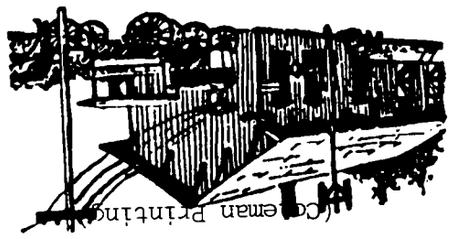
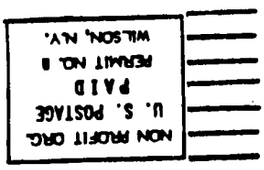
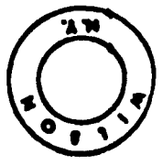
Wilson Historical Society
WILSON, NEW YORK 14172-9763
NEWSLETTER
DONALD W. CROOP, Editor
MILLENNIUM ISSUE
January 2000 Vol. 29 No.1
(Coleman Printing)







January 2,000
Millennium Issue

EARLY WILSON HIGHLIGHTS:

In 1810, Reuben Wilson and John Eastman, who resided in Canada, loaded their families and possessions into two open batteauxs and poled the boats along the Southern shore of Lake Ontario to a landing site about a mile and a half east of the present village of Wilson. There they pulled the boats ashore and tilted them up on poles as temporary shelter. When Reuben erected a log cabin there, he probably had no idea that his new home would be threatened by war a couple of years later.

It was in the Fall of 1811 that the first road was opened up from Fort Niagara to Somerset, but it was very rough and Reuben was quoted as having said it was easier to send grain by boat to Canada for grinding rather than to use the Lakshore highway.

Things became very difficult for the early settlers when the War of 1812 broke out. American troops who had invaded Canada, learned that a large force of British forces was approaching to drive them out. The Americans decided to retreat but, before doing so, needlessly burned down the small village of Newark,(Niagara-on-the-Lake.)

The British were infuriated and pursued the Americans across the Niagara River at Five Mile Meadows. From there they marched North to Fort Niagara and captured it. Using the Fort as a Base of Operations, they launched a series of devastating raids against the Settlers of the Niagara Region--burning their cabins and laying waste to their crops.

Early accounts tell us that Reuben's Cabin was spared because Mrs. Wilson cooked supper for the British officers who spared the cabin because of her hospitality. The site of the cabin was about 200 yards from the road and, according to the late Larry Pease, the remains of the cabin could be seen when he was a young man. A historical marker has been placed near the site by the Wilson Historical Society, and is on the North side of Route 18 just east of Maple Road.

In 1816, Reuben purchased 150 acres of land and a Sawmill that had been built the previous year by Joshua Williams and Simon Sheldon. The area was along the East Branch of the 12 Mile Creek where it crosses West Young Street. He then built a Grist Mill and a Log House which he moved into in 1818. That was the same year Wilson became a Town --made up from the Town of Porter.

The political organization of the new Town took place in 1819 when, at a meeting presided over by Reuben Wilson, he was elected the first Town Supervisor. He held the position to 1829.

In 1824, Reuben had also been appointed Postmaster--the year that he built a frame house around the original log house. It is still standing and lived in, and is considered to be a Niagara County Landmark.

Reuben's eldest son, Luther, was the real business genius in the family. He not only built a large warhouse near the mouth of the Harbor, but also had several schooners built. He bought and sold produce and shipped much of it to Oswego. Luther was also responsible for having the first old wooden piers built at the mouth of 12 Mile Creek.

In 1827, he started to develop the village of Wilson by having a tier of lots surveyed along the North side of Young Street. This was the center of activity until 1847 when he had another piece of land surveyed which was called the "Wilson Addition."

Other plots of land were then surveyed and sold by Simon Sheldon, Andrew Brown, and John Onderdonk, and the new village was incorporated by the State Legislature on May 11, 1858. Luther Wilson was the first President of the Board, the position now known as Mayor.

* * * * * * * * * *

TO PROSPECTIVE HONORARY MEMBERS:

At the present time we have approximately 30 Honorary Members in the Wilson Historical Society--quite a remarkable number. These are persons who have reached the age of 85 while a member of the Society.

Once a person attains Honorary Status, he or she is no longer required to pay dues in the Society. Occasionally some of our members,(who qualify for Honorary Status) fail to notify the Membership Chairman and continue paying dues needlessly.

Now if any of you who are reading this are 85, and have not yet notified the society, it would most certainly be to your advantage to do so. All it takes is a phone call to our membership chairman, Sandy Holden. (716) 751-6596.

* * * * * * * * * *

QUIPS:

When you see large apples on top of a barrel, you must remember it's the little ones that hold them up.

* * * * * * * * * *

IN MEMORIUM:

Mabel B. Burrows, 95, a native of Wilson, died Nov. 23, 1999 at the Odd Fellow & Rebekah Health Care Facility in Lockport. She married Albert Burrows who predeceased her in 1979. They operated the Burrows Farm on Beebe Road for over 55 years.

She was a member of Exley United Methodist Church and Ladies Aid in Wilson; Past Pres. of the Wilson Golden Age Club; member of the Eastern Star, 268, Wilson; and Honorary Member of the Wilson Hist. Soc. which she joined in 1980.

She is survived by Janet (Albert) Ellis of Niagara Falls, NY; Donald (Wanda) Burrows of Burt,NY;and Kenneth (Prudence) Burrows of Burt,NY; also 7 grandchildren, 10 g=grandchildren; and one g-g- grandchild.

A Memorial Service was conducted by the Eastern Star, and Rev. Ken Babcock conducted a funeral service at Exley United Methodist Church. Burial was in Arcadia Park Cemetery.

* * * * * * * * * * *

George E. "Duke" Lederhouse, 86, died suddenly at St. Mary's Hospital, Dec. 3, 1999. His wife, Marjorie Fenner Lederhouse, pre-deceased him on Sept. 6, 1998 "Duke" worked 38 years for the Carborundum Co. in NiaGARA Falls, and was a Department Head when he retired in 1972. He also operated a small fruit farm for many years.

He was a Trustee of Fillmore Chapel U.M. Church; Past Pres. of the Ransomville Rural Retirees; Pres. of the Service Class of Fillmore Chapel and Ransomville U.M. Churches; a 50 yr. member of Masonic Lodge 551 F&AM of Ransomville; and Honorary Member of the Wilson Hist. Soc. He was also an avid bowler, and on the day he passed away, bowled a 196 at Townline Bowl.

He is survived by two daughters, Carol L. Gaillard of Hoosick Falls, NY; and Karen L. Upton of Norfolk, VA; also 3 brothers, Howard Lederhouse of Newfane; Stanley Lederhouse of Pekin; and Norman Lederhouse of Ransomville; also 5 grandchildren and 3 g-grandchildren.

Services were held at Fillmore Chapel U.M. Church, and interment was in North Ridge Cemetery, Cambria, with Rev. Jacob Denny officiating.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Marilyn (DeNeau) Conti, 64, of N. Tonawanda, died Oct. 8, 1999 at DeGraff Memorial Hospital. She was born in Montpelior, VT. on Jan. 29, 1935, the daughter of Aldine(Fullerton) DeNeau and the late Ray E. DeNeau.

She was a member and former President of St. Peters United Church; Member of the Womens' Fellowship; also the Wilson Hist. Soc. which she joined in 1993.

She is survived by her husband, Frank Conti; a son, Mark Conti of N. Tonawanda; a daughter, Susan Eckstein of N. Tonawanda; and a sister, Carilyn Warblow of North Tonawanda.

Services were held at the Frettheld Funeral Home, with the Rev. Ronald Keaton officiating.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Donn E. Wagner, 67, passed away Nov. 5, 1999 at Long Beach Memorial Center, Long Beach, CA. A native of Long Beach, he was born Feb. 22, 1932, the son of the late James E. Wagner and Genevieve May Knight Wagner. He was a member of St. Paul's Methodist Church in Niagara Falls, NY;the 1st Marine Division Association in Los Angeles; the Orange County Chapter of the 1st Marine Div. Assoc. in Orange Co.,Ca. He spent his military service years with the U.S. Navy as a Hospital Corpsman with the U.S. Marine Corps.

He married Alice Mae Jacobs in 1960 who predeceased him in 1993. In August of 1996, he married Willamae Moore of Tacoma, WA. They lived in Long Beach until Donn died.

Donn is survived by his wife, Willamae, a daughter, Lori Ann Hart of Logan, Utah; a brother, Bruce Edward Wagner of Pleasanton,CA; 3 stepdaughters; 1 stepson; 3 tepsons-in-law; 8 grandchildren; 4 cousins; and many other relatives and friends.

Services were conducted at the Luyben Family Mortuary in Long Beach with Pastor Nathan O. Loesch officiating. Burial was in All Souls Cemetery, Long Beach, CA.

* * * * * * * * * * *

NEW LIFE MEMBERS:

Ronald Frank Zauner has joined the membership class of the Wilson Historical Society. Ron was born in Buffalo, April 11, 1943, the son of John Joseph Zauner and Ruth Irene Massing.

He attended the Olympia High School in Greece, NY, and furthered his education at the University of Missouri at Rolla where he received his degree in Mechanical Engineering. In his marriage to Judith Anne(Case) Zauner they had two children, Jonathon Paul Zauner, and Robert Scott Zauner. They attend the North Ridge United Methodist Church where Ron sings in the choir. He is also active in Kairos, (an interdenominational prison Ministry); and bowls in the Townline Bowling League Wednesday evenings. He is also a member of the Wilson Hist. Soc. and served the past four years on the Memorial Day Fair Committee. In 1988, he chaired Fittro Shop.

Ron served in the Missouri University R.O.T.C, and later was a Lieutenent in the U.S. Army with service in the Vietnam War.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Judith Ann Zauner was born Jan. 19, 1942, at Syracuse, NY, the daughter of Robert Monroe Case and Bettyellen (Soper) Case. She attended the Elmira Free Academy High School, and the Jean Summers Business School in Elmira, NY.

Of her two sons,(listed above) Robert Scott Zauner married Heather Mayfield of Alabama on May 24, 1997.

Judy is a member of the North Ridge United Methodist Church and the United Methodist Women. She is also a member of Kairos, and Compeer,(a Mental Health Friend program.)As a member of the Wilson Historical Society, she was Recording Secretary from 1980 through 1985; she is alsoa member of the Newfane Hospital Auxilary. Judy says her parents, 80 &78 are full of LIFE.

* * * * * * * * * * *

SOUNDINGS:

A small town is a place where everyone knows everything, but they still take the local paper to see if the Editor got it right.

* * * * * * * * * * *

HISTORY OF THE "Fleetwing":

The "Fleetwing" was built at the Wilson Harbor in 1862 by John V. Pease, Benjamin Dearborn, and Orrin Quick. It was registered at 127 tons, and Orrin Quick was the schooner's 1st Captain.

On one of its maiden voyages, the ship capsized off the Wilson Harbor, and Captain Quick's wife, his son, and the Ship's cook were all drowned. (All three are buried in Greenwood Cemetery)

After the schooner capsized it was enlarged to 180 ton registry, and sailed around the Great Lakes until 1906.

The Log of the schooner Fleetwing was recorded by Fred L. Quick of Wilson, and covers a sailing period of three yearsfrom 1884. The Log reveals that the ship was busily engaged in Lake Commerce and carried loads of lumber, shingles, coal, stave bolts, block stone, sand, Potash, wheat, and barley.

The Schooner visited dozens of Ports along Lake Ontario, Lake Erie, St. Clair, and the Detroit River. Ports visited included Ogdensburg, Oswego, Sodus Point, Charlotte, Oak Orchard, Wilson, Hamilton, Pt. Whitby, Toronto, St. Catherines, Port Coburg, Port Dalhousie, Buffalo, Sandusky, Cleveland, Detroit, Windsor, Vermillion, Canfield, and Port Huron.

The Logbook is neatly written in beautiful handwriting, and the last notation in the Log reads, "Schooner Fleetwing-1887. Left Wilson Harbor, March 21st to fit out schooner at Detroit. Commenced Work."

Captain Quick built a home in Wilson at 712 Harbor Street where the late Bea Salisbury used to live He later erected a brick home on Young Street where the Maynard Pettit family used to live. In fact, the structure was being built when the Fleetwing was swamped off Wilson Harbor, so Mrs. Quick and her son, who died aboard the Fleetwing, didn't live to see her new home completed.

The Fleetwing was later owned at Brighton, Ontario, the Port from which she sailed for many years. In 1906, manned by a green crew, she barely was able to make it into the Toronto Port because of so much water in her hold. Shortly after, she "died".

The late Dr. Argue and Norman Thilk learned that Mrs. Robert Starkweather of E. Lake Road, not only had the Log Book, but also a beautiful large colored painting of the Schooner hanging in her living room. They visited Mrs. Starkweather and convinced her that, when she passed away, these very important artifacts of Wilson's past history should be left to the Museum.

On December 7, 1999, a member of her family called this writer and said that he would like to carry out Mrs. Starkweather's wishes. Arrangements were made for him to drop the items off at the Town Hall, and Wanda Burrows was able to deliver them to the Museum in time for the Board meeting . on December 8, 1999.

* * * * * * * * * *

GENEROUS SUPPORTERS:

The Society gratefully acknowledges the following members who have donated generously to the Building Fund: Norm and Patricia O'Brien; Beverly Woolson; Bernice and William McLaughlin; Marie Hewitt; June Kropp; Mark and Phyliss Huntington; Debra Doron; Thelma Patterson; Rachel Flagler; Jeanette Fredericks; Richard and Jan Zipp; James and Carilyn Warblow; Elma Cowan McGrath; Leah Bigalow; William Owler; Paul and Catherine Harold; James Harold;Norma Ward; and Darrell and Sally Smith. A special Memorial gift was also received from Elsie Fitch, Gary Fitch, and Patricia Fitch for the Caboose Fund in Memory of Mabel Burrows.

Contributions to the Burt Jennings Challenge Fund have now more than exceeded the $1,000 needed to meet the Challenge. We are deeply grateful to Wendy Jennings Hayes who initiated the "Challenge Fund" and creating an incentive to raise funds to renovate the caboose.

* * * * * * * * * *

NEW MEMBERS:

It is a pleasure to welcome the following new members: John F. Harold of Chicago,IL, (Courtesy of brother,James); Paul Pettit of Georgetown,Tx, (courtesy of Ora and Marion Pettit); also Bob and Loraine Baxter of Ransomville, NY; Mr. and Mrs. William Owler of Youngstown,NY: and John P. and Wanda J. Putnam of Grand Island, NY.

* * * * * * * * * *

QUIPS:

Do not run through life so fast that you forget not only where you have been, but also where you are going.

****

.....MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION.....

Name.....(check) NEW..... RENEWAL.....

Address..... Phone: (____)___ -_____

P,O,BOX NO.... ..... CITY..... STATE..... ZIP CODE_____-_____

PLEASE CHECK BOX IF NAME OR ADDRESS HAS CHANGED RECENTLY

Please indicate previous last name if applicable_____

JUNIOR (UNDER 18) $1.00 each

NAME_____AGE_____

NAME_____AGE_____

NAME_____AGE_____

COUPLE $8.00_____

SINGLE $5.00_____

(SINGLE) LIFE $150.00_____

(COUPLE) LIFE $250.00 -----

HONORARY MEMBER (85+) FREE

BUILDING FUND DONATION $_____

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED_____

* * * * * * * * * *

APPLICATIONS AND MONIES ARE DUE JANUARY 1ST. PLEASE MAKE ALL CHECKS PAYABLE TO THE WILSON HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND RETURN TO: sandy holden, P.O.BOX 319, WILSON, NY 14172. Thank You.

PLEASE GIVE IT SOME THOUGHT:

Membership in the Wilson Hist. Soc. is a great way to stay connected to your local Society, but to do so all dues must be paid by April 1,2000. Now $8.00 per couple is not a lot of money,(by to-day's standards) but it is very important in many ways.

Membership dues help support a number of Society activities such as the Memorial Day Fair; our Rural One-Room "Working" Schoolhouse; the Annual Student Recognition Awards; the Monthly Newsletter; Upkeep of the Museum Grounds; Renovation of the Caboose--and More.

But most important of all, your dues support opportunities for you to stay connected to the Historical Society and share in the activities that help support Wilson's Fine Museum. Please give this some thought

* * * * * * * * * * *

NOVEMBER REGULAR MEETING:

Gordon Strablow, 2nd Vice-Pres., called the meeting to order on November 22, 1999. A motion was made by Celeste Crawford, seconded by Dorothy Maxfield, to accept the By-Law as presented by Judy King,Chrm., on Oct. 25th. Motion approved, with no objections.

Miles Linnabery, Program Chrm., announced that on the Regular meeting, Jan. 24th, GaryFitch will present a program about "Historic Apples:.

Miles then introduced Ann Marie Linnabery, Education Coordinator at the Theodore Roosevelt Inaugural National Historic Site in Buffalo, NY. Ann, using slides, told the story of how toy stuffed bears came to be called "Teddy Bears". The popularity of the toy eventually led to the formation of the Ideal Toy Company. Perhaps,little known,is the fact that Teddy Roosevelt is the only U.S. President to have a toy named after him.

Refreshments were provided by June Kropp, Virginia Strablow, and Miles Linnabery.
(Compiled from minutes submitted by Pam Groff, Recording Secretary.

* * * * * * * * * * *

BOARD MEETING,DEC. 8th:

Attending: Officers; Gary Fitch,Pres; Pam Groff, Rec. Sec; Judy King,Treas.; Wanda Burrows, Cor.Sec; Darrell Smith, Vice-Pres; Trustees: Miles Linnabery, Art Schnoor, Bill Rose, Lois Barnum. Wally Goodman. Honorary Trustees; Don Croop and Don Burrows. Chairpersons, Dorothy Maxfield, Curator, Sally Smith, Ways& Means, and Sandy Holden, Membership.

Judy King announced that $825 had been donated for Caboose Fund, also $500 in matching funds from Wendy Hayes. Miles Linnabery presented check to cover amount needed to meet the Burt Jennings Challenge Fund. Other smaller contributions have helped to exceed the amount.

Dorothy Maxfield made a motion, seconded by Don Croop, to appropriate up to $1250 for a new furnace and duct work in the Barnum Building. Motion approved. Don Burrows and Dan King will make the installation.

It was reported that it cost the Society $1800 to mow the grounds during 1999, and Gary Fitch recommended we retain Lee Smith another year.

Ed hastings has completed the depot wall and walkway, and the results show that it's worth waiting for Ed if you want a good, professional job done.

An estimate for a new roof on the caboose is $475, and work should be underway when you receive this Newsletter. In other related matters, Don Burrows has made and installed 4 new windows in the caboose at considerable savings to the society. Also, Gary Fitch has adjusted the rod on the depot's overhead door making it easier to operate.

A big Thank You to Kara and Sandy Holden who removed the old blinds from the Croop and Meyers Rooms. They also helped our curator, Dorothy, move displays prior to installing new blinds-- thus saving the society $60 in installation fees.

Sally Smith reported that the Ways & Means Comm. has about 40,(no longer saleable) T-shirts and suggested they be given to youngsters at Camp Good Days and Happy Times. Approved.

In the absence of Eleanor Myers,Chrm., a report of the nominating committee was read by Art Schnoor. Diane Muscoreil is nominated for the office of Corresponding Sec, and trustees whos terms expire in Dec. 1999, Miles Linnabery, Art Schnoor and Bill Rose, are nominated to serve new three=year terms until Dec. 2002.

Since Pam Groff holds two voting offices, she is resigning her trustee position, and will serve instead as a member of the Fair Committee--replacing Beth Waldron. Don Burrows is resigning as Chrm. of the Barnum Bldg., and a new chairman must be appointed by the Board. It was mentioned that in view of Kyle Andrew's dedicated service to the Society, that he should be given an active position in the organization.

A large colored painting of the schooner, "Fleetwing" and its log book were turned over to the Society by the Starkweather and Quick families. Also, a large beautiful portrait of the late Dr. John Argue has been donated to the Society by his daughter, Anne A. Faery.

Thank you, Judy King, for the nice surprise of Christmas cookies and sweet cider following the Board meeting.

* * * * * * * * * * *

IN MEMORIUM

Jonathon P. Zauner, 30, died at his home Dec. 9, 1999 after a long illness. He was the son of Ron and Judy Zauner, Life Members of the Wilson Hist. Soc.

Jonathon was a member of the North Ridge U.M. Church, and enjoyed bowling and collecting cards. He is survived by his par ents; a brother, Robert (Heather) Zauner of Va; and grandparents, John and Ruth Zauner and Robert and Betty Case--all from Rochester, NY.

