *

LOOKING AHEAD:

The Wilson Historical Society Museum will be closed to visitors on Sundays during the months of January, February, and March, 1997.

Regular program meetings on the 3rd Monday of each month will continue to be held, as well as the meetings of the Board of Directors on the 2nd Wednesday of each month. All meetings convene at 7:30 PM.

There will be no program meetings in July and August, 1997, but the Board of Directors will meet as usual. The museum will also be open in July/August for visitors. If you have any questions, please call Don Burrows, President.

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FROM THE MAILBAG:

Christine Munch Zewin of Sun City Center, Florida, writes that Henry and Amelia Munch came to live on their summer farm on Chestnut Road ca. 1905. Their cows were driven there from Tonawanda showing that the far west wasn't the only place to have cattle drives.

Ernest Munch married Evelyn Bardol, whos father was a Veterinarian living at the corner of Ide and Coomer Roads. They had four children, William, Eleanor, (who died as a toddler), Herbert "Herbie", and Donald.

Ernest Munch's brother, Oscar Munch, married Vira Meahl, and they had two children, James and Oscar, Jr.

Laura Munch married J. Collins of Newfane, and their children were Malin Collins, and Amelia "Molly" Collins (Stolzenberg,)

William Munch, son of Ernie and Evelyn resides in Gibsonton, Florida and is a member of the Wilson His. Society. Donald Munch, a retired State Police Investigator, lives in Irving, NY, and is a Life Member of the Society.

* * * * *

AROUND THE MUSEUM:

A few new exciting changes are being made in the depot/museum under the guidance of curator, Dorothy Maxfield.

A beautiful old china cabinet has been donated to the museum by Mr. and Mrs. Richard Kramer of Ransomville, and will be used to hold a number of items from the estate of the late Millie Croop. The cabinet was brought to the museum by Darrell Smith and Bill Loeschke.

According to Mrs. Kramer, the antique cabinet was old when she purchased it in 1945, and set unused in her attic for 31 years.

A Case containing uniforms and trophies of the Wilson Volunteer Fire Company, #1, has been moved to the front room, and a new case, which has been placed in the Ticket Office Room, will hold a collection of radio equipment in honor of the late John Myers, former President.

A Doll House, built and furnished by the late Elwin Upton, will be moved to the Patterson Room, and plans, suggested by Eleanor Myers, are underway to install a Victorean type living room at the west end of the Patterson Room.

Some of these changes may not be completed before Spring, but in the meantime, Dorothy would like to thank the following persons for helping her: Darrell Smith, Bill Loeschke, Randy Ward, "Skip" Pettit, Dale Schlyer, Ron and Judy Zauner, and Eleanor Myers.

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High School Seniors, sponsored by the Wilson Optimist Club, put on an outstanding "Haunted House display at the Wilson Museum from Oct. 23rd thru Oct. 30th. Historical Society members were invited to take a test run thru the "horror chambers" on Monday, Oct. 21st, and all agreed that the efforts put forth by the Senior Class were "Horrorrendous".

We believe it is a healthy sign having the younger generation making use of the museum facilities. Who knows--some day the ghosts and goblins may be running the place.

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GOOD RESPONSE:

Dues are coming in good, and your membership comm. wishes to thank all who are responding early. Hopefully, we can start 1997 with all members paid for 1997.

Prompt payment of dues is encouraging because its the best indicator we have that you support the Wilson Historical Society and Museum.

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ADOPT-A-CAR:

If you would like to "Adopt-a-car, talk to Wally Goodman, Chrm., Don Burrows, Pres. or Don Croop. There are about a dozen and a half left. Adoption means you'd be willing to spong off or polish "your" car once-in-a-while so it will look nice to visitors.

* * * * *

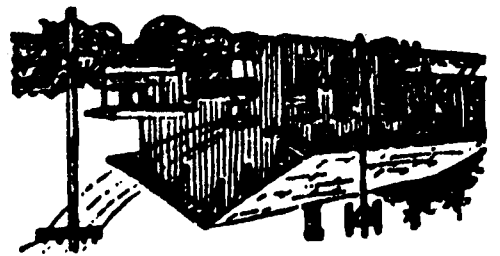
SOME PEOPLE can't afford new cars, and that includes a lot of people who are driving them.

1997.....MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION.....1997

NAME.....Phone ()..... RENEWAL..... NEW MEMBER.....
ADDRESS.....P.O.Box..... CITY.....Zip.....
COUPLE \$8.00..... SINGLE \$5.00..... JR. (under 18) \$1.00..... LIFE (single) \$150.....
LIFE (Couple) \$250..... Endowment Fund..... Building Fund..... HONORARY (85+) FREE.....
TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$.....