He was buried in Greenwood Cemetery, Wilson,

* * * * * * * * * * *

JANUARY MEETINGS: Board of Directors will meet at museum Jan.12,2000, 7:30 PM.
Regular Meeting, Museum, Jan. 24, 2000: Gary will talk about Historic Apples.

* * * * * * * * * * *

BON MOT: You don't have to be in "Who's Who" to know "What's What."

* * * * * * * * * * *

February 2000 Vol.29 No.2
(Coleman Printing)

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

NEWSLETTER

Wilson Historical Society
WILSON, NEW YORK 14172-9763

February 2000

1890 RESORT TOWN:

Wilson became quite popular as a Resort Town in the late 1800's, and the great influx of vacationers resulted in several attractive hotels being built because of them.

One of the more impressive places was the Sutherland Hotel that stood at the corner of Young and Lake Streets.It might be hard to visualize a three story hotel standing where the Pizzeria Shop is today, yet in 1895, Benjamin Howe Sutherland built his Sutherland Hotel there.

It was said that the Sutherland was exceptionally nice in its day, and was equipped with steam heat and hot and cold running water in every room. It had large pleasant sleeping rooms; two parlors; a reading room; a Bar; and two bathrooms. It also boasted a large dining room which was tastefully decorated and noted for its delicious foods. (The late Mildred Middleton of Wilson, and Paul Hewitt of Lewiston were Mr. Sutherland's grandchildren)

Unfortunately the Sutherland Hotel burned down in 1913, as did its predecessor, the Ontario Hotel which was built on the same site by Luther Wilson in the mid 1800's. It was built of cobblestones, and a popular spot for visitors for many years. When the Ontario Hotel burned in 1894, the fire spread to the frame 1st Presbyterian Church which was located just south of the hotel. The Presbyterian Church was the first organized religious organization in town.

Another hotel, the American Hotel, was a brick structure and stood on the corner where the St. Paul's Lutheran Church now stands. The building was originally built as a medical hospital for a Dr. Kress, and after becoming the American Hotel, also burned down in 1895.

The Tower House was built on the site of the former American hotel, and was reputed to have all the latest improvements. It was opened by Aulden Bowker in 1896, and he spared no expense in furnishing it. Most of the furnishings came from the Reed Furniture & Funeral Parlor which was located in the old Masonic Block. The Tower House also came to a tragic end, and in 1908 was lost in a spectacular fire.

Another hotel that catered to hundreds of vacationers in the 1890's, was the Pittsburg Hotel on Sunset Island. It was originally built by Jake Millerwho named it the Vendora. It burned down a few years later, and Miller re-built it and sold it to a Mr. Walters. Walters operated the place under the name Glendora, then later sold it to William Wright of Pittsburg.who named it the Pittsburg Hotel. Many persons from that city came to Wilson to spend their vacations there, but it too met the fate of most of Wilson's hotels when it burned down August 17, 1911.

Other popular tourist attractions at the Harbor were the Harris Cottage,(later known as the Tugwell Cottage) also the Huntington Lodge on Sunset Island.

Hundreds of vacationers patronized many of these fine old hotels. Many came to Wilson via the "Hojack" railroad, while many others crossed Lake Ontario on three-deck steamers that made regularly scheduled runs between Toronto and Wilson.

In addition to the many attractions provided at Lake Island Park there was the annual Farmer Picnics, and these gatherings were said to have had at least ten thousand people attend.

* * * * * * * * * * *

FINAL TRIBUTE:

As we enter the unchartered waters of the 21st Century we sadly bid farewell to our members who passed away in 1999: Dorothy Linnabery; Jean F. Argue; Althea Eastman; Ada Belle Nickerson; Mary E. Cornell; Eloise Smith Culverwell; Beatrice Rignell; Elwood Schultz; Doris H. Fraser; Mildred E. Lonsbery; LaMont Ridley; Blanche M. Wilson; Jeanette Warner; Laura Eick; Waldo F. Buetel; Mabel Burrows; George "Duke" Lederhouse; Marilyn DeNeau Conti, Donn A. Wagner. Myron Webster, and Peter Moot. * * * * * * * * * * * also Betty Stimson.;Albert Johnson

THE YEAR WAS 1932:

Remember when Amelia Earhart became the first woman to make a solo transatlantic flight? She made it from Newfoundland to Ireland in just 15 hours.....F.D.R. was elected to his first of four terms as President of the U.S.....the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier was dedicated in Washington.....and the first Olympic Winter Games came to Lake Placid, NY. And who, if you lived through the Great Depression, could ever forget that "Great Depression Song", "Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?"

* * * * * * * * * * *

LOOKING AHEAD:

When Bob and Elizabeth Schearer of Segement, TX renewed their dues recently, Bob said that he is sending a wood carving for use with our Quilt Raffle at the Memorial Day Fair on May 29th. Many thanks, Bob, the woodcarvings are a much sought after prize.

* * * * * * * * * * *

BON MOT:

Work as if everything depends on you, and pray as if everything depends on God.

* * * * * * * * * * *

RECENT ACQUISITIONS:

Bernice Robinson, Gasport,NY: Five Song Sheets.

Lisle Maralyn Gabbey: Two framed arrangements of Historical Society Note Cards.

William Fritton: RCA Tapes (1940) "Remembering the 1940's--#1 Does Her Work."

Gnostic Guild (Marlene Disney): Collection of Gnostic Guild Programs,(1940-1999) from Estate of Eloise Culverwell.

Brad Lee Clark,Jr: Standard 4th Grade Reader,Copyright 1907. Good condition.(Inside cover marked Ransomville,NY-RFD#23.

Duane Linck, Hamburg,NY: Misc. Newspaper items of people and times during World War II saved by Rose Dennis, Chestnut Rd., East Wilson.

William Okoniewski, Fort Myers, FL: Rare Historical items from former Drugstore on Young Street: Apothecary Jar,(previously on loan); 20 Sundae glasses; 8 Soda Glasses; 1 Banana Boat; 16 Nestles Cups & Saucers; 12 Creamers & 3 Sugar Bowls; 1 refrigerator jar; 3 Siren Hot Choc. Saucers; 2 Sugar Dispensers; 15 Buffalo China Bowls; 2 Richardson Root Beer Mugs; 4 Glass Funnels; 2 Beakers; 2 Nex Dose Medicine Spoons,i in box; Motars, 2 small, 2 medium. 2 large;, 2 medium pestals, 2 small, 1 large; Ceramic Pharmacy Vase;2 Apothecary medicine bottles(1 with Middleton Label); 1 box Betanaphthol Merck Medical Powder; 1 box Nursing Bottles,ca.1930; Postage Stamp Dispenser,1940's);Small Scales; 3 Sets of Weights;Small Plastic Scales;Cigar Box of Labels from McPherson Pharmacy; Receipt Dispenser,Okies Pharmacy;Plastic Label Maker; 5 Metal Stamps,(for date,1 paid);3 Metal Shelving Units; Courier Express Newspaper Box; 14 Prescription Record Books; 1908 &1927 Prescription Books; Framed Calendar (1800-2050; 1946 Pharmacist-tin self framed; Small Trinar Scales; 2 Copies of old photo of interior of Pharmacy in early 1900's; 1 Framed Drawing of Oakies Pharmacy; Book, Parmacies of Niagara Frontier; Enlarged Photo 1980 Young Street Fire (Hub Hotel); also Book lets, "1954 Master Plan, Town of Wilson.", 1966 Master Plan, Village of Wilson; 1971 Technical Report on Housing in NIagara and Erie Regions and 1970-1990 Population Projections.

* * * * * * * * * *

SENIOR CITIZENS FETED:

Senior Citizens of the Wilson Central School District were welcomed at the High School on Dec. 11th for the 17th annual Senior Citizens Breakfast sponsored by the Wilson Teachers'Assoc. The breakfast was started in 1982 by the late John Rodgers and each year since then, Seniors have not only enjoyed a delicious breakfast, but have also been able to get a glimpse of how their grandchildren are doing.

Mary Moley-Palacios, Teachers Assoc. Pres., greeted the Senior Citizens and thanked them for coming. She then introduced School Administrators and the various student groups who did an outstanding job of serving and entertaining the Seniors.

Attractive dining facilities were enhanced by original placemats made by classes at Thomas Marks, and Santa Napkins were provided by the 1st grade classes at W.H. Stevenson School. Ceramic gifts were made by Mrs. Lash's 2nd graders, and favors were provided by the Thomas pre-first,Kindergarten, and 1st 2nd and 3rd grades and Mrs. Bax's 4th grade, and Art Department.

Delicious cookies were made by the 7th & 8th grade Home Career classes; Christmas Cards were made by the French, Latin, and Spanish Classes; Note pads and pencils were provided by the 7th and 8th grades, and wood puzzles were made by 7th grade Technological Education.Classes.

The all out effort by every student group representing the School was excellent, and the 8th grade classes in charge of greeting Seniors; checking coats; cooking breakfast; and serving it, were not only courteous but did did a very commendable job.

Senior Citizens were served breakfast first, then adjourned to the Auditorium where they were entertained by the fine Senior Band. That was followed by the beautiful Young Ladies Concert Choir; the 8th grade Chorus & Small Enseble; and songs by the Thomas Marks 2nd grades; and the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grades from Stevenson School at Ransomville.

Senior Citizens of Wilson may be very proud of the School Administration and Faculty who do so much to provide the Seniors with a wonderful day of memories, and special mention should be given Wendy Brasure and Eileen Jaiger who coordinated the breakfast; Becky Foster who coordinated events; also Dina Kurial, cafeteria and staff; Don Johnson, logistics;and Mary Johnson for coordinating the 8th grade "Worker Bees".also Sharon Monaro for instructing the "Worker Bees". Daniel Connor, Prin., and elementary Principals Elaine Moon and Michael Carr, for their support and cooperation..

* * * * * * * * * *

NEW MEMBERS:

Please make welcome our following new members: Edward Goodnight of Wilson; Robert and Maureen Newton of Lockport; and Junior Members, Jeremy Skinner, Morgan Lolly, and our new 3 mos. Millennium baby, Erin Lolly.

* * * * * * * * * *

MORE GENEROUS CONTRIBUTORS:

More very generous donations continue to come in for the Caboose and Building Fund, and we wish to thank Gary Pettit; Michele Singer-Rose; Celeste Crawford; Art and Lillian Ulrich; Dennis and Cheryl Fulton-Sears; James and Carol Cornell; Tom and Gail Walder; James and Doris Feyrer; Ernestine Walpole; EdwaRD AND Edith Goodnight; Robert and Ann Botzer; William and Pearline Burdette; James and Ellen Ellis; Jim Harold; Marie Keller; Norm and Martha MacAskill; Richard Southard; Jack and Melinda Hutchison; Dianne Albright; Gary Gath and Judith A. Gerlach; Mildred Neville; Robert Eastman; Winona Hamblin; Lester Clark; Gerry Kadryna.

* * * * * * * * * *

MEMBER IN THE NEWS:

Marilyn Allgeier, former Town Clerk and Town Supervisor, was honored at a dinner in the Wilson House Inn on January 29, 2000, in recognition of her 34 years dedicated service to the Town of Wilson.

* * * * * * * * * * *

QUIPS: Life is like an onion. You peel away a layer at a time and sometimes you cry.

* * * * * * * * * *

WE ARE THERE FOR THEM:

Recognition should be given to all our members who made it possible for the Wilson Museum to be open during 1999. Sometimes the results were rewarding and our hosts and hostesses had an opportunity to meet some very interesting guests. Sometimes, no one showed up, but our "greeters" were "there for them" in case they did. Many thanks also to members of the Board of Directors who volunteered to open and close the museum each Sunday.

To all of those who sat and waited patiently to greet guests on Sundays we thank: Tom & Gail Walder; Gerry Swann; Terrence Upton; Bill & Maxine Jones; Julie Smith; Bill & "Peg" Fritton; Charles & Anne Horton; Dan & Judy King; Don & Wanda Burrows; Ed and Marilyn Allgeier; Robert & Bobbie Hull; Miles & Anne Marie Linnabery; Mildred Neville; "Micky" & Shirley Hunter; Edward & Mary Webster; Eleanor Myers; Howard & Dorothy Parker; Alice Thomas; Jim and Marlene Schotz; Edna Robinson; Jack & Winnie Terry; Rachel Flagler; Richard & Janice Zipp; Ruth Lampman; Hoyt Desso; Wallace & Chris Goodman; Howard & Leona Hunter; Gordon & Virginia Strablow; Dan & Mark Lenehan; Elton & June Kropp; Walter Ganshaw; Norm & Dorothy MacAskill; Dorothea Mark; Gary & Pat Fitch; Norma Ward; Floyd & Mary Clark; Greg & Dena Mandeville; Celeste Crawford; Don & Mary Basil; Joe & Julia Dulkiewicz; Ron & Judy Zauner; Charles & Jesse Michel; Dennis & Cheryl Fulton-Sears; Lois Jennings; Ruth Weaver; Rena Israel; Jean Hayes' Marion Campbell; "Ollie" & Helen Clark; Dora Wakeman; Art & Carole Schnoor; Cheryl Brown; Joe & Elizabeth Scherer; Helen Stevens; Harold & Neva Benedict; Dave & "Gus" Bradley;Tim Cramb; Donna Fritton; Jack & Melinda Hutchison; Jessie Michel; and Sara Berry & Don Croop.

The above list shows widespread participation by members of the historical society, and we especially wish to acknowledge Virginia Strablow, Hostess Chrm., who helped to make it possible.

* * * * * * * * * *

IN MEMORIUM:

Albert Johnson,81, died Tuesday, Dec. 7.1999 at Wyoming Community Hospital atWarsaw, NY. He was a native of Wilson, the son of Albert,Sr., and Emma Johnson.

He was a M/Sgt in the U.S. Army and served from 1942 through 1964. He also worked ten years for the Felt Mill in Newfane, NY.

He was a member of the Fraternal Order of Eagles, Lockport, NY, and a member of the Wilson Historical Society since 1995.

He is survived by his wife,Gertrude Sweeney Johnson; and 3 children: Albert (Julia) Johnson: III of Barker, NY; Darrell "Pat" Johnson of California; and Susan (William) Fuller of Bliss,NY; also 3 stepchildren, Robert (Lois) Hays; Norman (Gloria) Hays; and Linda (Robert) Hinson of Columbia, SC. Funeral Services were conducted in the Chapel at Arcadia Park Cemetery, Pendleton by the Rev. Robert Wendelin, Chaplain, Veterans Administration Medical Center, Buffalo,NY.

* * * * * * * * * *

Betty Stimson, 86, died Dec. 30, 1999 at the home of her daughter, Jill Wells, of Maniken Sabot, Va. A resident of Wilson from 1963, Betty always took an active interest in the village and served as a village trustee.

She was seldom idle and, from the early 1970's, quilted most of the comforters raffled off at the Memorial Day Fairs. She loved Wilson's shady trees, and in 1981 established the Wilson tree comm. to monitor the removal or destruction of trees in the village. Through her efforts she blocked an attempt by the State to remove the beautiful trees along route 425.Her courageous stand earned her the name "tree witch" from a local Newspaper reporter.

She had deep concern for the underdog and was a great supporter of the migrant workers whom she helped for 25 years as a volunteer with the Niagara County Migrant Worker and Rural Ministry

Betty was featured in the school 1995 "Crest"for the Community Service Dedication award as an "Outstanding Member of the Community", and her picture and list of her accomplishments were featured in the yearbook.

At the Memorial Day Fair on May 29,2000, the last comforter quilted by her will be raffled. Betty, in addition to quilting, also served the Historical Society in other capacities: In 1972, she was elected the society's first Program Chrm; In 1974 she was elected to the Board of trustees and served in that office through 1983. In 1978 she was elected Housekeeper and remained in that position until 1984. In 1983 she became Refreshment Chrm, and until 1999 served as Chrm. of the Quilt Committee.

She was an Honorary/Charter Member of the Hist. Society, and because of her and others of her same determination, the Historical Society got off to a good start.

She is survived by two sons, Paul & Clark Stimson of California; a daughter, Jill (Doug) Wells of Maniken Sabot, Va.; also 4 grandchildren, Scott Wells; Lisa S. Mark; Susan Stimson of Lewiston, NY; and "Sandy" Stimson of Montanna. Also a daughter-in-law, Nettie Stimson of Lewiston, NY. A grandson, David Stimson, predeceased her, and her husband, Glenn, died 1/1/00.

* * * * * * * * * *

AROUND THE MUSEUM:

Dorothy Maxfield, Curator, left things looking pretty good at the Museum before "Hitting the Road" for the sunny South.

Elton Kropp,Grounds Chrm., has reported that another Memorial tree was planted by Mark's Nursery for Marie Keller in memory of Arthur and Felicia Keller. He has placed a Memorial Marker by the Tree.

Don Burrows keeps "plugging away" at the Caboose, and is working on the cupalo and roof. Don reminds us of an old saying,"If you want to get a job done, ask a busy man to do it."

We note that Sally Smith, Ways & Means Chrm., has re-arranged and sorted over materials kept in storage or on display, making it easier for visitors to purchase Sketchbooks, Afghans, or other souvenirs.

Sandy Holden reports that membership renewals appear to be coming in good. If you happen to be in arrears, you still can renew and remain on the active membership list. Mail dues to Sandy at P.O. Box 319, Wilson, NY, 14172. Thank you.

* * * * * * * * * *

QUIPS: Even when you have pains, you don't have to be one.

* * * * * * * * * *

WILSON IS ALRIGHT:

As the year 2000 gets underway we are reminded of an article we read in a 1901 edition of the Wilson "Star". We decided to reprint it and, as you read it, consider that,(although written in 1901) it might well apply to the present:

"Wilson is Alright--don't kick about your beautiful village. We have been surprised of late to hear so many citizens 'drying down' Wilson.....

'We hear complaints that Wilson is not growing, that good citizens are leaving, that no new factories are being located here--that the Town is in a decline.

'Where were the cement sidewalks 25 years ago? Where were the Grist Mill and Fruit Houses then? Wilson High School has doubled in patronage, and our summer parks are known throughout the State.....

'We know men who came to Wilson 25 years ago without a cent, and by good business calculations have built fine homes and raised and educated fine families. The ones who say Wilson is dead don't calculate.....

'Wilson has some beautiful surroundings, more luxurious streets, better sidewalks, better water, cleaner air, fewer paupers, better schools...better churches, and better people than any village of comparable size in the State...

'Where in the United States is there a better High School? Look at the great young men who are now holding...some of the most honorable and responsible stations in life.

'Public health is above average due to our supply of good water and good clean air. Nearly free of crime, the morals of Wilson are way above other villages, and we have no drunkards in our whole domain.

'Quit growling--don't deceive people. If every citizen will get up tomorrow morning and tell the truth about our village, it will make evryone feel happier...Wilson is Alright!"

Considering some of the recent controversy that has been stirred up by proposed Towers; Bad Odors; Drag Strips; Politics; and Local Newspapers; we wonder if perhaps some of the comments made in the above 1901 article, might be as relevant today as they were 100 years ago.

* * * * * * * * * *

NEW LIFE MEMBER:

Richard Charles Southard was born in Lockport Nov. 10, 1932, the son of Donald and Lydia Berlin Southard. He graduated from Wilson High School with the Class of 1950 and completed his education at Syracuse Univ. (1954) and Cornell Law School, (1957). He and his wife,Joanne, had 5 children; Stephen, Eric, Laura, Anthony, and Nicholas, and the family was affiliated with Christ Episcopal Church in Lockport.

He was a Captain in the U.S. Airforce and served from 1958-60 as Asst. Staff Judge Advocate 13th Airforce, Clark's Air Base, Philippine Islands. He also served from 1960 through 1968 in the U.S. Airforce Reserves.

During his long, busy career, Richard has been Niag. Co. Atty.(1964-65); Council to the Town of Wilson,(1962-66)&(1970-81) As Town Attorney, he prepared legislation for passage by the Wilson Town Board to accept the railroad property from Dr. John Argue, also underlying sponsorship of the Society by the Town. He also prepared and submitted Charter Applications for Incorporation of the Society by the N.Y.State Education Department.

Richard's grandfather, Victor Berlin, was Wilson Town Supervisor and Chrm. of the Niagara County Board of Supervisors. His grandfather, George M. Southard, was Pres. of the Lockport Board of Education for 25 years, and the Southard Elementary School is named after him. His mother, Lydia Southard, was a teacher, Principal, and Administratorin the Wilson Schools 40 yrs.

* * * * * * * * * *

TIME TO START THINKING "FAIR":

The Fair Committee, which is appointed by the Board of Directors, held its first meeting at the home of its chairman, Lois Barnum, on Jan. 27, 2000. According to the By-Laws, Article VIII, Sec. 1--K, "The Memorial Day Fair Chairperson will be responsible for selecting Fair Personell and supervising all areas of Planning and Conduct of the Annual Fair."

* * * * * * * * * *

OFFICERS ELECTED FOR 2000:

In accordance with the by-laws, Eleanor Myers, Chrm., of the Nominating Comm., presented a slate of officers, trustees, and Chairmen at the November meeting, and approved at the December general meeting. Officers for 2,000 are: Gary Fitch, Pres., Darrell Smith, Vice-Pres., Gordon Strablow, 2nd Vice-Pres., Pam Groff, Secretary; Dianne Muscoreil, Corresponding Sec., and Judy King, Treasurer. Trustees to Dec. 2002 are: Miles Linnabery, Art Schnoor, and Bill Rose. Honorary Trustees, Jerry Dean, Eleanor Myers, Don Croop, and Don Burrows.

Chairpersons: Celeste Crawford, Acquisitions; Virginia Strablow, Sunday Hostesses; Ann Marie Linnabery, Refreshments; Lois Jennings, Memorial; Carole Schnoor, Publicity; Publications and Newsletters, Don Croop; Faye Schotz, Tours; Celeste Crawford, Genealogy/Library; Janice Sporleder, Historical Sites; Sandy & Kara Holden, Memberships; Miles Linnabery, Programs; Judy King, By-laws; and Sally Smith, Ways & Means.

Chairpersons appointed by the Board of Directors should be in the next Newsletter.

* * * * * * * * * *

SOUNDINGS: A Leader should look back now and then to make sure he still has followers.

* * * * * * * * * *

BOARD ACTION & REPORTS:

Pres. Gary Fitch called meeting to order on Jan. 12, 2000, with the following officers present: Gary Fitch, Darrell Smith, Gordon Strablow. Pam Groff, Diane Muscoreil, and Judy King. Trustees: Lois Barnum, Bruce Muck, Kyle Andrews, Wally Goodman, Art Schnoor, and Bill Rose. Honorary Trustees: Jerry Dean, Eleanor Myers, Don Croop, and Don Burrows. Chairpersons, Sally Smith, Celeste Crawford, and Elton Kropp.

Judy King reported that bills from Dec.9,1999 to Jan. 12, 2000, were $6,873.10. Motion made by Lois Barnum, seconded by Art Schnoor, to pay bills as presented. Carried. Judy also said that $1,462 was donated for caboose; matching funds from Wendy Jennings Hayes, $1,000; also $2,000 originally appropriated by Board for the Project. Total spent to date, $1,626.73. Balance still available to complete restoration, $2,835.27.

Eleanor Myers welcomed Kyle Andrews who has been appointed trustee to complete term of Pam Groff who resigned. The Board also appointed Kyle Chairman of the Barnum Building to replace Don Burrows who resigned.

Pres. Fitch welcomed our new town Supervisor, Jerry Dean, who is now an ex-officio member of the Board of Trustees. Mr. Dean announced a new event in the planning stage pertaining to the history of the Wilson Harbor. It is scheduled for the 1st weekend in August, and will become an annual event with many activities planned such as a Fashion Show, Car Show, fishing contest for children, fireworks, and much more. Jerry projects that the new event will eventually become a big attraction in Wilson comparing in scope to the historical societies Memorial Day Fair in May. He asked that the Historical Society consider contributing an exhibit on the Island.

Pres. Fitch announced that a formal appraisal has been secured for the Rex Tugwell Cabin of $45,000 in view of its historical value. The Board will present the cabin to the Town Board for acceptance on their property,(museum grounds). Art Schnoor, Planning Board Chrm., will call a meeting of his committee to decide where the cabin should be placed.

In other reports, Don Croop, in the absence of Sandy Holden, said that membership dues for the year 2,000 appear to be coming in steadily.

Darrell Smith reported that he is getting price estimates for a sign out front of the museum which would be used to inform the public of coming activities and events.

Don Burrows reported that the caboose is ready for a new roof, and he has made and installed 3 new windows in the Cupola.

Bill Rose announced that the Jeep will need new brakes and a carburetor if its to be ready for use at the Memorial Day Fair.

* * * * * * * * * *

WILSON BARBERS:

Possibly the 1st Barber Shop in Wilson was run by Frank Slocum who had a shop next to the former Perrigo Hardware Store on Young Street. Frank had an apartment in the home of Charles Haner at the corner of Young and Catherine Streets. His Shop burned in the big block fire of 1901. but the Haner home and his apartment were saved. When the block was re-built, Frank opened a new shop in the front of Timothy's Bowling Alley next to the present bank.

"Hub" Ferrin, a barber by trade, moved to Wilson from Springfield and settled on a farm near Plumb's Bridge. He later moved into the village and bought the Emerson property on Young Street. He enlarged the premises into the "Hub" Hotel, and had a barbershop in it.

Arthur Bundy came to Wilson from Jeddo around 1914, and Ray Nevins worked with him for a while before opening his own shop. Tom and John Costello also barbered in Wilson from 1914-25.

Al Toenniessen worked for Bill Slocum in 1925, and also worked for Ray Nevins and "Hub" Ferrin. Other barbers included Ed and Louis Singer of Lockport who had a shop in Wilson for a number of years.

Another well-known barber in the community was Max Ranson who, after working awhile for "Hub" Ferrin, opened a shop of his own where Lakeside Market is today.

Jack Perry was also one of Wilson's best known barbers. Jack had about 35 years experience and worked for Powers of Newfane; Carl's in Lockport; the Statler in Buffalo; the Park Hotel in Lockport; and Max Ransons in Wilson. He then opened his own shop on Catherine Street. He later became well-known as an auctioneer.

Jim's Barbershop on Young Street was owned by James Stephenson of Youngstown. Jim cut hair in Wilson for about 1w years, and also operated a watch repair business in back of his shop. Jim attended the Chippewa Barber School in Buffalo, and worked in Youngstown and Niagara Falls before coming to Wilson.

Dr. John F. Argue started his career working as a "lather boy" in his father's Lockort Barbershop. In 1929 he got a job as a barber in Olcott where he saved enough money to pay his tuition at the University of Buffalo. During his first two years in college, he paid for his room and board by working weekends at a barbershop on East Delevan Avenue.

After the Wilson Historical Society was organized, Dr. Argue acquired the barber chair that he had used when helping his father, and donated it to the Wilson Museum along with other old mugs, razors and other equipment.

We believe its a shame that the Society has not yet been able to agree on a space where all the tonsorial equipment that has been donated to the Society could be displayed.

* * * * * * * * * *

FEBRUARY CALENDAR:

Feb. 9th: Board of Director Meeting, Wilson Museum, 7:30 PM

Feb. 28th: General Meeting, Wilson Museum, 7:30 PM.

* * * * * * * * * *

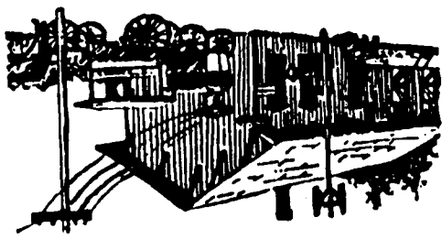
PLAN AHEAD:

The annual MEMORIAL DAY FAIR will be held on the Museum grounds, May 29,2000. It's a Great Place to meet old friends and renew acquaintances. Plan to Come- Plan to Help- we need YOU.

* * * * * * * * * *

FINAL THOUGHT: Those who wish to sing can always find a song.

* * * * * * * * * *



March 2000 Vol.29 No.3
(Coleman Printing)

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

NEWSLETTER

Wilson Historical Society
WILSON, NEW YORK 14172-9763

NON PROFIT ORG.
U. S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 8
WILSON, N.Y.

MAR 2000

~~February 2000~~ March 2000

"HOJACK" HAD IMPACT ON WILSON:

The old Rome, Watertown, and Ogdensburg Railroad played an important part in Wilson's history, and originally was organized as the Lake Ontario Shore Line. Some of the first directors from the local area were, Reuben F. Wilson, Wilson; Joseph Fowler, Ransomville; Oliver Scovell, Lewiston; and Burt VanHorne of Newfane.

Construction was slow and in 1875 the tracks had only been laid 18 miles west of Oswego. More financing was obtained in Rochester, and by the end of 1875 the road was pushed through to Kendall, NY. At that time, the small railroad only had two second hand locomotives and about 50 freight cars. By years end, still in financial trouble, the Lake Shore Line was sold on the block to the R.W.& O. who immediately extended the tracks to Lewiston, NY.

The 1st passenger train "chugged" through Wilson on June 12, 1876, but the debt-ridden line was still in trouble. This changed, however, when Charles Parsons got control of the stock and hired Henry Britton to manage the line. Together, they turned the R.W. & O. into a prosperous railroad. The New York Central, aware of this, then arranged to lease all properties of the R.W.& O. on March 14, 1891.

In 1897, the depot was photographed by W.W.V.Dox and distributed as a postcard. It was this station that was sketched in 1972 by Berne Kent and used,(with his permission) for the Society's Letterheads and Souvenirs. On January 13, 1905, the Wilson "Star" stated "The R. W. & O. depot is being torn down and will be replaced by a station of more modern design" It was this station that was later remodeled and enlarged in 1912.

In 1912 a thirty foot extension was built on the east end of the depot, and a forty foot addition was added to the west end which permitted the waiting room, express room, and freight roomto be enlarged. The entire complex was then covered with a slate-asbestos roof. Fay Campbell, who worked near the depot then, confirmed that he watched as the beautiful brick walkways were layed around the building.

For many years, the "Hojack" was the principal means of transportation in and out of Wilson. Students who attended the Wilson Academy from Barker, Newfane, Elberta, Ransomville, and Lewiston used the train regularly and "basket-boarded" in Wilson homes.

By 1891 the R.R. played a very important part in Wilson's economy, and serviced the greatest fruit growing region in the United States. It was said that even the great,powerful N.Y. Central found itself hard-pressed sometimes to furnish enough cars to carry all thefruit and other produce shipped from Wilson and other Lake Shore Towns.

Special fruit trains with ice compartments were run in season to Boston and other eastern cities, and thousands of barrels of fruit and tons of cabbage were shipped from Wilson. In 1899, for instance, M. S. Vosburg alone shipped out 70 carloads of cabbage and 30 carloads of apples.

Early stocking of Wilson's fishing waters were initiated when State Fish & Game Authorities sent thousands of 4" bass, white fish, and trout fingerlings to Wilson in steam-heated cars. There were also many shipments of lumber, dairy and poultry products shipped from the depot.

In 1901 a person could leave Wilson by train at 7:49 AM and arrive at 42nd St.N.Y. City by 8:58 PM. Five passenger trains operated daily through Wilson and sleeping car accomodations were available to New York City and Portland, Maine. In 1903 a round trip fare from Wilson to Niagara Falls was 90 cents, while a round trip ticket to New York City was $7.00.

Improved highways and a growing trucking industry finally forced the railroads to curtail operations and by 1924, passenger service had been cut to 2 trains a day. In 1934 all passenger service was discontinued but the freight office remained open until 1959.

In Oct. 1961, the Wilson Canning Co. bought the depot but resold it immediately to Dr. John Argue who stored antique cars and parts in the building until Oct. 1971. In 1972 he turned the property over to the Town of Wilson with the stipulation that it would be a meeting place and Museum for the Town of Wilson Historical Society.

People sometimes ask where the name "Hojack" originated? We like the story told about Jack Welch, a farmer, who became one of the railroad's first engineers. It was said that when he slowed down for a station he'd always holler"Whoa" at the Engine, so persons jokingly called the railroad the "Whoa Jack" line--later shortened to "Hojack". In the year 2000, all that's left to remind evryone of Wilson's booming "Hojack" days is the 1912 Depot and 1903 Caboose.

* * * * * * * * * *

QUIPS:

It's easy to communicate with a fish---all you need to do is drop him a line.

* * * * * * * * * *

PLANNING THE FAIR:

It's great that so many people come to Wilson each year to enjoy the Memorial Day Fair. It sort of gives one the impression that the Historical Society must be doing something right. But it's the hard-working members and their friends who make it all possible and, of course without them there would be no Fair.

It all starts with our Fair Committee, who have already had meetings in January and February to lay out plans for a successful Fair. This committee, as you know, is composed of Lois Barnum, Nettie Stimson, Darrell Smith, Ron Zauner, and Pam Groff, however, others who are helping with the Planning include Don Burrows, Gary Fitch, Kevin King, and Kyle Andrews.

Here are just a few of the things that must be resolved before Fair Day: All key Chairmen must be appointed; Prospective vendors must be sent contracts to sign and return; Parking and Bussing arrangements have to be arranged; Attention must be given to arranging insurance coverage with participating businessmen; Permits and licenses must be obtained from the Health Department; Grounds have to be mowed and marked off for Vendors, Antique Cars and other Concessions; arrangements made with Modern Disposal for garbage disposal; Distribute trash containers around grounds; Order Rest Rooms and install wash stations near food outlets; Order tents, tables, and chairs where needed; order all foods and supplies; arrange for entertainment groups; get tickets for food concessions; make financial arrangements so ticket booths and concessions will have enough change; Arrange to have Wilson's fine Ambulance Co. on grounds in case of an emergency; Contact American Legion about Memorial Day Tribute to our American Veterans; and perhaps one of the most important pre-fair activities is getting the Stands, Ticket booths, food concessions ready.

You can see by the above list that a lot of things have to be done before the Fair is opened to the Public, but like we said at the start of this item, when all is said and done, "It's the support and participation of our members and friends that insures that we will have another successful Fair."

We hope everyone will participate---and we might suggest that the key phrase for our up-coming Millennium Fair could be. "Yes. I'll Help".

* * * * * * * * * *

A "SPECIAL" QUILT:

The Historical Society has been fortunate to have been able to raffle off so many beautiful quilts at its Memorial Day Fairs--27 to be exact-- but this year's "Millennium" Boquet Quilt" is unquestionably one of the prettiest, most special ones to date.

We say "Special" because about ten of Wilson's best seamstress's had a hand in piecing it together including Lois Barnum; Mary Clark; Shirley Evans; Julie Godfrey; Barbara Mosher; Anne Rohring; Winnie Terry; and Norma Ward.

Also, this is the last comforter that the late Betty Stimson quilted. Jill Wells, Betty's daughter, basted the backing together so it could be safely taken to Virginia, then, after Betty quilted it, it was mailed back to Wilson.

Adding to its "special" quality, some of the quilts blocks were made in several States. For instance, one was made in Tenessee by Shirley Evans; Another was made in Florida by Mary Clark; while a third one was sewn in Texas by Winnie Terry. The center block, which was being sewn by Winnie Terry needed a button on it to "close an album" on the block. Not having one, Winnie removed a button from her blouse and added it to the quilt. Needless to say, it was a perfect match.

So, knowing this, here's your chance to take a chance on a rare quilt that never can be duplicated. Tickets for the drawing are attached to this Newsletter.

* * * * * * * * * *

RECENT ACQUISITIONS:

Timothy Henesey of North Tonawanda, NY, has placed the following items on loan with the Wilson Museum. The 1884 Log Book of the schooner, "Fleetwing", and a large framed painting of the "Fleetwing".

Wilson Free Library: Five Postcards.

Lucille Upton Estate: 1937 Street Guide to Buffalo, NY.

Richard Rutland, Olcott, NY: Oil Painting by Grace Daily, wife of Lee Daily.

Randall Road Schoolhouse Comm.: "Diary of an Early American Boy, Noah Blake (1805) by Eric Sloan. Copyrighted (1965). Also, the "Book of Storms", and "ABC Book of Early Americans" by Eric Sloan. Excellent condition.

* * * * * * * * * *

THE MIDDLETON ERA:

Remember when the old Middleton Drugstore was located on the north side of Young Street? If you do, you perhaps remember the dark, heavy woodwork inside; the round tables with iron legs; the little tables for children along the side of the room; the big glass-covered tables with boxes of candy inside; the marble counter and fountain; (the marble counter top in the Museum's "kitchenette" is made from the former Middleton Soda Fountain counter top); also the old phone booth; the Postcard rack; the piles of magazines in the window; and the big mirror in back of the store. And remember those 2 or 3 dip ice cream Sundaes covered with vanilla or chocolate sauce & peanuts for only 15 cents?

Those were the days when the Wilson Library was located upstairs over the Gillis Hardware Store, and Librarian Arthur Pease, who was confined to a wheelchair, had to use an elevator to get to the library.

And perhaps you may recall the old Slocum Barbershop where the coons and coon dogs used to smell up the place. Yes, those were the "good old days".

* * * * * * * * * *

SOUNDINGS:

Blowing out another person's candle doesn't make yours shine any brighter.

* * * * * * * * * *

EVERY THING CHANGES:

Everything changes--even the Wilson Hist. Soc. Memorial Day Fair: If you can remember the 1977 Fair when Eleanor Myers took on the responsibility of Fair Chrm., you may recall it was very well organized but much smaller than today. She had good area chrm. helping her including Anna Mae Nevins; Verna Caufield; Art Schnoor; Dora Wakeman; Sue Schultz; Lois Jennings; Diane Albright; Ed Peters; Doug Smith; Chris Kelman; Peggy Ward; Norm MacAskill; Don & Millie Croop; Lynn Sherrie; Rex Stacy; and Jan Sporleder. Today, some of them are deceased while others have moved away.

That was the year the late Jane Moxham started up a new, exciting, Plant Booth in which varieties of home-grown plants and flowers including philadendrums, african violets, Cactus, and Begonias , and many others were displayed and sold.

The "Flea Market" was in its growing stages, while about 20 of the society's antique cars were polished up and proudly displayed by our late President, Dr. John Argue.

Lois Barnum and the late Betty Stimson chaired the Food Concession where home-cooked beans, chili, salads, cakes, cookies, and Pheiffer's delicious Loganberry Juice were served.

Then there was the popular Cheese Booth chaired by Sara Berry where one could "try a sample" or purchase blocks of cheese by the pound. Also that "scrumptious" Candy Booth featuring home made candies by our members--but mostly by our "Candy Lady", Bessie Cole.

Free old movies were shown throughout the day by Doug Smith, while other children attractions included a "Balloon Clown", and a Democrat Wagon Ride drawn by a team of ponies.
Musical entertainment was provided by the Wilson School Band, and special piano rythymns and sing-a-longs were played and conducted by Frances Goldthorpe and Berne Kent.

The Fair has grown considerably since those early days, as has the Museum grounds. which now permits five acres to be used just for the Flea Market. Coupled with a huge antique car display; "Chicken Bar-B-Que" Funnel Cakes; Hot Dogs, Roast Beef on Weck; coffee & donuts; "name it--we've got it"; the Fair of today has become a colosal undertaking.

The Memorial Day Fair; The Firemen's Fieldday; and the Labor Day "Fleamarket" are perhaps the three biggest attractions in Wilson. Now a 4th big "Harbor Festival" will be added in August when Jerry Dean's new venture at the harbor will attract thousands of visitors. The Cruise Nights and Harbor Concerts pointed the way. Watch Wilson Grow!

* * * * * * * * * *

MARCH MEETINGS:

March 8th: Board of Director Meeting; Wilson Museum,; 7:30 PM.
March 23rd: Fair Meeting at Lois Barnum's; 448 Lake Street; Start, 7:00 to 7:30 PM.
March 27th: Regular Meeting; Wilson Museum; 7:30 PM; Guest Speaker, Melissa Dunlop.

* * * * * * * * * *

IN MEMORIUM:

Marie Lauer Getman, 94, died at home Feb. 1, 2000, after a short illness. She was born in Hungary, the wife of the late Wayne Getman.

She was a registered nurse at Erie County Medical Center, and later became the school nurse at Angola, NY. She also owned and operated a Floral Shop in Angola. She moved to Wilson in 1974 where she became a member of the Wilson Yacht Club. She joined the Wilson Hist. Soc. in 1976 and became an Honorary/Life member in 1995.

She is survived by a nephew, Frank (Jean) Lauer of Wilson. A private funeral service was held by her family, and she was buried in Forest Lawn Cemetery at Buffalo, NY.

* * * * * * * * * *

BOARD APPOINTMENTS:

Board appointments for 2000 have been approved as follows: Dorothy Maxfield, Curator; Kyle Andrews, Chrm. Barnum Building; Gary Fitch, Construction; Art Schnoor, Planning Board; Darrell Smith, Caboose; Micky Hunter, Breezeway & Shelter; Dan King, Storage Barn; Wanda Burrows, Schoolhouse; Dan King, Finances; Ed Allgeier, Fittro Shop; Dorothy Maxfield, Depot; Wally Goodman & Bill Rose, Argue Car Building; Eleanor Myers, Nominations; Elton Kropp, Grounds; and Norman MacAskill, Federation Representative.