Please make all checks payable to the WILSON HISTORICAL SOCIETY and return to;

ANNE A. FAERY, P.O. BOX 731 WILSON, NEW YORK 14172.

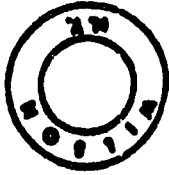
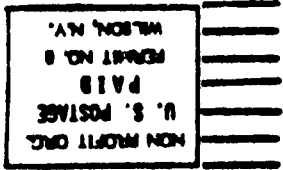


December 1996 Vol. 25 No. 10
(Coleman Printing)

DONALD W. CROOK, Editor

NEWSLETTER

Wilson Historical Society
Wilson, New York 14172-9763



December 1996

PHARMACIES IN WILSON:

In the early 1800's, many settlers in the Niagara region used herbs grown in their own gardens to counteract illness and disease, but as Niagara County developed, drugs and medicines were usually furnished by doctors or purchased at general stores.

Before the drugstore licensing act of 1904, just about anyone could call their business a drugstore---and many did.

Although the history of early pharmacies in Wilson is a little obscure, we note that M.C. Betts and his Druggist and Apothecary Store was prominently advertised in the April, 1880, edition of the Wilson "Star".

In 1887, Oscar McChesney was listed in the Niagara County Directory as a "Jeweler, Druggist, and Stationer", but on January 3, 1895, he sold his entire stock of medicines and drugs to a Mr. Norman Keck.

The late Bea Salisbury once recalled that the "Salisbury and Jones" drugstore used to operate on the north side of Young Street and, according to her, the first "Middleton Drugstore" was opened in 1905 in the old Masonic Building.

In 1908, George Middleton and Ronald Singer purchased the store owned by Bigalow and Salisbury, and then Clarence Johnson bought out Singer's interest, and the store was operated by Johnson and Middleton.

In 1909, Middleton's Hall, also known as the "Skating Rink", was built behind the drugstore, and soon became the focal point for many of Wilson's social gatherings. Activities included roller skating, dances, basketball games, village fairs, and other types of entertainment. In the drugstore itself, customers could get an 8 oz. "coke" for five cents, or an ice cream sundae for ten cents.

One of the three glass colored globes that used to hang in the store's front window to identify it as a drugstore, can be seen today as an exhibit in the Wilson Museum.

George Middleton ran the drugstore until 1936 when he sold it to his son-in-law, Charles Haner. Mr. Haner operated the drugstore with his wife, Edna, who worked as the pharmacist. When Mr. Haner died, his wife continued running the business until 1951.

It was during this time in 1943 that Mr. John Bieda, publisher of the Wilson "Star", bought the drugstore and re-opened it as the "Wilson Pharmacy".

The Haners moved the Middleton Drugstore across the road and for a year or two there were two drugstores operating in the village.

In 1944, John Bieda sold the Wilson Pharmacy to Edna Haner, and re-purchased the Wilson "Star". He published the paper until 1945 when he was called into the service. He retained ownership of the paper, however, until 1950.

Edna Haner moved the Middleton Drugstore back to its original location and operated the business until 1951 when she sold it to Gordon MacPherson. Mr. MacPherson operated the store until 1968 when he sold out to William Okoniewski.

"Okies's" Pharmacy is still operating today, and under Bill's perceptive management, stores were opened in Barker in 1973-74, and Newfane in 1976.

Medical supplies and drugs were discontinued in the Barker store and instead dispensed at the larger Newfane and Wilson stores.

The "Okie" Pharmacies have adapted well to the ever changing high tech age we live in today. All prescription drugs are checked by computer against other drugs a patient might be taking to insure that no harmful side effects might occur. Also, a description of the drug dispensed and any possible reaction a patient might have by taking it is included with all prescription drugs sold.

Pharmacists at the Wilson store are Gary Mittlefehldt, who started in 1976 and is celebrating his 20th year with the store; also Lee VerMenlon, Sr. Bill Okoniewski also fills in part time when needed.

Other employees include Joyce Rohring, Sandra Holden, Gertrude Streblein, Ritta Rohring, Bonnie Mittlefehldt, and Shawn Mittlefehldt.

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SPECIAL THANKS:

Anne Faery, Membership Chrm., reports that membership renewals for 1997 are coming in good. We also wish to thank the following members who included donations to the building fund: Leah Bigalow; Alfred Stevens; Thelma Patterson; Ernestine Walpple; Blanche Wilson; Elton and June Kropp; Harry and Bernice Brown; George Cruickshank; Mary Margaret Young; Frank Massing; and Howard and Dorothy Parker. Endowment Fund: Dana Druckenmiller and James P. Harold.

* * * * *

BON MOT: Luck is the idol of the idle.