* * * * * * * * * *

JANUARY REGULAR MEETING:

Gary Fitch presented a very interesting program on some of the historic apples that were once common in Western New York. Some of the old varieties have been replaced by some excellent new ones--and Gary had some (help yourself) samples available to prove it. As most of you are aware, members of the Fitch family have been growing apples in the Town of Wilson for over 170 years.
In keeping with the "apple theme" program, Miles and Anne Marie Linnabery provided sweet cider and other tasty delicacies, (including an apple pie) for refreshments.

* * * * * * * * * *

KEEP THE FAITH:

Apparently membership dues haven't been coming in as well as first thought because Sandy Holden, Membership Chrm., just informed us that as of FebruaRY, we still have 100 delinquent members. That means this Newsletter will be the last for some of you. This does not send out a very good message for the Wilson Hist. Soc.

$5 dollars seems like a small amount to renew dues and it shouldn't be a problem for anyone, moreover, it seems like a small price to pay to insure that the wonderful heritage of the Town of Wilson will be preserved in the Museum. Simply stated, we <u>do</u> need your support. Keep the Faith--don't let the society down. We are very fortunate that about 160 persons have joined the society as Life Members--this is guaranteed perpetual income.

* * * * * * * * * *

QUIPS:

People with coughs don't always go to a doctor--they go to a concert.

* * * * * * * * * *

BOARD ACTION & REPORTS:

1st Vice-Pres., Darrell Smith called the Feb. 9, 2000 meeting of the Board of Directors to order with the following in attendance: Officers: Darrell Smith; Gordon Strablow; Pam Groff; Diane Muscoreil; and Judy King. Trustees: Lois Barnum; Ollie Clark; Kyle Andrews; Art Schnoor; and Miles Linnabery. Hon. Trustees: Don Burrows; Eleanor Myers; and Don Croop. Chairpersons: Celeste Crawford; Sandy Holden; Dan King; and Elton Kropp.

Judy King, Treas., reported that an error was made in the payment of a bill to Hy Tech Concrete. The original bill of $880 was short $80. Motion made by Sandy Holden, seconded by Miles Linnabery, to pay $80 owed. Motion carried. Bills for Jan. 13th thru Feb. 9th were $1,044.75. Miles Linnabery made motion, seconded by Lois Barnum to pay outstanding bills. Motion carried. Letter read from Wilson Central School regarding Class Night awards. Motion made by Don Croop, seconded by Diane Muscoreil, to inform school that the Historical Soc. would present the awards again this year. Motion carried.

A request for funds to help back a Community Ambassador-type project made by Sarah Miller was denied. Such requests are not within the mission of the Hist. Soc., however individual members may support the request if they so desire.

The lawn care proposal for the year 2000 at $150 per cutting was discussed. In view of the past service, Sandy Holden made motion, seconded by Judy King, to continue service. Approved.

Diane Muscoreil, Cor. Sec., presented a letter of request to the Wilson Town Board for funds to help restore the historic Tugwell Cabin. The letter also presents the Cabin to the Town for acceptance and placement on the Society Grounds,(which is Town Property.) The letter was signed by Vice-Pres. Darrell Smith so it could be placed on the agenda of the next Town Meeting.

The Town has requested permission to exhibit the painting of the schooner "Fleetwing" . Since the painting is on loan to the Museum, Diane will contact the lender, Tim Henesey of N. Tonawanda for permission to move the painting from the Museum to Town Hall.

Sandy Holden, Membership Chrm., announced that as of date, about 100 persons have not yet renewed their dues for the year 2,000.

Dan King is looking into prices for a new sign to place in front of the Museumto inform the public of up-coming events. Judy King suggested that money from the Memorial Fund might be used.

Dan King, who is also Finance Chrm., presented a report of a meeting held Jan. 20, 2000. Four of 7 members were present. An internal audit of the books and accounts of the Society was conducted with no irregularities noted. The Committee also established a tentative budget. A written report with an explanation of the audit and the budget figures were submitted to Judy King, Treas., with praise for her excellent record keeping and monthly reports. The Committee recommends that the Society continue with the policy of having an internal audit of the books annually, and that the treasurer continue to file the annual report with the IRS.

Lights for the outside of the Depot were discussed, and a motion was made by Gordon Strablow, seconded by Miles Linnabery, to have them installed at a cost less than $200. Motion carried.

Concern has been expressed regarding junk cars which are parked on Society grounds by the owner or renters of the house adjoining the museum property on the North. The Board requested that Pres. Gary Fitch contact Town Attorney, Walter Moxham, asking him to have cars removed.

Don Burrows has met with Doyle Phillips to work out a solution to the property line on our South border.Don also presented a Fair Committee request to establish a permanent entrance to the museum grounds along our south border--then north to the new property. Cost estimate by Paul Karsten would be about $2,000. Motion made by Art Schnoor, seconded by Miles Linnabery, to have the south line driveway put in this year at a cost not to exceed $1500. The remaining proposal to continue the road would be completed later. Motion carried.

Don also demonstrated the new rollers that have been installed on the rack of Schoolhouse Maps. He also said that the Argue Building Furnace is now working well.

Lois Barnum, Fair Chrm., announced that a Lockport Church group may be willing to put on a breakfast at the Memorial Day Fair.

(Compiled from minutes of the Feb. 9th Board Meeting which were respectfully submitted by Pam Groff, Recording Secretary.)

* * * * * * * * * * *

MEMBERSHIP NEWS:

Name Plates have been engraved and attached to the Life Membership Plaque for Ronald Zauner; Judith Zauner; Miles Linnabery; Anne Marie Linnabery; and Richard C. Southard.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Please welcome our newest members in the society: George and Pauline Alvers of Wilson, and junior member, Alexander King.

* * * * * * * * * * *

More generous donations for the building funds have been received from Ruth Phillips; Tom and Gail Jeacock; Mary Lou Young; and Earl and Barbara Albright.

* * * * * * * * * * *

HIGHLIGHTS:

Former Mayor E. Kenneth Welker and his wife, Dorotha, celebrated Ken's 90th Birthday recently at the Wilson House Inn. Ken & Dorotha are both Life Members of the Wilson Hist. Soc.

Life Member, Walter Moxham,Jr., has been appointed attorney for the Town of Wilson.

Ollie and Helen Clark celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary with a trip to Las Vegas. Ollie, also a Life Member, was responsible for the initial remodeling of the 1912 Depot.

* * * * * * * * * * *

QUILT IS ON DISPLAY:

Judy Rose has made arrangements to display the quilt at the following places:

The Wilson Free Library Feb. 12th to March 1st
The Garden Gate Floral & Gift Shop March 4th to March 27th
The Wilson Community Pharmacy April 1st to April 22nd
The Wilson Town Hall April 29th to May 20th

* * * * * * * * * * *

BON MOT: Hot heads and cold hearts never solve anything.

Wilson Historical Society
WILSON, NEW YORK 14172-9763

NEWSLETTER

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

April 2000 Vol.29 No.4
(Coleman Printing)

NON PROFIT ORG.
U. S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 8
WILSON, N.Y.

April 2000

SCHOOL GROWTH IN WILSON:

As best as can be determined, the first school in the town of Wilson was a log cabin which stood on the South side of Rt. 18 about a mile and a half east of the present village. Day classes were taught there by a Dr. Warner of Olcott, and he averaged about 12 students a year.

The first school in the village was also built of logs, and stood at the corner of Young and Lake Streets where the Wilson House Restaurant is today. The first teacher at this school was Almira Welch.

In 1821, the town of Wilson was divided into 5 school districts, but by 1852 it became necessary to build a two-story cobblestone schoolon Pettit Street---just west of the 1st Baptist Church. This was the main village school for many years, and when it became overcrowded, children were taught in annexes established in the "Dox Block", the "G.A.R. Building; and the "Free Methodist Church located on Washington Street.

The Wilson Collegiate Institute was organized in 1845 on land donated by Simon Sheldon, and was soon attracting students from the surrounding areas. It opened its doors in 1846 and was financed by tuition received from its students.

In 1869, the Institute fell on hard times, and it was decided to have it join the new Union Free School District No.1 which was being organized in the village. This new Union District was made up from four of the local districts close to the village.The remaining Districts in the town of Wilson each had their own teacher and elected trustee.

In 1899, a brick addition was built onto the original Collegiate Institute Building,however, the State condemned the building in 1900, and it was torn down and replaced by a new 60 square foot building which was attached to the brick addition that had been built the previous year.

Ground was broken for a new Wilson High School across the street in 1935, and the Wilson Central School District was organized under Arthur Blemaster, Principal. By 1955, all rural school districts, including the Ransomville Union School District, had been absorbed into the Wilson Central School System.

It is interesting to note that prior to 1927, there was no official school backing for basket ball or baseball. Ball games were played at Olcott, and basketball games were played in the old Middleton Hall back of the drugstore on Young Street.

Mr. L. Ernest Tarr was appointed Principal in 1945 and Walter Hutchison was retained as Coach in 1946. It was under Coach Hutchison that sports began to play a bigger and more prominent roll in the school. Track was added in 1948, and Cross Country in 1949. Eleven man football was started in 1953 and tennis was added to the sports program in the late 1950's.

The population of the school more than tripled under Mr. Tarr's administrationand numerous building programs were proposed. Education kept pace with the building program and in 1948 adult education was introduced.

In 1961, Mr. Richard Schmidle was appointed High School Principal, and Mrs. Lydia Southard was appointed Principal of the Ransomville School.In 1970, Jack Terry became Superintendent of Schools; Thomas Palisano was Principal; and Wesley Johnson was Junior High Principal.

Mr. Richard Zipp succeeded Mr. Terry as Superintendent of Schools, and the school district then undertook an impressive construction program with great progress and considerable scholastic achievements being accomplished. Many students performed well in New York State and National Achievement Tests, and an impressive 7% of each Senior Class have received N.Y. State Regents Scholarships.

Now, as the Wilson Central Schools enter the 21st Century, it appears that the fine traditions and performance established by former Administrations will be continued.

* * * * * * * * * *

UPWARD SPIRAL:

The cost of educating children was less expensive when youngsters received their elementary education in one-room school districts. For example, in 1938 the total school tax for Dist. No.7, town of Wilson, was $871.28, and the assessment,(made by the trustee) was as follows: Teacher's Wage, $645.00; Fuel & Lights, $75.00; Janitor, $25.00; Medical Inspection, $12.00; Supplies, $25.00; and other expenses, $89.28.

Total Assessed valuation of property in Dist. #7 was $217,820.00, and the lowest tax in the district was paid by George Crittendon---.20 cents on one acre of land. The highest property tax, $89.40, was paid by Fred Thilk on 136 acres. Oscar and Ernie Munch were a close second and paid a school tax of $48.00 on 118 acres.

Now we certainly don't suggest that we return to the days of the one-room schoolhouse, but it is interesting to note how the cost of educating Wilson's children has increased.

* * * * * * * * * *

BON MOT: After all is said and done, more is said than done.

EARLY RANDALL ROAD FAMILIES:

In 1834, three families got together and settled on the Randall Road near the cabin of Asa Randall. The first was Dudley and Maria (Brockway) Frink, who had a daughter,Maria, and a son, Dudley, Jr,. In 1835, Maria married Wm. H. Randall, son of Harrison Randall.

The family of Henry Maham,Jr. consisted of Henry and his wife, Elizabeth Frink, daughter of Dudley and Maria Frink. A daughter, Catherine, died after they arrived. Henry Maham built a house and barn near the Randall Cabin and today, the barn has collapsed but the house has been remodeled and still stands.

The third family was Silas Frink, son of Dudley and Maria, who married Rhoda Wright, and they had two children, David and Jonathon.

The families of Dudley and Silas Frink settled on the Randall Road about a mile south of the Randall Cottage and Maham House. The Maham House is where Andrew J. Smith was born in 1854, and he later became one of the first students to attend the District No.8 Schoolhouse. Andrew was the grandfather of W. R. Reese of Williamsburg,Va., a Life Member of the Wilson Society.

Henry Maham,Jr., gave the plot of land on which the Randall Road Schoolhouse was built, January 26, 1861. His wife, Eliza Frink Maham, had some interesting ancestors. Her father, Dudley Frink, fought with a Conn. Regiment during the American Revolution,and her great, great grandfather, Rev. Thomas Shepard, was the Founder of Harvard University in 1636.

Eliza's mother, Marian Brockway, attended the Kenderhook Reformed Dutch Church with Martin Van Buren, who later became President of the United States. Both Maria and Dudley are buried in the North Ridge Cemetery.

(Note: Above information researched by W. R. Reese.)

* * * * * * * * * *

CALENDAR OF COMING ATTRACTIONS:

April 12th,	7:30PM:	Board of Directors at Museum.
April 20th,	7:30PM:	Fair Meeting atMuseum: All chairmen--please try to attend. (Last one)
April 24th,	7:30PM	Regular Meeting at museum. Dorothy Maxfield will talk on her rare Collection of Salt & Pepper Shakers.
June 26th,	6:00PM	Annual Meeting of the Wilson Historical Society will start with a "Potluck Dinner". Meats and Beverages will be furnished by the Society. All Committee Chrm. should be prepared to report on their committees or turn in a written report.
July and August:		There will be no Program Meetings during the Summer months, however, Regular meetings of the Board of Directors and Sunday afternoon visiting hours will be held as usual.
Sep't. 25th	7:30PM	Monthly Meetings will resume with guest speaker, Rev. Kenneth Babcock, who will discuss the "Early History of the Methodist Church in W.N.Y.
October 23rd	7:30PM	Bob Emerson of Old Fort Niagara will discuss the History of the Fort.

* * * * * * * * * *

THE MAIL BAG:

In the February Newsletter we stated that the Museum Committee should consider making a decision where to display the Argue Barbershop Chair and other Tonsorial Equipment donated to the Museum. A letter in the "Mailbag" shows we were not alone in that opinion.

Former Curator, Lois Jennings, writes from Illinois: "I was particularly happy to see the article about John's Barber Chair. When the Schnoor Room was made over, I wanted the Chair to go in the Barnum Building at the east end of the "Country Store" since many barbershops used to locate in or near a store."

We tend to agree with Lois becaue,(in our opinion) the present Country Store takes up more space than necessary to display the items that are in it. We wonder if anyone else agrees?

After all, it is the opinions of our members that decides the direction we should go!

* * * * * * * * * *

FAIR PROGRESS:

Fourteen persons attended the meeting of the Memorial Fair Comm. held at the home of Lois Barnum on Feb. 24, 2000: Lois Barnum, Kevin King, Kyle Andrews, Dave Branch, Don Burrows, Bill Rose, Judy Rose, Darrell Smith, Sally Smith, Nettie Stimson, Ron Zauner, Greg Zugay, Don Croop and Pam Groff, Fair Sec.

Kyle Andrews reported that Pepsi & Water are ordered; Lois Barnum said that a new entrance to the grounds is a "Go"; Randy Ward has volunteered as Clean-up Chrm;Bruce Muck will be the Announcer on Fair Day; A "lost & found station will be at the "Ways & Means Booth"; Darrell & Don Burrows will have 2-way radios with head sets for communication--and Lois Barnum, Nettie Stimson, and Pam Groff will have hand-sets.

Items discussed: Large tent for "Pepsi" by the Pole Barn; More benches for Rest Areas; to keep the Hot Dog Booth in the Food Court Area; Wanda Burrows will check on offer by the Boathouse Staff to help serve the Chicken Bar-B-Que; Dave Branch, Chrm. of Classic Cars, will decide if entrees will be charged $1 or$2 per car plus a free-will offering to the Historical Society; Don Burrows proposal for a possible "Corn Roast"; Refused request by Jeri Lynn Rhode to provide and sell Italian Food as it was felt this could hurt the Society's Food Sales.

Scheduled Events: Wilson High School Band, 12:30 to 1:30; Niagara Experience Players,(time pending); Lucille May, Country & Western Singer, 2:00 to 3:00PM; and Buffalo & Brandy, 45 minute Children' Show (time pending). Notes submitted by Pam Groff.

* * * * * * * * * *

MUSEUM REOPENS IN APRIL: (Closed on Easter, April 23rd.)

Visiting Hrs., Sun. 2-4PM Volunteer hosts & Hostesses will serve as follows:

April 2nd:	Lois Barnum, Kyle Andrews, and Helen Stevens. Open Museum, Lois Barnum.
April 9th:	Cheryl Brown; George & Pauline Alvers. Open Museum, Gordon Strablow.
April 16th:	Bob and Loraine Baxter; Bernice Laughlin. Open Museum, Dan King.
April 30th:	Frances Diez; Howard & Dorothy Parker. Open Museum, Gary Fitch.
May 7th:	Bill & Judy Rose; Barbara Mosher. Open Museum, Bill Rose.

* * * * * * * * * *

BLIZZARD OF '77:

Twenty-three years ago the memorable Blizzard of '77 struck Western New York from Jan.28th to Feb. 1, 1977. It was around noon gale winds of 70 miles per hour pounded people and vehicles alike, and soon thousands of persons discovered that though they were dismissed from work or school, it was impossible for them to find their way home.

Many abandoned their cars and found shelter in nearby homes while those who remained in offices, factories, or schools, had to make the best of makeshift food and bedding facilities. All roads in and out of Lockport were closed, and all but emergency travel was banned on rural roads. There were many incidents of rescue and mercy missions when drivers of snow mobiles and 4-H Drive vehicles were called to transport food and medical supplies to persons in need.

The Postoffice and most stores were closed but some grocery stores that remained open were soon getting low on supplies. By February 1st, blizzard conditions continued to plague the entire region and hundreds spent a 4th night stranded from home.

When the weather began to ease the following day, most roads were open but some were still clogged with stalled vehicles. Things began to look up after the Federal Government declared Western New York a major disaster area, industries, schools, and businesses began to re-open and postponed activities were rescheduled.

Following extensive research by the weather bureau, it was determined that one of the three hardest hit areas was the area from Youngstown to Olcott. For the past several years, this area has been enjoying fairly mild and open winters. The Blizzard of '77 is a reminder that it could happen again.

* * * * * * * * * *

REGULAR MEETING:

At the Regular Meeting on Feb. 28,00, it was stated that the proposed driveway on the South side of the depot will depend on a decision made with Doyle Phillips regarding the fact that ten feet of one of his buildings is on Museum property.

The Tugwell Cabin will need footers so it can be moved in the Spring. The stone chimney will be replaced, and Art Schnoor, Chrm. of the Planning Board has suggested that the cabin be placed west of the Fittro Shop and north of the Caboose.

Miles Linnabery, Program Chrm., talked about research he has done on Sarah Cordelia Greene, (1841-1931) a private in Battery M, 1st N.Y.State Light Artillery. She is buried in Greenwood Cemetery and is, as far as known, the only Civil War woman veteran from Wilson. (Note: we listened to the Cable History Channel to a program regarding this very subject, and learned that hundreds of women served in the military during the War. The identity of most was kept secret and not revealed unless one was wounded or taken to a Field Hospital.)

Refreshments were served by Celeste Crawford and Carole Schnoor.

* * * * * * * * * *

MEMBERSHIP NEWS:

It is a pleasure to welcome Emmallee Pearce of Wilson, our most recent new Junior Member. We also welcome the following new adult members: Margaret B. Kelly of San Diego, CA; Margorie Bajorek of N. Tonawanda,NY, (Courtesy of Joanne Ruch; Tower & Ruth Wilson of Zephyr Hills, FL, (Courtesy of Bill & Judy Rose); and Nancy Schultz of Niag. Falls, (courtesy H. Ward)

Several generous donations were received for the Building Fund from, Mary Lynn Reardon of Watertown,NY; Margaret B.Kelly of San Diego,CA; Howard & Dot Parker of Newfane,NY; Wanda Burrows of Burt,NY, and Dorothy Lort of Wilson,NY.

* * * * * * * * * *

FAIR CHAIRMEN SET:

Lois Barnum, coordinator for the Memorial Day Fair has announced the chairmen for this year's Fair: Bruce Muck & Ron Zauner, Announcers; Bill Rose & Wally Goodman, Antique Cars; Kevin King, Bottled Water; Don Burrows, Busses; Shirley Hunter & Shirley Linnenbank, Chicken Bar=B-Que; Dave Branch, Classic Cars; Randy Ward, Clean-up; Judy Zauner, Coffee & Donuts; Winnie Terry, Coffee Barnum Bldg,; Melinda Hutchison, Cotton Candy; Nettie Stimson, Dealers; Ron Zauner, Dealer Parking; Greg Zugay, Entertainment; Sally Smith, Funnel Cakes; Ray Groff, Garbage; Dale Schlyer, Hot Dogs; Darrell Smith, Large Equipment; Sandy Holden, Membership; Don Croop, Newsletter Publicity; Harold Benedict, Parking; Kyle Andrews, Pepsi; Pam Groff, Pies; Sue and Dick Schultz, Popcorn; Marge Williams, Publicity; Judy Rose, Quilt & Lost and Found; Althea Montgomery, Roast Beef; Linda & Joe Moran, SNo Cones; Lois Barnum, Supplies; Gary Fitch, Ticket Booths; Judy King, Treasurer; Dick Schmidle, Ways & Means; and Workers, Gale Walder. (Pie donations may be brought to the museum Sunday afternoon)

* * * * * * * * * *

MARCH BOARD OF DIRECTOR MEETING:

Meeting called together by Past-Pres., Don Burrows with 8 persons present: Pam Groff; Judy King; Diane Muscoreil; Don Burrows; Don Croop; Lois Barnum; Sally Smith; and Celeste Crawford.

Judy King,Treas., reported checking balance for Feb.10th thru March 8th at $5,227.33. Bills to be paid, $1,332.48; income, $642.35; Motion made by Diane Muscoreil to accept report and pay bills. Seconded by Lois Barnum. Motion carried.

Diane reported that the Wilson Town Board accepted donation of Tugwell Cabin and will permit placing it on Museum property. The Society will be one of 4 recipients of the next 5K Race, with money earmarked for Cabin restoration.

Don Burrows reported that the wind apparently tore off storage room door on west side of Barnum Building. Must be replaced.

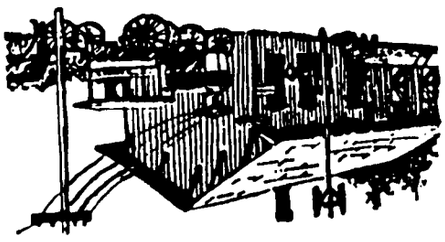
The April Board meeting will be at the museum on April 12th, 7:30 PM. (Notes compiled from minutes submitted by Pam Groff, recording secretary.)

* * * * * * * * * *

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO ALL FAIR CHAIRMEN:

Will you please make up a list of your fair workers by April 8th, and call Gail Walder at 751-9679 and tell her who you have. This is important so when Gail starts calling people to help out at the Fair, she won't bother persons who are already committed. Thanks a million.

* * * * * * * * * *



May 2000 Vol.29 No.5
(Coleman Printing)

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

NEWSLETTER

Wilson Historical Society
WILSON, NEW YORK 14172-9763

NON PROFIT ORG.
U. S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 8
WILSON, N.Y.

MAY 2000

May 2000

A FAIR DAY IN WILSON:

On Memorial Day we honor the Veterans who gave their lives for America from 1776 to the present day. We recognize their sacrifice, and that is why we are proud that members of Wilson's Martin F. Jennings American Legion Post #836 volunteer to conduct a Memorial Service on the Museum grounds around Noon. So perhaps at that time we should halt all activities and take a moment to thank those who helped make our Nation strong and free.

A great deal of time has been spent in planning and making arrangements for this year's Fair on May 29th, and it is hoped that all our members and friends will pitch in Memorial Day weekend to make it a great success. (And while your at it, let's pray for a nice day.)

Some recent decisions by the Fair Committee will include the purchase of a new 100 cup coffee urn, also a couple of smaller ones.

Katelyn Smith will run the children's Fish Pond this year, and balloons for all the youngsters will be located near the fish pond.

Lois Barnum said that Pfeiffer's have drums suitable for garbage collection, and has offered them to the Society for the taking. Ollie Clark will be asked to loan his truck to pick them up, and a couple volunteers will be needed to help him.

It was decided that the fair comm. should remove un-used items from the library so there will be more room for the Finance Comm. to operate on Fair Day.

Flur escent paint has been ordered for marking Vendor plots and numbers.

Entertainment not already announced may include a chainsaw carving demonstration, and the Frontier Sky Divers will be dropping in again between 1:30 and 2:30 PM, behind the classic cars.

All eyes turn to Wilson on Memorial Day, so mark your calendars and renew old acquaintances.

* * * * * * * * * *

UNUSUAL WAR HERO:

In addition to the many brave Wilson men and women who fought in the Civil War to keep our Nation united, we also have our Confederate War Horse, Billy Sherman. Billy was captured in the Battle of Chatanooga by Chief Bugler, Lorenzo Pratt, Battery M, N.Y. Light Artillery.

He named the horse after his commanding General, William T. Sherman and, after he and his horse were mustered out in 1865, Pratt brought Billy back to Wilson with him. The war horse was kept on the Pratt farm east of Wilson, and every year Pvt. Pratt and Billy lead the Village parades on July 4th and Memorial Day. When Billy died at age 30, he was buried with Military Honors on the Pratt farm by members of Wilson's G.A.R. Post.

In 1973, the Wilson Historical Society located the gravesite and decided to place a marker there, and the site was dedicated in 1973 with a large array of notables attending. Among them were Congressman Henry P. Smith III; Paul Hewitt, Chrm. of the Niagara County Board of Legislators; James Buncy, Northeast Regional Commander of the North-South Skirmishers Association; Wilson Town Supervisor, Whitney Barnum; Wilson Mayor Harold Mosher; and Historical Society President, Dr. John F. Argue. Also attending the dedication were Jackie Lynn Luff, g.g.granddaughter of Lorenzo Pratt, and Randy Schultz of Wilson who played Taps.

Billy's gravesite has been kept mowed and beautifully decorated the past few years--and for this we can thank Frank Ramming, who adopted the project as his contribution to the Society.

* * * * * * * * * *

THUMBNAIL SKETCH:

Mark L. Huntington, a member of the Wilson Hist. Soc. since 1981, has had a busy career and, before moving to Lockport, was an influential member of the Wilson Community. He was married to Phyliss Mac Farlane, and they had two children.

Mark served on the Wilson School Board; was President of the Tuscarora Club; member of the Wilson Lions Club; and treasurer of Wilson's Midget League Baseball.

He started his financial career with the old Niagara County National Bank,(later Marine), and was Manager of Wilson's Marine Branch until 1959 when he started his investment career with Doolittle & Company in Lockport. He was later appointed Manager of the S.C. Parker Company's Lockport Office

Mark holds four degrees including a doctorate in Economics, and has also written two books on the Big Band Era. He has been in the investment business for over forty years and for twenty years authored the Union Sun & Journal's "Investment Corner".

He is currently Vice-Pres. of the Bodell, Overcash Anderson brokerage office in the Bewley Building at Lockport where he is assisted by his son, Scott, and Barbara L. Wilson.

* * * * * * * * * *

BON MOT: No one is ever out of work if he minds his own business.

* * * * * * * * * *

THE SCHOOLHOUSE OWL:

Visitors at the old Randall Road Schoolhouse on the museum grounds may have noticed the large Great Horned Owl that hovers gracefully in a corner of the one room school. They may have even wondered how such a Nationally protected bird found a place in the school--and therein lies an interesting tale.

Now the Great Horned Owl is one of the larger, more distinctive birds in the United States, and, though seldom seen, may sometimes be heard when its deep "Hoo-hoo-hoo" echoes from a woods as twilight darkens into night.

The story of the museum's Horned Owl began in 1981 when Tony LaRock of Chestnut Road, Wilson, found the bird laying beside a barbed wire fence with its neck broken. Tony happily brought the bird home with the expectation of having it mounted.

After checking around, however, he learned from a New York State Conservation Officer that the owl could not be possessed alive or dead by any individual. He also learned that only an educational institution such as a school or museum could keep such a bird--providing the proper permit was obtained from the Federal Wildlife Agency.

A Conservation minded neighbor of Tony's, Mrs. Gail Walder, told him that the Wilson Museum might be willing to accept the owl and include it in their permanent collection. The museum officials agreed, and proceeded to obtain a permit from the Federal Fish and Wildlife Service. A taxidermist was then engaged to mount the bird. In case you're wondering how the bird was preserved all this time, Mrs. Walder kept it in her freezer.

Thus through the diligence and caring of 11 year old Tony LaRock, one of America's rare Great Horned Owls, mounted, may be seen today as one of the interesting exhibits in the renovated Randall Road Schoolhouse.

* * * * * * * * * *

NEW LIFE MEMBERS:

Miss Helen Annette Stevens, the daughter of Lensen Smith Stevens and Louise May (Bickford) Stevens, was born June 5, 1914 in Wilson, New York. She graduated from Wilson High School with the Class of '32, and then attended the Brockport State Normal School.

Helen taught in 5 different Rural Schools in the towns of Porter, Lewiston, and Wilson, and retired from the Wilson Central School in 1969.

Miss Stevens had a brother, Harold B. Stevens, and a sister, Julia C. Stevens. (Julia played the organ beautifully at Exley Methodist Church for many years.) Helen is a member of Exley United Methodist Church; the Gnostic Guild; the Wilson Historical Society; the Dale Senior Centre at Lockport; and the New York State Teachers Association.

It is a pleasure to welcome our new Charter, Honorary Life Member of the Wilson Hist. Soc.

* * * * * * * * * *

Anne Marie (Brogan) Linnabery has joined the Life Membership Class of the Wilson Hist. Society. Anne Marie is the daughter of Cyril R. and Mary (Neary) Brogan, and was born Nov. 15, 1962, at Lackawanna, New York.

She attended St. Ambrose Elementary School in Buffalo, and the Baker Victory High School in Lackawanna. She received her BA at Canisius College in Buffalo, and obtained an MA at the SUNY at Buffalo.

Anne Marie was married to Miles Linnabery in a beautiful wedding ceremony held on the grounds of the Van Horn Mansion in Newfane. They attend Our Lady of the Rosary R.C. Church in Wilson.

She is a member of the Victorian Dance Society in Amherst; the Amherst Museum and the Old Fort Niagara Association. She is employed as the Education Director of the Theodore Roosevelt Inaugural Site on Delaware Ave. in Buffalo.

* * * * * * * * * *

Miles Linnabery, son of the late George and Dorothy Linnabery of Wilson, has also become a Life Member of the Wilson Hist. Society. He joined the society in 1975.

He graduated from the L.D. Bell High School, and in 1975 received his BA in Anthropology at the University of New Mexico, and obtained a MA in Science and American Studies at Logan,UT.

He also took courses in Archaeology and Museum Studies at Portales,NM; History, Photography, and Economics at Tarrant County Jr. College in Bedford, Texas; Sociology and Phsycology at the University of Texas at Arlington; and Landscape Architecture, Photography, Drafting; and Graphics at Syracuse University in New York.

He is currently serving as a Woodcarving Instructor at the Lewiston Senior Citizen Center; the Dale Senior Center at Lockport, and is also teaching Victorean Dance lessons at the Amherst Museum.

He has produced wooden objects for several museums; manufactured over 250 different types of lace bobbins; and sub-contracted specialized woodturning and wood carvings to local furniture shops.

Miles has also been arranging the programs at the regular meetings of the Wilson Hist. Soc. since 1995.

* * * * * * * * * *

OVERSITE:

In the school item in the April Newsletter, we overlooked the late Howard Fuller who was Supt. of Schools in 1964. Mr. Fuller's son, Kenneth, married Kathi Allgeier, daughter of Ed and Marilyn Allgeier.

* * * * * * * * * *

MEMBERSHIP NEWS:

Please welcome the following new members: Ron and Kathy Butterworth of Peterborough,Can; and J. Warren Perry,PhD, of Buffalo, NY. Dr. Perry paid up his membership five yrs. to 2004. James W. McGrath of Lockport has joined the Society, and also made a generous donation for the Building Fund. Esther Davis Stockwell of LaPort,IN, also gave a generous donation.

* * * * * * * * * *

QUIPS: Most women are not as young as they are painted.

* * * * * * * * * *

NOVEL GRADUATION CLASS:

Did you ever hear about Wilson's unusual graduating Class of '24---the one that called themselves "The Class that didn't do anything?" Well, it seems they had no Class projects; No Class fund-raisers; No yearbook; No nothing; and Why? Well, as one class member put it, it was because the Class Advisor, Mary Berlin, fell in love that year and had other things on her mind.

Be that as it may, when the Class graduated from the old High School,(where the Town Hall is today) Alexander McIllroy was Principal, and the Class was comprised of 2 boys and 9 girls.

Sixty years later they decided to make up for lost time, and held their first Class Reunion at the Best Western in Lockport. Some of the classmates who hadn't seen eachother since graduation were: Grace Brown Wright; Winifred Dulin Stacy; Annabelle Duxbury Benedict; Douglas Grant; Mildred Lash Toenniessen; Ora Pettit; Virginia Rodgers Boyd; Drucilla Ward Brown; Marian Williams; Mary Wilson Pelletier; and Gladys Woodcock Webster.

The one thing the Class did have was a Class Motto: "Not only try, but succeed." At their 60th Reunion they decided to change it to: "Age is a matter of mind--if you don't mind, it doesn't matter."

* * * * * * * * * * *

CABOOSE PROGRESS:

It's a slow process, but our volunteers are doing what they can, (depending on the weather and their work schedules.) to renovate the old caboose. And it is worth restoring because, like the Dinosaur, it is fast becoming extinct.

The museum's caboose is special because it was once used as a temporary home for the workers who repaired damaged cars and equipment after train wrecks. Thus it was equipped with sleeping accomodations, stove, ice-box, sink, and toilet.

Renovation of the caboose was originally completed under the supervision of the late Burt Jennings, while today's repair work has mainly been done by Don Burrows and Darrell Smith. Miles Linnabery and Elton Kropp have helped with the siding, and all the new woodwork was painted red by Gordon Strablow. Don said that someone has been engaged to complete the roofing, and this may be underway or completed by the time you read this Newsletter.

* * * * * * * * * * *

REMEMBERING JOE:

When thinking about some of the first members of the Wilson Hist. Soc. that worked on the Depot, our thoughts turned to Joe Higgins, whose hard work got the museum off to a good start.

Memories of Joe,however, go back a few years earlier when he was First Aid Director at the old Lewiston Trail Council Boy Scout Camp at Allegheny State Park. He was also a Counselor and Scoutmaster, and helped show the boys how to do crafts like leather and Bead work.

We had the pleasure of meeting Joe when, as Scoutmaster of the East Wilson Scout Troop #41, we took the boys to Camp.

Joe grew up on Lock Street in Lockport, and we believe he attended Canisius in Buffalo. He joined the Office Force at Harrison Radiator from where he retired as supervisor of Placement and Personel.

He had a cottage on "Sunset Island" in Wilson, and later lived along the Lake in a small house called the Old Glass Front. He was very active on the Church Council at Our Lady of the ROsary Catholic Church which he attended for over 40 years.

Joe was also Director and Vice-President of the Niagara County Historical Society in Lockport, and when the Wilson Historical Society was organized in 1972, he became very active as a trustee and the first Curator.

The impact that "Uncle Joe" had on the formation and direction of the Wilson Society can never be over-estimated.

* * * * * * * * * * *

FROM THE MAILBAG:

Donald Munch, and his wife, Retha, have returned from Florida to their "Munch Farms" home on Old Lake Shore Road in Irving,NY, where they spend the summer growing Prize-Winning Concord Grapes. Don was formerly a New York State Trooper, and when he retired 25 years later, he was Senior Investigator in charge of the Bureau of Criminal Investigation in Chautauqua County.

Don grew up on Chestnut Road,Wilson, and graduated from Wilson High School in1952. In his marriage to Retha Bates of South Plymouth,NY, they had four sons. He joined the Wilson Hist. Society in 1985, and upgraded his membership to Life Member in 1986.

* * * * * * * * * * *

MAY EVENTS:

Just a reminder that there will be no Regular Meeting of the Society on May 22nd because of itsproximity to the Memorial Day Fair.

The Board of Directors will meet May 10, 2000, 7:30 PM at the Museum.

The Memorial Day Fair is Monday, May 29th, from 8:00 to 5:00 PM.

On June 26th at 6:00PM, the Annual Meeting will start with "Potluck Dinner". Meats and beverages will be furnished by the Society. Business Meeting; Committee Chairman Reports.

* * * * * * * * * * *

LOOKING AHEAD:

According to Lois Barnum, the Society has a quilt for the 2001 Raffle on Memorial Day. Elma McGrath has also donated a fancy cross-stitch Napkin and tablecloth set for next year. Elma joined the Society in 1985. She grew up on the Maple Rd. and attended District School #12. She graduated from the new Wilson High School in 1936, and moved to Lockport after her marriage in 1941.

* * * * * * * * * * *

SOUNDINGS:

The years between fifty and seventy are the hardest. You are always being asked to do things, and yet you are not decrepit enough to turn them down.

* * * * * * * * * * *

BOARD MEETING-APRIL 12th:

Pres. Fitch called meeting to order with quorum present including: Pam Groff; Diane Muscoreil; Judy King; Darrell Smith; Lois Barnum; Bruce Muck; Kyle Andrews; Miles Linnabery; Bill Rose; Don Croop; Don Burrows, Jerry Dean; Eleanor Myers; Dorothy Maxfield; Celeste Crawford; Sandy Holden, and guest, Jill Phillips.

Judy King gave treasurer's report. Bills from March 9th to April 12th totaled $1,073.81. Checking balance, $8,206.94 which includes $3,650 Vendor deposits for Fair, and $830 collected on quilt raffle. Motion made by Miles Linnabery, to pay bills, 2nd by Dorothy Maxfield Carried.

Jill Phillips presented request for use of grounds by Lions Club to hold Easter Egg hunt on April 22nd. Motion made by Bruce Muck, 2nd by Don Croop to grant request. Carried.

Lee Smith has raised his bid to mow grass from $150 per cutting to $160 because of the increase in gas. Motion made by Bill Rose, 2nd by Miles Linnabery to accept bid. Carried.

Wally Moxham, Town Attorney,of the Wilson Harbor Concert Series has requested money and/or our chairs for summer concerts. Motion made by Lois Barnum, 2nd byDiane Muscoreil to loan chairs. Society Rules, Sec. I letter H, state that chairs are not to be removed from Museum grounds, but rule was waived by Board in view of Mr. Moxham's professional generosity to the Hist. Society.

A certificate of Insurance liability has been received from Jerry Dean, Town Supervisor, and Lois Barnum passed out flyers advertising the Memorial Day Fair.

Pres. Fitch sent a letter to Pete Rohring of Parco Buildings informing him that shingles on the northwest corner of the Pole Barn roof are coming loose again after **several attemptsto repair. He also sent a letter to all chairmen** that written reports must be turned in at the annual meeting on June 26th.

Following a recommendation from the Planning Board to place the Tugwell Cabin north of the Caboose, Gary Fitch held a Construction meeting where it was decided to place the cabin on a pad, facing south. They also decided that rest rooms should be constructed on the south end of the Barnum Building with access from either the outside or inside.

Sandy Holden suggested that a sign be erected and site marked off where Tugwell cabin will set. The field tile are draining well permitting the grounds to be rolled by Harold Benedict.

The 1946 Jeep needs work on its carburetor and brakes. Cal's Auto Repair will be asked for a bid. Board agreed amount to be spent should not exceed $400.

Dan King requested use of the Depot for a meeting of the Antique Truck Club on May 16th. Don Burrows made motion to grant request, 2nd by Diane Muscoreil. Carried.

Don Burrows reported for Wanda that the Wilson Garden Club will care for the plantings around the schoolhouse. The Club requests $200 for topsoil, shrubs, and other plants. Motion made by Darrell Smith, 2nd by Bill Rose to grant request. Carried. He also said that the schoolhouse windows will be tinted to help preserve items inside. Cost will be $450,(Paid by schoolhouse).

The Porsche will be on display Fair Day, and Wally Goodman is checking into getting raffle tickets and repairs.

Wanda Burrows received a letter from the Roswell Alliance Foundation thanking the Society for its donation of T-shirts, Sally Smith, Chrm. of Ways & Means, stated at the Dec. Board meeting, that the society had 40 T-shirts which the committee could donate.

Dorothy Maxfield said that blinds for the rest of the depot windows will be $250 dollars.

* * * * * * * * * * *

MUSEUM GREETERS FOR APRIL:

May 7th:	Bill & Judy Rose; Sara Berry.	Open, Bill Rose
May 14th:	Art Schnoor; Carole Schnoor; Donna Fritton	Open, Carole Schnoor.
May 21st:	Rena Israel; Ruth Weaver; Celeste Crawford.	Open, Celeste Crawford.
May 28th:	June & Elton Kropp;;Beverly Woolson.	Open, Elton Kropp
June 4th:	David & Gus Bradley; Don Croop.	Open, Don Croop.