IT'S CHRISTMAS TIME AGAIN:

There's no question about it. Christmas is a wonderful time of the year, and you can feel the excitement as laughter, love, generosity, and the Spirit of Christmas fill the air.

It's a time for Carolers to joyfully sing their favorite Christmas hymns, and help spread the message of peace, hope, and good will throughout the land. It's also time to extend a "Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to All" from Anne Faery, Membership Chairman, and Don Croop, Newsletter Editor.

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ADOPT-A-CAR:

Let's try to make it work. So far, Francis Landy Nolan has adopted the Electric Car; Don Burrows has adopted the "Covert"; Sara Berry and Don Croop have adopted the "Metz"; Darrell and Joshua Smith have decided to adopt "Red" Clark's recent donation, the 1969 Ford Mustang; and Ann A. Faery has adopted the 1963 Supercharged "Avanti".

Here are a number of nifty cars and trucks still yearning to be adopted: the 1927 Wolverine Coupe; 1957 Lincoln Mark II; 1959 Cadillac Convertible; 1967 Pontiac Convertible; 1923 Chevy 1 Ton Truck; 1919 Ford T.T. Truck; 1968 Corvair Monza Coupe; 1962 Chrysler 4dr. Sedan; 1962 Vauxhall; 1946 Chrysler Imperial Limousine; and 1969 Volvo.

The purpose of the adopt-a-car plan is to insure that cars adopted will occasionally be dusted off or polished so they'll make a good appearance to visitors.

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WERE YOU BORN BEFORE 1940?

If you were, you can appreciate how times have changed. Things we take for granted today just didn't exist then--things like TV, penicillin, frozen foods, contact lenses, credit cards, lazer beams, ball point pens, pantyhose, dish washers, dryers, electric blankets, and air conditioners--to mention a few.

Fast Foods were what you ate before Lent, and yogurt or guys wearing ear rings were unheard of. There were also no Day Care Centers, Nursing Homes, FM Radio, tape decks, or word processors.

McDonald's, Pizza Hut, and instant coffee were still in the future, and five and ten cent stores were where you could really buy things for five and ten cents. In fact, for a nickel, you could ride on a street car, make a phone call, buy a root beer, or mail one first class letter and two penny postcards.

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MEMBERS IN THE NEWS:

Lois Barnum, Winnie Terry, Lois Jennings, and Pauline Alvers posed for a recent photo in the Lockport Union Sun & Journal advertising the Exley United Methodist Church Bazaar. The successful event featured Christmas decorations, crafts, baked goods, candies, and a very tasty chicken or beef on weck luncheon.

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IN FOND MEMORY:

As the year 1996 draws to a close, we note that 14 Wilson Historical Society members passed away from November, 1995, to November, 1966. They are sadly missed but not forgotten:

Helen French, Joanne Wiltse, Dr. George Badger, Franklin Bickford, Claude E. Lampman, Lucille C. Kirchoff, Gertrude Marks, Lorin Allgeier, Winifred Fischer, Frank Fenn, Marietta Goodman, Hazel Salisbury, Steve Mendes, and Christine Hutchison.

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DECEMBER MEETING:

Dennis Farmer from Old Fort Niagara will be the guest speaker at the December 16th meeting of the Wilson Historical Society. He will discuss the War of 1812 and its effect on Wilson.

Officers for the new year will be elected. Nominees for office will be presented by Art Schnoor as selected by the Nominating Committee. Nominations will be accepted from the floor.

Light refreshments will be served

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DECEMBER MUSEUM ATTENDANTS:

Dec. 1st: Open Museum, Gary Fitch. Greeters, Marilyn and Edward Allgeier.
Dec. 8th: Open Museum, Darrell Smith. Greeters, Sally and Darrell Smith.
Dec. 15th: Open Museum: Dorothy Maxfield. Greeters, Dorothy and Jack Maxfield.

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THE "WILSON SKETCHBOOK":

The Wilson Sketchbook makes a nice gift for that "hard to get for" person--especially at Christmas, so we just want to remind you that it's available and we can mail it anywhere in the United States.

The price of the "Sketchbook" is \$15 plus \$3 for shipping and handling. Checks should be made out to the Wilson Historical Society, and for fast service address requests to Don Croop, PO Box 977, Wilson, NY 14172.

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BAKE SALE A SUCCESS:

The election day bake sake at the Wilson Town Hall turned out great. What makes it all the more remarkable, there was no advance publicity in the Newsletter, yet Sally Smith, who was acting as temporary chrm of the Ways & Means Comm., enlisted the aid of several live-wire members who helped her call prospective bakers--and did they ever respond.

Sally wishes to thank everyone who baked and helped--especially Lois Barnum who did the really tough job of putting prices on things. Since we had only one outlet this year, the historical society did well and cleared \$184 dollars.