* * * * * * * * * * *

ADOPT-A-CAR ALERT:

Bill Rose will open Car Bldg. on Sun., May 7th at 2PM. Be sure to clean and polish your car before Fair Day. Also open other Sundays in May. Cleaning materials in Car Building.

* * * * * * * * * * *

OOPS:

We omitted the name of Hazel Wilson LeVan from list of 1916 Graduates.(Oct.) '99. Sorry.

* * * * * * * * * * *

FEDERATION MEETING:

The Niag. Co. Federation of Hist. Society's met at the Niag. Co. Museum on April 15,00 with lunch provided by Lockport Locks & Canal Tours, Inc. Norman MacAskill, Pres. of the Federation, welcomed guests and introduced speakers.

At 9:40Am, Patricia McQuire, member of the Kenan Quilter's Guild, spoke about the "Role of Quilts in the Underground Railroad."

At 10:45 Am, Wanda Burrows, Chrm. of Wilson's Schoolhouse Comm., played videos, and discussed the reasons why the schoolhouse was moved from the Randall Rd. to the Museum Grounds.

Following lunch at Noon, Melissa Wertman, Collections Asst. at the Buffalo & Erie Co. Hist. Society, gave an interesting talk on the history of the Pan American Exposition.

Members of the Wilson Hist. Soc. who attended the meeting were: Norm and Martha MacAskill; Don Croop; Celeste Crawford; Don and Wanda Burrows; June & Elton Kropp, and Katelyn Smith.

All presentations were excellent and informative--a day well spent.

* * * * * * * * * * *

OUR FINAL ANSWER:

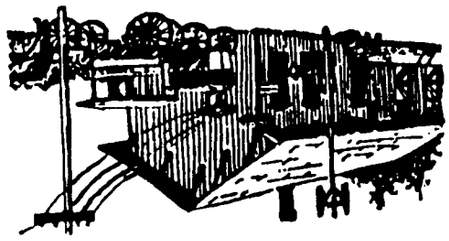
The Memorial Day Fair is on May 29th, Wilson Museum Grounds, Rt. 425, 8 to 5PM.

* * * * * * * * * * *

FINAL LINE:

Anyone can grow old; All you have to do is live long enough.

* * * * * * * * * * *



(Coleman Printing)
June 2000 Vol.28 No.6
DONALD W. CROOP, Editor
NEWSLETTER
Wilson Historical Society
WILSON, NEW YORK 14172-9763

NON PROFIT ORG.
U. S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 8
WILSON, N.Y.

June 2,000

RICHMOND AVENUE ENTREPRENEUR:

We noted recently that there was some question regarding the historic value of one of the buildings on Richmond Ave. in Lockport,NY. Our research revealed that Byron Covert once manufactured his Covert automobile on Richmond Ave., and that the site was later used for the newly organized Harrison Radiator Company.

Covert came to Lockport in 1891, and started up a Bicycle Shop at 56 Market Street He was a natural mechanic and soon figured out a way to improve and manufacture a bicycle of his own design. He also built his first Covert automobile at the Market St. address, but in 1901 he moved his business to Canal St.--later named Richmond Avenue.

There he developed and manufactured his Covert cars through 1907, and in 1908 he moved his business again to Grand and Lock Streets. In 1910, Herbert C. Harrison took over the former Covert building on Richmond Ave., and started up the new Harrison Radiator Company.

Mr. Covert, who backed Harrison's ribbon type idea for automobile radiators, became Vice-President and Treasurer of the Harrison Company.

When Covert moved his Plant to Grand & Lock Streets, he no longer made Covert Cars but instead devoted his efforts to building transmissions, differentials, and gears. Eventually, he manufactured just gears, and the Plant became known as the Covert Gear Company.

During the 1930's and 40's the Covert Foundry supplied cast iron inlets and outlets for Harrison radiators, but these were later replaced with copper & brass fittings.

In 1977, Dr. John F. Argue of Wilson learned that one of the Covert Cars was going to be auctioned off by the Ford Museum at Dearborn, MI. Since "Doc" was interested in antique cars, he sent in a bid for $10,000 dollars. He late remarked that though higher bids were submitted, the Dearborn Museum accepted his bid since the auto had been built so close to Wilson. As a result, the 1904 Covert Chainless was the first and oldest car donated to the Wilson Museum by Dr. Argue.

The 1904 Covert was once owned by James Melton, a famous Opera Star, and it was he who gave the car to the Dearborn Museum. The Museum sold the car because it was short of exhibiting space and needed the area for other items.

While tracing the history of the Covert Company, it was discovered that Wilson's newly acquired antique car was the first Covert Chainless built by the Company. Today the Wilson Museum's Car is believed to be the only one left in the United States--possibly the World.

When the car was acquired it needed new tires, the rear fenders were missing, as were the fancy side running lamps. Dr. Argue replaced the tires.

Under the Wilson Museum's "Adopt-a-car " policy, the 1904 Covert was "adopted" by Donald Burrows. Picture postcards of the rare auto are available at the Wilson Museum.

* * * * * * * * * *

SCHOOLHOUSE DOOR:

Hostesses who may have had trouble opening the schoolhouse door should be aware that the key must be turned to the right to open lock and left to close it. It also helps if one press on door when turning key. Also, Wanda Burrows,Chrm., reports that a protective coating has been put on the schoolhouse windows to protect furnishings inside the schoolhouse.

* * * * * * * * * *

LIONS EASTER EGG HUNT:

A damp and dreary day at the Museum Grounds on the day before Easter didn't dampen the spirits of hundreds of youngchildren and their parents who attended the Lions Club Easter Egg hunt on April 22nd. In fact, the persistent showers that had been plaguing the area for days let up when the event was held.

Kyle Andrews, Chrm. of the Barnum Building, opened the Museum for the popular event, and, to all appearances, everyone had a good time.

* * * * * * * * * *

APRIL MEETING:

The regular meeting on April 24th was called to order by Darrell Smith, Vice-Pres., and Diane Muscoreil filled in as Secretary in the absence of Pam Groff.

Dorothy Maxfield gave an interesting talk and displayed a large portion of her Salt & Pepper shakers from an impressive Collection acquired over the past 40 years.

Refreshments were served after the meeting by Ann Marie Linnabery.

* * * * * * * * * *

QUIPS:

It is said that Middle Age is when your age starts to show around your middle.

* * * * * * * * * *

MEMBERSHIP NOTES:

We are pleased to welcome Thomas P. Palisano of Peoria,AZ, as a member of the Wilson Historical Society. Mr. Palisano is no stranger to Wilson and, for many years, was a Science teacher and Principal in the Wilson Central School system.

It is also a pleasure to welcome Marjorie Borjorek of N. Tonawanda, NY, a new member through the courtesy of Joanne Ruch of Buffalo, NY.

Correction: May Newsletter (pg. 2) Life Member, Miss Helen Annette Stevens, is the daughter of Lonson Smith Stevens and Louisa May Bickford.

Congratulations to junior member, Emmalee Pearce, who won the top award in "visual Arts" in the Reflections program at Thomas Marks School. Emmalee received her award from Principal Elaine Moon at the Founders Day Celebration held at Thomas Marks.

It is a pleasure to announce that Elaine Moon, who joined the historical society in Oct'98, has upgraded her membership recently to the Life Membership Class.

Congratulations to Lester and Betty Clark of Hayward, CA, who celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary on March 26, 2000. The happy occasion was hosted by their five children. Thirteen grandchildren and one hundred elderly guests attended. Graduation exersizes for two of his grandchildren will prevent Lester from attending this year's Fair--the first in many years.

* * * * * * * * * *

RECENT ACQUSITIONS:

Timothy & Barbara Henesey of Tuna,NY, have donated the following items to the Museum: Quick family Bible dated 1858 with births, marriages, and deaths dating back to 1812; Cyclopedia of Biographies and people of Niagara Co. dating back to the 1600's; 11 Newspaper Articles from early 1900's; "In Memory" card of Samuel Pettit, former Niagara Co. Clerk, whodied in 1918; Book Sketches of Lockport by Louise Carelton (1898); 2-Ribbons from the 5thAnnual Reunion of "Battery M" dated Oct. 14, 1884, Lockport, NY; Farm Implement News withAd for Herschell Co., late 1800's; and 37 mounted photos from late 1800's to

Wanda Burrows: Schoolhouse Comm., Books, "Legacy" & "Vanishing Landscape"by Eric Sloane.

Agnes Drewes: Vol.1,No.1, Wilson High School "Chronicle" published Nov. 1911; also three copies of the Wilson "Star", 1/24/'47; 1/31/'47; and 2/25/'62. Also old Postcards of Birthdays and Holidays.

Don Croop: Newsletters from January through December, 1999. Indexed with sheet protectors.

Susan Schearer: Framed Graduation Certificate for Dr. John Argue from the University of Buffalo Medical School.

Leanne Haley-Brown: Old Drugstore Display Cabinet and advertising found in building that now houses the Wilson Community Pharmacy.

* * * * * * * * * *

NOSTALGIC MEMORIES:

When Thomas Palisano joined the Wilson Hist. Soc. recently, it brought back memories of a wonderful period in the lives of our 3 children when they attended and graduated from the Wilson Central High School during the 1950's. We cherish those years and firmly believe our children were very fortunate to complete their high school educations under the guidance of some exceptionally fine teachers and administrators.

Most of those teachers are now celebrating their "Golden Years", and many are members of the Wilson Hist. Society. We would like to mention a few, and wouldn't be surprised if we left some out: Marion Campbell; Helen Stevens; Jack Maxfield; Thomas Palisano; Richard Schmidle; Marjorie Hurlburt; Grace Singer; Janet Sporleder; John Cable; Berne Kent; Nancy Kent; Dorothy Lort; Joyce Richards; Dora Wakeman; and Ernestine Walpole.

Other school employees of the '50s belonging to the Hist. Soc. are: Sally Pelton; Elizabeth Cole; Sara Berry; Micky Hunter; and Howard Lederhouse.

* * * * * * * * * *

COMING EVENTS:

June 14th: Board of Director Meeting at Museum. 7:30 PM.

June 26th: Annual Dinner Meeting, Barnum Building, 6PM. "Potluck". Meats and beverages will be furnished by Society. All Chairmen please turn in written report of past year's activities.

July & August: Board meetings will be held each month on 2nd Wednesday. 7:30PM. No regular meetings are scheduled for July and August.

Sunday after noon visiting hours at the museum will continue in July & Aug.

Sept. 25th: Regular Meetings will resume with guest speaker, Rev. Kenneth Babcock, who will discuss "The Early History of the Methodist Church in Western New York." 7:30PM.

Oct. 23rd: Bob Emerson of the Old Fort Niagara will talk about "Ghost Stories, Fact and Fiction" at the old Fort.

* * * * * * * * * *

YOUR VOTE IS IMPORTANT:

Voting results in some of Wilson's past elections have shown that candidates for office sometimes win or lose by very close margins. That is why your vote is so very important.

Occasionally you may hear someone say that his or her vote doesn't really matter. If you believe that, perhaps you should consider the following:

In 1778, one vote decided whether America would be an English or German speaking Nation. In 1845, Texas became a member of the United States because of just one vote. Also, in 1878, Rutherford B. HaYES BECAME President of the U.S. by just one vote. And, in more recent times, One Vote saved the Selective Service System just a few weeks before Pearl Harbor..

So a lot depends on your One Vote. Who knows? It might change the whole course of history.

* * * * * * * * * *

QUIPS:

Once upon a time , I was beautiful. My hair was thick, dark, and glossy. My skin was smooth and soft as a ripe peach---my mouth was dark & pink...my eyes were large & clear... Unfortunately, I was 4 yrs. old at the time. It's been downhill ever since. (Geneen Roth)

THE MEMORIAL DAY FAIR:

One nice thing about the annual Memorial Day Fair is there is no racial or other restrictions of any kind--all you need to take advantage of the historical society's free admission policy is a little curiosity, a good appetite, and an appreciation for an old-time Country Fair atmosphere.

The Fair Committee, under Lois Barnum's guidance, trys to have something for everyone including good food and great entertainment. In the food department you can sample Chiavettas's Chicken Bar-B-Que; Beef-on-Weck; Hot Dogs; Funnel Cakes; Sno-Cones; Cotton Candy; Homemade Pies; Pop Corn & Lemonade; Coffee & Doughnuts, or bottled water.

Great entertainment provided by Country Western Tom Keil & Co.; Niagara Experience Players; Wilson High School Band; Mombrea Brothers; Jessica Grant, and the Frontier SkyDivers.

The bigger attractions at the Fair include the large "Flea Market"; "Quilt-Drawing"; and "Antique Car Display", and there is plenty more to keep one busy such as Museum Exhibits; the old schoolhouse; Petting Zoo; Pony Rides; Fish Pond; and free balloons for the children. Then there is Free Shuttle Buses available and Free Admission to the grounds.

Perhaps one of the best features of the annual Fair is its attraction for former residents and friends who find it a perfect place to renew old acquaintances.

None of this could be accomplished, however, without the great cooperation and help received from dozens of society members and their friends who "pitch in" each year to make the annual Fair one of Wilson's most popular attractions.(This year, however, we had problems)

* * * * * * * * * * *

WILSON PLANS BUSY SUMMER:

It all started with the Lions Club Easter Egg Hunt followed by the Wilson Historical Society Memorial Day Fair on May 29th. But that's only the beginning.

The "Kids Fishing Derby" sponsored by the Wilson Conservation Club, will be held Saturday, June 17th , from 8-12 PM. The Clubhouse on Rt. 425 will serve as aMeasuring Station, and all Trophies and Prizes will also be given out at the Club.

Town Supervisor, Jerry Dean, has announced a number of projects to benefit Wilson this year and foremost, perhaps, will be the new "Harborfest 2000" scheduled for the weekend of August 4-6, 2000. A feature attraction will be a visit to the harbor by the Tall Ship, "Pilgrim", and many other activities will include Concerts; Fireworks; Fishing Derby; Boat Races; Marine Auction; Cruise Nights; Street Dance; and lots of food.

Another big event will be the 5K Salmon Run which will take off on June 10th. Persons interested may pick up applications at the Wilson Town Hall.

On July 23rd, the Wilson Free Library's Golf Tournament will be held at the Oak Run Golf Course starting at 1:00PM. To register, you may call Jerry at 751-6431 or 751-7127.

The popular Wilson Harbor Concert Series will start on July 3rd with the "Big Wheelies and the Hub Caps", and other concerts will be held as follows:

July 13th: The Lockport Community Band.
July 20th: 23 Ski Do
August 6th: American Legion Band (tentative)
August 17th: Ann Kennedy and Students.

Other events to look forward to will be the Wilson Invitational Soccer Tournament; the Labor Day Flea Market at the Museum Grounds; and, above all, the Wilson Volunteer Fire Co.#1 Field days and Parade on August 24th through August 26th.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Other Fishing Derbies scheduled in addition to the "Kids Derby" are: June 9-11, Pro Am Salmon Team; Aug. 18th, Trout & Salmon Derby; Sept. 9-17th, Fall Classic Fishing Derby; and Sept. 9 and 10th, Classic Team Bass.

* * * * * * * * * * *

MUSEUM HOSTS & HOSTESSES:

Virginia Strablow, Chrm. of Sunday afternoon hostesses, has selected the following volunteers to serve as "Greeters" at the Museum:

June 4th:	Wally and Chris Goodman; Pauline Kurtz	Open Museum, Wally Goodman.
June 11th:	David & "Gus" Bradley; Don Croop	Open Museum, Don Croop
June 18th:	Lois Jennings; Eleanor Myers; Jean Hayes	Open Museum, "Ollie" Clark.
June 25th:	Miles & Ann Marie Linnabery; "Chuck" Messersmith	Open Museum, Miles Linnabery.
July 2nd:	Marion Campbell; Dora Wakeman; & "Dick" Schmidle	Open Museum, "Dick" Schmidle.

* * * * * * * * * * *

CENSUS STATISTICS:

In 1930 our Nation had a population of 123.2 million persons. By 1999 the population grew to 274 million--a pretty impressive increase.

In 1930 the average size of a family was 4.1 persons, but in spite of a dramatic increase in the population up to 1999, the size of an average family dropped to 3.18 persons.

On a brighter note, although a person's life expectancy was only 59.7 years in 1930, that figure increased to 76.5 years in 1999.

Another interesting fact shows that in 1930, 43% of the population lived in rural areas. In 1999 persons residing in rural areas has dropped to 24.8%.

If the cost of food is foremost in your mind, we find that in 1930 one could buy a pound of Round Steak for 42¢ a pound. Now, if you can afford it, round steak sells for an average of $2.60 per pound.

* * * * * * * * * * *

QUIPS:

Here's my morning ritual. I open a sleepy eye, take one horrified look at my reflection in the mirror and then repeat with conviction. "I'm me and I'm wonderful. Because God doesn't make junk."-----(Erma Bombeck)

* * * * * * * * * * *

BOARD MEETING:

The Board of Directors met May 10, 2000 with 19 members of the Society present: Gary Fitch; Gordon Strablow; Pam Groff; Diane Muscoreil; Judy King; Lois Barnum; Bruce Muck; Bill Rose; Kyle Anderson; Miles Linnabery; Wally Goodman; Don Croop; Don Burrows; Eleanor Myers; Celeste Crawford; Dorothy Maxfield; Micky Hunter; Wanda Burrows; and Elton Kropp.

Judy King gave treasurer's report (April 13-May 10th) Checking, $7,677,01; Income, $1,374.00; Expenses, $2,932.38. Motion made by Bruce Muck,2nd by Bill Rose, to pay bills presented. Carried. Judy also reported Schoolhouse Fund is now zero.

Shingles on Storage Barn repaired. Parco suggests no storage shelves be erected in building because of the structure's design.

The National Equity Utility Services will do an analysis of society's utility bills at no charge. If they find incorrect charges they are to receive 50% of any re-imbursement.

Wally Goodman reported that tickets for Porsche raffle are designed. Don Burrows made motion, 2nd by Miles Linnabery, to authorize Wally to order 10,000 tickets. The Porsche was on display at the Fair and raffle will be conducted all year. Mr. Goodman is also determining who shall receive the Historical Society Awards on Class Night.

Elton Kropp announced that Harold Benedict has been doing a great job mowing and rolling the grounds. The dead 4-H tree has been replaced, and one evergreen & a Memorial Tree to Rex Stacy have died. Gary recommended that fertilizer be placed around evergreens planted last year.

Wanda Burrows announced that the Wilson Garden Club planned a spring clean-up around the Schoolhouse on May 17th. She also requested permission to use the School & Barnum Building for a program on Sunday Schools, June 18th, 10:30Am. Miss Helen Stevens will teach a class of youngsters about old Sunday Schools with a picnic to follow..

Don Burrows gave an update on the caboose, and called a work meeting on Sat.,May 20th, to give the caboose a 2nd coat of paint. The Boy Scouts have been asked to clean the inside.

Celeste Crawford has done a nice job cleaning the Library. Building Chairmen should remove boxes of material relevant to their areas. Things should not be stored in the Library.

Micky Hunter asked if the Methodist Church might use the grounds again on Labor Day for their annual "Flea Market". Motion made by Don Croop, 2nd by Miles Linnabery, to grant request. Motion approved. (Excerpts from minutes submitted by Pam Groff, Secretary)

* * * * * * * * * *

TO BE OR NOT TO BE:

Ever since 1973 the Wilson Hist. Soc. Memorial Day Fair has grown bigger & bigger.Now, huge crowds attend the annual event with many residents taking advantage of the Fair to hold their own private "flea markets.". That is great, and the historical society is glad that others in the Community can benefit from the crowds of people attracted to Wilson by the Fair.

There is one problem, however, that worries the society's Fair Committee, and that is the ever-increasing difficulty of finding persons who will give up a couple hours of their time to help out

The question has even been raised that perhaps, if this trend continues, the few hard-working persons who make the Fair possible, may become discouraged and decide to call it "quits." Considering all the people who are benefitting from the Fair, this would be a real shame. So perhaps some serious thought should be given to ways you could help out.

Everyone wins if the Fair can be kept going--but everyone loses if we fail. So what will your answer be next year? Will you be willing to help out a couple hours? Seriously folks, the future of Wilson's Memorial Day Fair is in your hands.

* * * * * * * * * *

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?:

In January, 1947, Girl Scout Troop #1 of Wilson celebrated their 12th Birthday at a meeting held in the American Legion Rooms. Registered Girl Scouts who attended were:

Lois Tower; Myra Zastrow; Jean Johnson; Joann Myers; Dorothy Cramer; Donna Bloodgood; Doris VanHousen; Joyce Fitch; Laura Mae Johnson; Doris Grenville; Marilyn Monroe; Joyce Branch; Marilyn Pearce; Carol Croop; Patricia Cramer; Judith Rice; Annabell Zastrow; Myrtle Benzino; Patricia Tourville; Ruth Schultz; Shirley Singer; Alice Robinson; Beverly Luff; Nancy Grabbit; Patricia Vought; Marcia Wakeman; Florence Laffler; Joyce Martin; Elizabeth Wilbur; Maxine Schultz; Nancy Jane Wilson; Lorraine Averell; Virginia Magrum; Arlene Kohler; Joyce Myers; Gretchen Wright; Patricia Stacy; Shirley Beutel; Mary Lynn Brydges; Mary Carol Collins; Margaret Evans; Marjorie Hamilton; Lorena Lester; Elizabeth Hornsby; and Ida Mae Harrington.

Leader of Wilson Girl Scout Troop #1 was the late Mildred E. Croop, who devoted over forty years of her life to Scouting in Wilson.

* * * * * * * * * *

GENEALOGY EXPERT:

Becky Baker Hill of Tiffin.OH, has been named an Ohio Genealogical Society Fellow. Becky founded the Seneca Co. Genealogy Soc. in 1981. It now has 300 members. In 1984 she accepted a position as Librarian at the Hayes Presidential Center Library in Fremont, her present occupation. In Tiffin, she was instrumental in building the genealogical section of the Tiffin-Seneca Public Library.

Becky, the daughter of the former Ella Mae Baker of Wilson, grew up in Wilson and graduated from Wilson Central School in 1966. She is one of the youngest Charter/Life Members of the Wilson Hist. Soc., and when the society published its Sketchbooks I & II, (A History of Wilson), Becky consented to work up the cross-index file for both publications.

* * * * * * * * * *

Congratulations are also in order for Melanie Barnum, daughter of Lois and the late Whitney Barnum, who has graduated from the College of Arts at San Jose State University, San Jose, CA.

Mathew Jennejahn, son of Carl & Judy Jennejahn, who graduated from Case Western Reserve, College of Law, at Cleveland, OH.

Also, Sara Smiley, daughter of Tom & Pris Smiley, who graduated from the Univ. of Illinois, College of Audiology at Champaigne,IL.

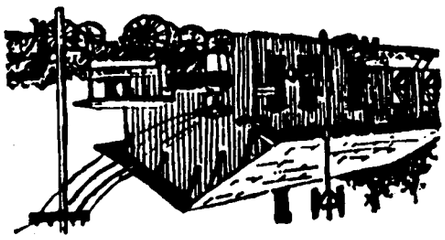
* * * * * * * * * *

Wilson Historical Society
WILSON, NEW YORK 14172-9763

NEWSLETTER

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

July/Aug.2000 Vol. 29 No.7
(Coleman Printing)



NON PROFIT ORG.
U. S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 8
WILSON, N.Y.

July/August 2000

ELBERTA STATION:

Bill Wilson was a long time resident of the Randall Road, and there wasn't much he didn't know about the community called Elberta. It wasn't always known by that name, however, and up to around 1908 he recalled that the corners was known as Randall--the 1st whistle stop on the "Hojack" southwest of Wilson.

Victor Berlin of Wilson was one of the largest produce buyers in Niagara Coun ty and, according to Bill, he built a way station just east of where the railroad tracks crossed the Randall Road. He also owned a cooperage at that site where four coopers were kept busy making barrels in which apples and peaches were packed and shipped out.Ray Eddy was the head cooper, and two of his helpers were Fred and Lou Schrader.Randall later became known as Elberta because of the large number of peaches shipped out from there.

There were several other established businesses where the Braley Road crosses the Randall road including a Storage House; Elevator; and Evaporator. The Bass Store was located just south of the intersection, and the fruit dryer was just behind it along the tracks. Cooper's Store was across the street from Bass's, and Bill recalled with a smile that Coopers used to sell candy for a penny, while Bass charged two cents--so all the kids would go to Cooper's.

Bill Wilson was manager of the dryer which had seven peeling machines and one for coring apples. They were all operated by young women, and the dried fruit was packed in boxes and shipped by rail all over the Country.

Lou Schrader grew up and worked on his father's Randall Road farm. He also worked a year for Ray Fitch, and was still an unmarried young man when he was hired to work at the Cooperage, and later became "Vick's" right hand man.

When Lou married Emma Duxbury, they began housekeeping in a house on McChesney Street in Wilson that had formerly been the site for the Andrew Bett's Bakery. Later on, Lou was elected Village Clerk, and held that position for 37 years. What might be described as "Like father like Daughter", Emma Lou Schrader (Reppentine) is the current Village Clerk of Wilson. We might also add here that on May 25th, her mother, Emma Schrader, celebrated her 98th birthday.

The Cooperage, Dryer, Evaporator and other businesses that once flourishedin the Elberta area gradually disappeared, and the Elberta Chemical Plant operated there up to the '70's.

* * * * * * * * * * *

POOL SCHEDULED TO OPEN:

The Wilson Community Pool, which has been under construction at Clark's Park near the Wilson Boathouse, is scheduled to be open on July 1, 2000. It is planned to use the 30 X 50 foot pool for various swimming programs from beginners to advanced, according to Mayor Thomas Bateman, and other programs may include Jazzercize classes for Senior Citizens, handicapped swimming, etc.

The pool, which will be open to Wilson reidents, was built by Patrick D. Brady, a summer resident of Wilson, and CEO of CYRK, a National Promotion Company. Cooperating in the project with Mr. Brady are: Thomas Bateman, Village Mayor; Jerry Dean, Town Supervisor; and Walter Moxham, Attorney for the Town of Wilson.

* * * * * * * * * * *

FREE TRADE:

While Joe's Japanese-made coffee pot "perks" some Columbian coffee, he shaves with his electric razor, (made in Hong Kong); puts on a dress shirt,(made in Taiwan); puts on his designer jeans,(made in Singapore); slips into a pair of shoes,(made in Korea); cooks some breakfast on his new skillet,(made in the Philippines); then figures out what he could spend that day on his calculator,(made in Mexico).

Getting into his car,(made in Germany); he drives around all day looking for a good-paying American job.Following a fruitless search, he goes home to relax; puts on his slippers, (made in Brazil); pours a glass of wine, (made in France); and turns on his TV,(made in Japan);--- all the time wondering why he can't find a good-paying American job. (Thanks to the Internet)

* * * * * * * * * * *

QUILT-DRAWING WINNERS:

Lynn Barnum of Wilson won the beautiful millennium quilt made by local ladies.
Linda Trescott of Olcott won the woodcarving made by Robert Schearer of Segement,TX.
Gail Jeacock of Ft. Erie, Can., won a Wilson Centennial Afghan.
Pat & Norm O'Brien of Williamsville, NY, won a Wilson Sketchbook History of Wilson.
Pat Drewes of Wilson, won a Wilson Hist. Soc. Recipe Book

* * * * * * * * * * *

BON MOT: The best thing to spend on your children is your time.

* * * * * * * * * * *

MUSEUM HOSTS & HOSTESSES:

We have a long list of museum greeters for July & August, and we ask that you check it carefully and make a note of the time you've agreed to serve. Sincere thanks to Virginia for all her time spent putting these lists together, also many thanks to all who make it possible:

July 2nd::	Christine Goodman;Dora Wakeman; Wally Goodman.	Open- Wally Goodman.
July 9th:	Harold & Neva Benedict; Dorothy Mark.	Open - Lois Barnum
July 16th:	Donald & Wanda Burrows; Julie Smith.	Open- Don Burrows.
July 23rd:	Bill & Maxine Jones; Helen Sherrie.	Open-Darrell Smith
July 30th:	Dan & Judy King; Gerry Swann.	Open- Dan King.

* * * * * * * * * *

August 6th:	Edward and Melva Bull; Ollie & Helen Clark.	Open- Ollie Clark
Aug. 13th:	Norma Ward; David & Jennifer Branch.	Open- Celeste Crawford.
Aug. 20th:	Bill and "Peg" Fritton; Dr. George & Sue Cruickshank.	Open- Elton Kropp.
Aug. 27th:	Jack & Winifred Terry; Marge Craig.	Open- Carole Schnoor.

* * * * * * * * * *

Sept. 3rd:	Edna Robinson & Virginia & Gordon Strablow.	Open- Gordon Strablow

* * * * * * * * * *

IN MEMORIUM:

James Waldron, 73, died June 5,2000, at his Town of Lockport home after a five-year battle with cancer. He was born at Grosse Point,MI, was a Navy Veteran of World War II. He studied music and piano at Michigan State University, and received an Engineering degree from Iowa State University. He was an accomplished musician and member of the Burchfield-Penney Art Center where he often played for Receptions.

When residing in Wilson, he became a member of Exley United Methodist Church where he sang and arranged music for the choir. As a member of the Wilson Historical Society, he served as Treasurer from 1995 though 1997.

He worked for many years in the electrical and plastics industries and managed his own communications business--an Antenna Co. that designed and marketed low profile antenna equipment since 1979. Among his many other pursuits, he was an amateur radio operator for 42 years, a member of the American Radio Relay League, and Director of the Quarter Century Wireless Assoc. for several years. He also was a excellent cook and member of the Gourmet Cooking Club.

He is survived by his wife, the former Beth Croop of Clarence Center,NY; a son, James Waldron of Fort Lauderdale, FL; a brother, Robert Waldron of Okemas,MI; 3 stepson, Gary Chilcott of Columbus,OH, and David and Douglas Chilcott of San Antonia,Tx; also 4 grandchildren and a great grandson.

A "Celebration of Life" service was held at noon on June 17th at Exley United Methodist Church. His body was donated to the University of Buffalo School of Medicine for Cancer research

* * * * * * * * * *

MEMBERSHIP NOTES:

Please make welcome the following new members: Rebecca and Lawrence Frauen of Wilson, NY; James Lepch of Ransomville, NY; Francis Danielwicz of Lockport, NY; and Arthur and Georgia Bolman of Ohio.

Emma Duxbury Schrader, a Life Member of the Society, celebrated her 98th Birthday at Exley U. M. Church at a party hosted by friends and rela tives on May 26th.

It is pretty well established that the Stork will fly over Wilson in a few months and stop in at the home of Miles and AnneMarie Linnabery . Happy Landing.

Clark L. Brown received his BS in Business Information Systems at Phoenix University on June 24th. Clark's wife, Dianne, is Don Croop's granddaughter.

Karen Walder, daughter of Tom and Gail Walder, Chestnut Rd, S. Wilson, received a MBA, (Masters in Business Administration) from Yale University on May 22 , 2000.Karen, who graduated a few years ago from Cornell University, is employed by Pratt & Whitney as Mng.of Research.

Mrs. Kathleen A. Voelkle of Clarkston, MI, made a generous donation recently of $40 to the Schoolhouse Fund in memory of her father, Corliss Armstrong. Corliss grew up on W. Lake Rd., Wilson, graduated from Wilson High School in 1923, and received a Masters in Business Administration at the Univ. of Michigan. When he retired, he was a Business Executive with the Pontiac Div. of General Motors Corporation.

* * * * * * * * * *

FLAMING YOUTH:

We can't complete this Newsletter without mentioning those strong, young Junior Members who helped get the grounds ready for the Fair. They did a fantastic job and deserve a lot of credit for the way they "pitched in" and got the job done.

Young people who worked hard all day on Saturday, Sunday, and Monday, were: Joshua Smith; Andy Evans; Jerry Winquist; Michele Evans; Laura Evans; and Donald Smith. Because of their help, the difficult work of assembling equipment for the fair was made a lot easier. Also, helping with clean-up after the fair were Derek Masters; Andy Maacks; Steven Fowler; and junior memeber, Scott Sobiegray.

Cub Scout Den #6,(assisted by Josh Smith and Steven Fowler) also helped Caboose Chrm., Darrell Smith, clean the inside of the caboose about a week before the Fair. When the job was done, Darrell Smith invited everyone inside the Depot where they enjoyed pizza and soda provided by him.

Members of Den#6, who made the inside of the caboose really shine were: Brad Pease; Mat Smith; Devon Fowler; David Warsocki; Derk Gagnon; and Jonny Moran.Cub Scout Leader was Mary Jane Ziehm and Martha Smith, Asst. Leader. Parents of Cubs who also helped were: Nina Gagnon; Paul Warsocki; and Joe Moran.

* * * * * * * * * *

SOUNDINGS:

"Remember that everyone you meet is afraid of something, loves something, and has lost something."

* * * * * * * * * *

IT ALL STARTED IN 1973:

In past years we've always tried to thank fair-workers by thanking them in the Newsletter. This did not always reach everyone,however, as many who helped were not members of the Society and did not receive a Newsletter. This year, the Fair Comm. decided to have each Chairman should send a Thank You note to each person who helped them so no one would be missed. So far this seems to be working well. Which reminds us that many organizations in town have also given the Wilson Historical Society a much needed boost.

The Pfeiffer's Food Div.of T Marzetti,Inc. has probably been the society's greatest benefactor for nearly 30 years, and have made their large parking lot available to fair-goers for free parking since the first Fair started in 1973.They also donated dozens of bottles of fine Salad Dressings for use at our former popular Salad Bar. And who could ever forget the great Loganberry juice drink donated by Pfeiffer's--a "hit" at former Fairs.

In-as-much as possible, it has been a policy of the society to purchase groceries and supplies from local businessmen, and over the years it has been found that our own IGA Lakeside Market serves our needs best--not only for its competitive prices, but also for the convenience of being able to get supplies when needed and return those not used.

Ontario Orchards, another of our benefactors, has always been a "friend in deed"--not just for free use of its parking facilities but also for the loan of heavy equipment when needed to move materials around the museum grounds.

And we should never take for granted the fine cooperation we've had from the Wilson Schools, Churches, Town Hall, and village officials who have permitted visitors to park free in the village lots and streets--thus alleviating crowds at the museum and allowing our free Shuttle Bus Service to and from the Museum grounds.

We hope that everyone is aware that the Wilson Vol. Fire Co. #1 Ambulance Crew always sets up on the grounds to take care of any unforseen emergencies. This year a father and his young son were happy they were there when the boy got some iritable substance in his eyes, and was directed to the Ambulance Crew for help.

Buetel's Nurseries of Chestnut Rd., S. Wilson, has been donating the beautiful plantings around the museum sign at the entrance to the museum grounds. The society appreciates the time and interest Don has shown in keeping our "front door" looking nice. And if you liked that, you probably were amazed at the beautiful landscaping job and floral plantings done by the Wilson Garden Club around the old 1861 Schoolhouse

In the forgoing comments we've mentioned a few of the Wilson organizations who recognize that the Wilson Museum belongs to all the people of Wilson. The Wilson Historical Society is merely directors and caretakers of the fine museum facilities.

Please remember that the Wilson Museum holds the heritage of your town's Founding Fathers within its walls, and by supporting your museum that heritage can be maintained and preserved.

* * * * * * * * * *

MISCONCEPTION:

Several irate persons at this year's Fair complained that the Historical Society misled the Public when we advertised the Fair as.having Free Parking & Free Admission. Well, we did have plenty of Free Parking as well as a Free Shuttle Bus Service from village lots to the fair. Until the past couple years, we have always had free parking near the museum thanks to the generosity of our neighbors. Unfortunately, one neighbor with propertyacross from the museum entrance, decided to charge $6.00 for cars to park.

We still wouldn't have mentioned it until we found out that the people that complained about the $6.00 parking fee believed that the historical society was receiving the money. This was absolutely not true.

One man snapped: "We stopped to get our son a free balloon. After paying $6.00 to park, you can hardly call it a free balloon." Other persons who were having "Smiling Faces" painted on their childrens' faces refused to make a donation and were heard to say, " We already donated $6.00 to you to park." Well, the Society got a "black eye" for something we had no control over and we're truly sorry some visitors paid to park when they could have parked free in town.

As the Fair gets bigger and bigger, the possibility of having problems grows with it, but, generally speaking, we believe that the Public and most Organizations in Town have been very generous and supportive of the Historical Society's one money-raising event of the year.

In spite of a few "sour" notes, we believe that this year's Fair waS WELL MANAGED, and for that we thank our Fair Committee and the numerous fair chairmenwho cooperated with them. Also, the weather was about right, and most food concessions were sold out by mid afternoon including Home-made Pies; Beef on Weck; Funnel Cakes, and the delicious Chicken Bar-B-Que. We also wish to thank the many workers who "stuck" to their jobs all day long.

Most comments were positive and we liked the one by the lady from Syracuse who said, "We enjoy coming here each year because of the friendly people and smiling faces, and we can afford to bring our children to this family-oriented Fair because of the reasonable prices." That sentiment was also echoed by many persons who were pleased to buy a "good cup of coffee for only fifty cents."

So thanks everyone for a job well done. If we try to do what's right for our Community, we believe the Community will do right by us(We hope to have Fair Results in next Newsletter.)

* * * * * * * * * *

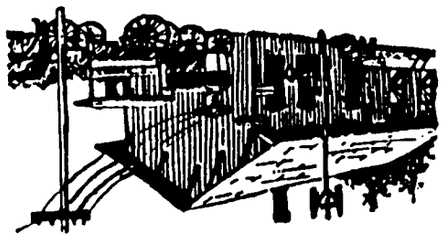
CLOSE MISS:

It had been hoped to have the Caboose completed by the Fair, but the weather didn't cooperate. In spite of that, a lot was accomplished by Gordon Strablow; Don Burrows; Dan King; and Darrel Smith. Gordon did most of the painting while Don and Darrell replaced most of the windows. Dan King provided a power sprayer which he and Gordon Strablow used to clean the wheels and undercarriage.

When one considers that these members have been volunteering time from their own busy work schedules, you can appreciate the contribtion they have made to get the old caboose repaired.

* * * * * * * * * *

IT'S AFACT: "We always admire the other fellow more after we've tried to do his job."

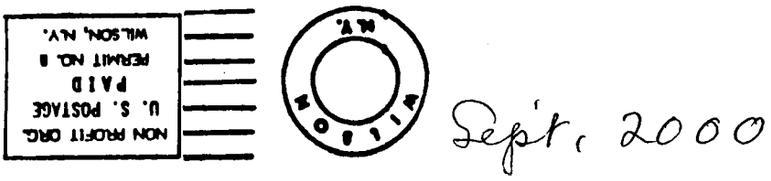


Wilson Historical Society
WILSON, NEW YORK 14172-9763

NEWSLETTER

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

Sept. 2000 Vol. 29 No.8
(Coleman Printing)



Sept, 2000

INDIAN LEGENDS:

Interest recently in the possible location of Indian settlements or camps in the Wilson area prompted us to do some research on the subject. It is, however, an established fact that the "Neuter" Indians were the first to have villages or camps this side of the Niagara River. It is also said that the Neuter Tribe were very peaceful and didn't wish to be involved with the more warlike tribes like the Senecas.

Many Indian artifacts have been turned up along the Lake Ontario Shore to suggest that the Neuter Indians had several trails, villages, and camps in this area as they hunted and fished along the shoreline.

It appears that the Neuter Indians were subdued and replaced by the Seneca Indians around the middle of the 1600's, and evidence of their existance in Wilson is much more pronounced.

Niagara County's first historian, Clarence O. Lewis, learned from the late Deputy Sheriff, Earl Armstrong, that there is a hill west of Greenwood Cemetery at the outskirts of the village of Wilson called "Indian Hill". It was at that site that Mr. Armstrong picked up enough arrow heads and other Indian artifacts to indicate that the site may have been an Indian Camp used by Neuter Tribe while catching and smoking their winter supply of fish.

In 1900, the New York State Museum put out a bulletin which stated that, "Three quarters of a mile from Lake Ontario in the Town of Wilson is a Mound containing bones.Located close by the village, the mound was reported to be ten to twelve foot high and 100 feet around at the base."

Further evidence of Indians in our area was disclosed by the Nelson family. Pomphrey Nelson, who fought in the American Revolution, and his son, Benjamin Nelson, a Captain during the War of 1812, settled in Wilson on 50 acres of land at the corner of the present Rt. 425 and Nelson Rd.

A descendent, the late Alice Nelson of Oriskany,NY, told us that both of her ancestors are buried in the old section of Greenwood Cemetery

She also said that the original Nelson Cabin was on the north side of the present intersection of Nelson Road and Rt. 425. At that time, the road was an Indian and animal trail that extended south to the Creek. She said there were salt licks along the Creek making it an ideal spot for Indians to camp and salt and dry their catches of fish.