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SOUNDINGS:

If you observe people long enough, you will discover that the self made ones have a good number of working parts.

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RECENT ACQUISITIONS:

Dorothy and the Late George Linnabery have given two school desks for the Randall Road Schoolhouse. Desks are in memory of George Linnabery and Hazel Salisbury, who once was a teacher at the school.

Carol C. Smith of Sanborn, NY: For Schoolhouse, Baldwin Reader (6th yr.); Elson Grammer School Reader, books 3 and 4; Palmer Method in Handwriting,(1926); and book, "More Friends and Neighbors" used in Chestnut Road District 7 Schoolhouse.

Virginia Clark Klaiber, Williamsville, NY: Bruce Fittro Group photo; photo, Wilson Masons; 6 photos of Fittro Home; "Starlight" (1916); Program for 1914 Commencement, Invitation, and Program; and photo of group of friends. (Belonged to Doris Fittro Clark.)

Edward Allgeier: The "Crest" (1946); "The Wise Owl" 9 issues; 1936 Program for the Dedication of the New Wilson High School.

Janet Sporleder: Eight copies of "AmericanHeritage,(1995; "Legacy", (1995); Bible Dictionary, (1884); Photo of Emergency Car and Fire Truck, (1933); and Hat Band for R.R. Ticket Clerk.

Marea A. Kwiatkowski of Louisiana: Exceltone Player Piano; piano stool, 7 piano study books, and 17 pieces of sheet music.

Dorothy Maxfield: Boy's Coat.

Elton Kropp: Two Election Buttons for the late Sen. Earl Brydges.

Eleanor Harrington: 1887 Early Bible from St. John's Episcopal Church.

Robert & Doris Motchenbaugh: Two school desks for the Schoolhouse renovation project.

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FROM THE MAILBAG:

Les Clark of Hayward, CA, writes that he and his wife, Betty, had a cruise on the former Pres. Franklin Delano Roosevelt's yacht, the "Potomac". The diesel powered ship, which was restored by volunteer labor, is 130 feet long and 30 feet wide, and can carry 150 passengers.

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MEMBERS HONORED:

Howard and Leona Hunter were awarded the 4-H Distinguished Service Award at the Cornell Extension Service Awards meeting held in Lockport recently. In addition to their 18 years working in 4-H, the Hunters have been active in the Boy Scouts; I,O,O,F, and Rebecas; Exley United Methodist Church; and the Wilson Historical Society.

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NEW MEMBERS:

We are pleased to welcome two new junior members, Katherine and Michael Cornell of Wilson.

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VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:

Wilson's new Optimist Club, the Schools' Guidance Departments, and Thomas Marks Elementary School are developing a tutoring program for grades K-8. They are looking for adult volunteers with an interest in working with students from 2:30-5:30pm. If interested, contact Louis Simard (751-9779) or Chris DeLuca (751-6105).

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BOARD ACTION/REPORTS:

Don Burrows, Pres., reported that the old Randall Road Schoolhouse has finally been lowered onto its foundation and, if weather permits, the roof will be shingled by Mike White's Roofing.

Ollie Clark will check on the possibility of having the siding replaced, (where missing) also having the doors and windows replaced before winter sets in.

In other activity, Lois Barnum reported that the freezer and stove from the South Wilson Fire Company have been purchased, and it is hoped to have them operable soon.

The Christmas tree was put together by Micky Hunter, and beautifully decorated by Celeste Crawford. Hopefully, the outside decorations will also be working before the Holidays.

* * * * *

DO YOU REMEMBER....When Constables "Bill" and "Hank" Lort used to wait at the corner by the the old Welker and Brown store for someone to go through the stop signs at the corner--- then would blow their whistles and give the drivers a ticket?

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THOUGHT FOR TODAY:

Life is too short to remember slights and insults....to hold grudges that rob you of happiness....to waste time doing things that are of no value.

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FINAL NOTICE:

The attached application form makes it possible for you to renew your membership for 1997, (if you haven't already done so). Your cooperation is appreciated.

* * * * *

1997.....MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION.....1997

NAME.....Phone ()..... RENEW..... NEW MEMBER.....

ADDRESS.....PO BOX.....CITY.....ZIP.....

COUPLE \$8.00..... SINGLE \$5.00..... JUNIOR \$1.00..... LIFE (single) \$150.00.....

LIFE (Couple) \$250.00..... ENDOWMENT \$..... BUILDING FUND \$..... HONORARY.....FREE 85+

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$.....

Please make all checks payable to the WILSON HISTORICAL SOCIETY and return to:

ANNE A. FAERY, P.O. BOX 731 Wilson, N.Y. 14172