One morning when Alice's grandmother,(who lived in the cabin) was baking bread, the aroma filled the air and attracted several Indians to her door. She was frightened because they just stood and looked at her, so she gave them her freshly baked loaves of bread and they left.

One morning, several weeks later, Harriet Nelson opened her cabin door and there on the ground before her was a beautiful 12-14 inch birch bark canoe. It was filled with wildflowers and moss and had been left there by the Indians as their way of saying "thank you" for her kindness to them

Alice's grandmother, Harriet Nelson, died in 1923 at the age of 96. Of some interest is the fact that the Nelson family was descended from Francis Cooke and Richard Warren who came to America on the Mayflower. Other famous ancestors of the Nelsons were Thomas Nelson and Stephen Hopkins who both signed the Declaration of Independance.

* * * * * * * * * *

IN MEMORIUM:

Sidney W. Pettit, 76, a Life Member of the Wilson Hist. Society,died June 17, 2000 at Inter-Community Hospital, Newfane, following a long illness. He was a Native of Wilson, born April 17, 2000, the son of Earl and Rubie Jarvis Pettit.

When "Sid" retired in 1982, he had worked as a pipefitter for E.I. DuPont, Niag. Falls, for 33 years. Before getting ill, he was very active in the Wilson Historical Society, and could always be depended on to help out when needed.. He was also a talented musician and during his high school years played the trombone in both the high school and American Legion Bands.In the 1960's and 1970's he was also active in the Boy Scouts with Troop #66 of Wilson.

Sidney is a 4th generation descendent of William O. Pettit, a Wilson Pioneer, who settled here in the 1820's. He also was a Life member of the 1st Baptist Church of Wilson where, at one time or another, he served on every Board in the Church. Hobbys enjoyed by "Sid" included hunting, boating, gardening, bowling, and stock-car racing.

Sidney is survived by his wife of 52 years, Donna Reed Pettit; two sons, Gary B. Pettit and Rodney C. Pettit, both of Wilson; also a daughter, Carol (David) Chase of Mentor, Ohio; a brother, Jarvis Pettit of Wilson; and two grandsons, Mathew and Patrick Chase.

A funeral service, with Rev. Durham officiating, was held at the 1st Baptist Church, and burial was in Greenwood Cemetery at Wilson, New York.

* * * * * * * * * *

FATHER'S DAY CELEBRATION:

Fathers, both young and old, were honored at the worship service at Exley U.M. Church on Sunday, June 18th, with an after-church family picnic held at the Wilson Historical Society grounds soon after. It was a rainy day, so while set-up arrangements were being made in the Barnum Building, Miss Helen Stevens spoke to about a dozen youngsters about the history of Sunday Schools in the town of Wilson. Since Helen used to teach in the Randall Rd. Schoolhouse before it was moved to the Museum grounds, her authoritative talk had more significance in the historic setting of the old 1861 one-room schoolhouse.

Arrangements for the "working schoolhouse" program were made by Wanda Burrows and Linda Pease, and Shirley and Micky Hunter and Jack and Winnie Terry coordinated the "picnic" inside the Barnum Building.

Hot dogs and hamburgs were furnished by the church supplemented by a tasty "pot luck" meal provided by the assembled guests.

* * * * * * * * * * *

ARMSTRONG FAMILY VISITED FAIR:

As we mentioned before, the Wilson Hist. Soc. Fair is always a great time and place for former friends or relatives to meet and renew old acquaintances. This year, a descendant of one of Wilson's oldest families drove many miles to attend the Fair on the weekend of May 29th.

Kathy Armstrong Voelkle of Clarkston, MI, although partially confined to a wheelchair, brought her daughter, Suzanne, with her to see and learn more about the home of her famous ancestor, Byron Barber.

Our records show that Suzanne's great-great grandfather, Byron, was one of the Veterans of Battery M, 1st New York Light Artillery, who helped preserve our Union during the Civil War.

Byron is buried in Greenwood Cemetery in the Armstrong Family Plot, and we're sure Suzanne must have been thrilled to have her picture taken standing beside the gravestone of her Veteran grandfather. Byron and Hattie (Barber) Armstrong were the parents of Corliss Armstrong who grew up on West Lake Road, Wilson, and graduated from Wilson High School in 1923.

Although we never had the pleasure of meeting Corliss personally, we did strike up a letter-writing correspondence together, and Corliss contributed a great deal to some of our earlier Newsletters. During that period, Corliss sent the museum two wool army blankets and a copy of the discharge papers that his grandfather received after the Civil War.

Having graduated from Wilson High, Corliss never lost his love or interest in the town of his birth, and some of his classmates who might be still around to rememeber him were: Marjorie Crossman (Hurlburt); Edith Wilson (Cable); Emily Dennis (Link); Dorothy Diez (Kirkland); Grace Evans; Duane Stacey; and Jane Stoddard (Wilson).

In addition to Kathy Voelkle, another member of the Armstrong family we enjoyed meeting was the brother of Corliss, Elton Armstrong, who used to operate the gas station at the corner of Young and Lake Streets. The late Doctor Argue used to like to stop there for gasoline.

Corliss wrote us one time that the real reason Doc used to stop there for gas was because Elton's wife, Doris, used to always give Doc a cup of coffee and cookies each time he brought his car in for a tune-up.

* * * * * * * * * * *

MEMBERSHIP NEWS:

Please welcome back Shirley Fisher (Novak) of Syracuse,NY, who recently rejoined the Wilson Historical Society. Shirley visited the Museum a few months ago with a group of students from the West Side Learning Center at Syracuse, N.Y.

The friendly group of Puerto Ricans; Cubans; and Columbians,(many who could not yet speak English) were visably excited about the Museum and enjoyed carefully looking at all the exhibits. In addition to getting her membership up-to-date, Shirley gave a generous $45 donation for the Society's Building Fund.

* * * * * * * * * * *

50TH CLASS REUNION:

This item was received too late for the July/Aug. Newsletter, but it certainly doen't decrease its importance as an event of historical significanse.

On Saturday, June 10th, Forty-five classmates (with spouses) and six faculty members from Wilson's Graduation Class of 1950, assembled at the home of their Class President, Tom Singer,and his wife, Jacqueline, where the 50th ClassReunion was celebrated. Class members attended from as far away as Arizona and California.

A committee, which worked two months to organize the event was chaired by Marlene Taylor (Schultz) of Sanborn and included Hazel Walker(Urtel) of Olcott; Richard Southard of Lockport; Elmer Zolyome of Lockport; and Tom Singer of Appleton. Elmer Zolyome acted as Emcee.

In spite of a rainy Spring, the weather cooperated with a sunny day, and nearly everyone came including the following teachers: Marian Campbell; Kay Ness; Jack Maxfield, and wife, Dorothy; Janet Sporleder; Al and Margaret Waite; and Grace Singer.

According to Class President, Tom Singer, "It was great to share many memories of Wilson Central School, and greet a great group of teachers." It was agreed that Ernie Tarr was a stern disciplinarian, but also a very good Principal.

The Senior Class trip to Washington,DC, became a topic of considerable hilarity, but a moment of silence was also observed for the 13 class members who had passed on.

* * * * * * * * * *

SOUNDINGS:

So I pumiced and brushed and sprayed and bleached and trimmed and sqirted and rubbed..... and I discovered a terrifying fact. If I did all the things the magazines and TV told me to do, I'd spend my entire life in the bathroom. --Caryl Rivers.

* * * * * * * * * * *

JUNE BOARD MEETING:

Gary Fitch called the meeting to order with the following historical society members present: Gordon Strablow; Pam Groff; Judy King; Lois Barnum; Bill Rose; "Ollie" Clark; Floyd "Red" Clark; Eleanor Myers; Celeste Crawford; Kara Holden;Miles Linnabery; Art Schnoor; Don Burrows; Sandy Holden; Dorothy Maxfield; Micky Hunter; and Norm & Martha MacAskill.

Judy King reported that the total income to the date of the Fair was $35,125.57. Expenses to date were $15, 543.79.

A letter was read from Gary Stanton requesting payment of $68.45 for damage sustained to his garden when a tree on the society grounds blew down. Dorothy Maxfield made motion, seconded by "Red" Clark to pay request. Motion carried.

Winners of the Society's "Class Night" Awards this year were Jessica Isler and Jesse Buzzard who received $100 each from the Society plus a year's membership. Dorothy Maxfield made a motion, seconded by Norm MacAskill, to increase the award in 2001 to $200 each.Motion carried. Don Burrows made the motion, seconded by Bill Rose, to give the Seniors one year membership.

In view of the splended support given the historical society over the years by Gerry Kadryna, Manager of Wilson's IGA Lakeside Market, the Board decided to award him a Life Membership in the society. Motion was made by Don Burrows, seconded by Eleanor Myers, to present at the Fair Comm. "Wind-up meeting on June 22nd. Motion carried.

Regarding the Tugwell Cabin: Eleanor Myers announced that she is checking on several descendents of the Tugwell family that might be available for a cabin dedication. Motion made by Bill Rose, seconded by Dorothy Maxfield, that $2,000 be appropriated for repairing and replacement of the Tugwell Cabin on the Museum grounds. Motion carried.

It was announced that James Sandoro, an appraisor, had borrowed the society's 1904 Covert to display in Buffalo on Sun. June 17th. The car was in a display that featured a car for every year of the 20th Century. Bill Rose also announced that raffle plans for the Porsche are continuing, also where tickets will be available. Also, photo displays are planned.

Better organization of the Storage Barn was discussed, and it was decided to get Cabbage Bins available from Jim Pease at $30 each. Judy King made a motion, seconded by Lois Barnum, to purchase 50 bins from Jim for a total of $1500 dollars.Motion carried.

Celeste Crawford reported that acquisitions are "piling up" in the Library and that area chairmen should check regularly to see if any of the items should be removed to their areas. If the library is to be kept in order, thechairmen of the following areas must cooperate: Depot; Fittro Shop; Barnum Building; Schoolhouse; Car Building; Breezeway and Grounds.

Don Burrows announced that he needs painters to help finish up the caboose. Please call Don if you are available.

Norman MacAskill, Pres., and Wilson representative to the the Niagara County Federation of Historical Societies, requested that a Newsletter be sent to <u>all</u> historical societies in Niagara County. He also said that this year's theme for the Historical exhibit at the Farm and Home Days will be "Country Kitchens". He asked permission to enter some of the items in the Wilson Museum, and also stated that he would need about 200 "Welcome to the Museum" and "Cobblestone Trail Brochures" for "hand-outs" during the exhibit. Anyone who might like to help out at the exhibit, please contact Mr. MacAskill.

(Excerpts from June Board Meeting as submitted by Pam Groff, Recording Secretary.)

* * * * * * * * * *

ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL FAIR:

Overall, the 2,000 Memorial Day Fair was a great success. Following are a list of the Concessions and their chairmen who were responsible for another "Great Year":

Dealers, Nettie Stimson; Chicken Bar-B-Que, Shirley Hunter/Shirley Linnenbank; Hot Dogs, Dale Schlyer; Funnel Cakes, Sally Smith; Quilt, Judy Rose; Roast Beef, Althe Montgomery; Coffee & Donuts, Judy Zauner; Antique Cars/Car Raffle, Wally Goodman & Bill Rose; Sno Cones, Linda and Joe Moran; Popcorn, Dick & Sue Schultz; Coffee (Barnum) Winnie Terry; Pies, Pam Groff; Cotton Candy, Linda Hutchison; Pepsi & Bottled Water, Kyle Andrews & Kevin King; Classis Cars, David Branch; Membership/Ways & Means, Sandy Holden.

Other chairmen who were also very essential for the operation of the Fair were: Announcers, Bruce Muck & Ron Zauner; Shuttle Busses, Don Burrows; Clean-up Randy Ward; Dealer Parking, Ron Zauner; Entertainment, Greg Zugay; Garbage, Ray Groff; Large Equipment, Darrell Smith; Newsletter, Don Croop; Parking, Harold Benedict; Publicity, Marge Williams; Lost & Found, Judy Rose; Supplies, Lois Barnum; Ticket Booths, Gary Fitch; Treasurer, Judy King; and Workers, Gail Walder.

* * * * * * * * * *

IN MEMORIAM:

James M. Williams, 66, of Roanoke,Va., passed away in his sleep on March 18, 2000. He never lost his love for Wilson having spent many summers at the cottage of his gradparents, the Myerhaffers.

Jim grew up with the Wilson Brothersand worked at the Fish Market; Boat Rentals and sometimes upstairs as the Cook.

He was born June 14, 1933, and leaves his wife, Sara A. Williams after 45 years of marriage. He also leaves a couple sons and a daughter. We are sure we probably rented many row boats from Jim, and in recent years we had many friendly phone conversations about Wilson and the Wilson Historical Society, which extends it's condolences to his family.

* * * * * * * * * *

NEW MEMBERS:

It is a pleasure to welcome the two Class Night Seniors who were awarded a year's membership in the society, Jessica Isler and Jesse Buzzard. Jesse was also cited by the Niagara Co. Legislature for having 130 months of perfect attendance..Also, Michael and Dianne O'Rourke of Wilson, New York

* * * * * * * * * *

AS OTHERS SEE US:

When Shirley Fischer Novak arranged a special tour of the museumfor her adult students at the West Side Learning Center at Syracuse,NY, we were hardly prepared for the enthusiastic response we received. Should anyone doubt the impact the Wilson Museum has on some of our visitors, some of the following comments might be of interest.

For instance, Maria del Pilar Raynor of Columbia, S.A. writes: "After we went to Niagara Falls, a group of us spent the night at Shirley's House and enjoyed it a lot because we met with Miss Helen Stevens, a very interesting woman who was the central figure of the evening. We talked, laughed, and ate, and this woman has a good memory--she knows about topics related to many countrys. Then we had a nice idea--we went outside and made a campfire. We sat around the campfire, looked at the stars, and were very happy.

"The next morning we walked around the house and went to a small lagoon. There were many mosquitos, but it was beautiful, and there were many old things around the house. Finally we went to the village named Wilson. We visited the whole place. It was nice.

"There was a Museum with many very old things including some things donated by Shirley's mother. We could see the earliest TV; Refrigerators; Pianos; and a lot of antiques.They have a good collection of beautiful cars. The person who helps direct the Museum is Donald Croop, who was very friendly and he explained some of the history of the village. He was happy we had an interest in Wilson, a place with good streets, rich in fauna and flora, and full of Peace. It is good to know there are still places like these. I think I will try to comeback some day." Maria.

Another interesting letter was received from Pedro Guzman of Puerto Rico who came to Wilson with his wife and three sons. Pedro wrote, "The most attractive things that caught my attention at the Museum were the Antique Cars; the antique radios; but especially the Police stamps and a pair of old Handcuffs.

"I liked the way they kept those old cars, well-maintained, shined; also part of a Train. About the old school that still exists for many many years--still intact. It was amazing seeing the museum with all the antiques there--very interesting.

"Thank you very much for opening the doors to us so we could look around and enjoyseeing everything in the Museum." Sincerely, Pedro Guzman.

Finally, "A Wonderful Experience" written by Armed Smith of Cuba. "For the first time in my life and, after being here in the U.S. for nearly a year, I have never seen anything as beautiful as Niagara Falls.

"After seeing the Falls and taking a lot of pictures, we went to a little town on the border of Lake Ontario called "Wilson". The simplicity of its people, like Helen Stevens, a teacher for many years in that place. She is a wonderful person because of her youthful character and Knowledge.

"We visited the Town Museum where we learned about the development of the small but beautiful town. Everything about Wilson made me proud to live in New York State. Thank you. Armed"

* * * * * * * * * *

NEW LIFE MEMBER:

Jerry Kadryna, our newest life member, the son of Matthew and Helen Kadryna, was born April 28, 1948, at Buffalo, NY. He attended St. John's Kanty; Bishop Ryans High School, and Bryant and Stratton Business School. He and his wife, Gail, had four children, Jennifer Giordano; Rachelle Vergin; Roselle Angelo; and Christine and Michael Rafferty. They also have four grandchildren, Chelsea; Brianna;Tristan; and Jocylynn.

He attends Our Lady of the Rosary R.C. Church in Wilson, and served in the U.S. Army; is a member of the Lions Club; All Sports Booster's; Wilson Youth, Baseball and Soccer; the Christian Food Pantry; Friends of the Wilson Free Library; and the Wilson Historical Society.

Jerry says: "If there's one common Bond every IGA store has, it's called'Hometown Proud'. It's giving back to our Community, because where would we be without our neighbors? I'm proud to be a part of the Wilson Community."

* * * * * * * * * *

MEMBERS IN THE NEWS:

Congratulations to two of our Life Members, Art Schnoor and "Chuck" Messersmith, who were chosen "Outstanding Lay Persons of the Year" in recognition of their past services to Exley United Methodist Church.

* * * * * * * * * *

MUSEUM HOSTESSESS:

Virginia Strablow, Sunday Hostess Chairman, has submitted the following list of museum hosts and hostesses for the month of September:

Sept. 3rd:	Edna Robinson; Ted and Melva Bull	OPEN UP:	Gordon Strablow.
Sept. 10th:	Ed and Mary Webster; Terence Upton.	Open up:	Don Croop
Sept. 17th:	Bernice McLaughlin, Richard and Jan Zipp	Open up:	Gary Fitch
Sept. 24th:	Jim and Marlene Schotz; Larry and Lisa Bulmer	Open up:	Maelene Schotz
Oct. 1st:	Jack and Dorothy Maxfield; Tom and Gail Walder	Open up:	Dorothy Maxfield.

* * * * * * * * * *

CABIN PROGRESS:

The concrete footer for the Tugwell Cabin has been installed north of the Caboose. It is planned to move the cabin next month.

* * * * * * * * * *

QUIPS: The best classroom in the world is at the feet of an elderly person.

* * * * * * * * * *

BOARD ACTION & REPORTS:

A quorum was present at the Board meeting, August 9, 2000, including Gary Fitch, Pres., Pam Groff; Judy King; Lois BarnumOllie Clark; Don Croop; Gordon Strablow; Miles Linnabery; Wally Goodman; Celeste Crawford; Eleanor Myers; Dorothy Maxfield; Kyle Andrews; Darrell Smith; and Micky Hunter.

Judy King, Treas., reported that the monthly income to August 9th was $336.40, and expenses were $847.32. Motion made by Wally Goodman, seconded by Lois Barnum to pay bill. Carried.

Ways were discussed to lower utility bills. It is believed that all three thermostats may not be turned down after visiting hoursWays to try and reduce heating costs were also discussed.

A thank you note was read from Jessica Isler thanking the historical society for the cash award and membership she received from the societyon Class Night. Another thank you letter was read from the AAA thanking the Society for allowing them to to borrow and display the 1904 Covert at the Centennial of Cars held on June 18th.

Wally Goodman and Bill Rose have books of Porsche tickets available, and anyone wishing to help out may see either Wally or Bill for tickets.

Miles Linnabery would appreciate helpgetting the apple equipment out of the Fittro Barn for display on Oct. 7th-8th. September 16th will be a work day. Volunteers appreciated.

It was reported that the Methodist Church has donated 66 folding chairs to the Society, and the Cor. Secretary will send a letter of thanks to the church for this generous gift.

Fifty cabbage bins have been delivered to the Museum by the Pease Farmsand chairs and drums used at the Fair have all been stored away. A log book of the contents of each bin is being kept, and Gary said that he plans to have each bin color-coded for easier identification.

Gary is working with Jan Sporleder to make up list of Historical Markers erected by historical society so they may be registered with the State, and Town.

Discussion on repairs to the flagpole resulted in a suggestion to move pole east of the Clark Veteran's Memorial stone. This would allow pole to avoid electric wire to caboose, so that pole could be raised or lowered for painting and repairs..

Gary announced that the Society received $2,000 from the 5K run, and it will be used to help with repairs related to the Tugwell Cabin.

The Methodist Church has asked permission to use an electrical outlet for their Cotton Candy machine at the Labor Day Fleamarket spomsored by the Church. Darrell Smith made motion, 2nd by Dorothy Maxfield to grant request. Carried.

Discussion was also held on possibly purchasing our own equipment for mowing grounds. Major question raised was who would volunteer to do mowing? Consensus of opinion appears to favor to continue contracting mowing out.

(Excerpts from minutes submitted by Pam Groff, Secretary.

* * * * * * * * * * *

MEMORIAL MONUMENT:

The town of Wilson's new Veteran's Memorial Monument was dedicated in Greenwood Cemetery on August 5,2000. It is located near the center of the cemetery along Route 18, and stands as a beautiful tribute to the hundreds of service men and womenwho gave their lives while serving their Country.

* * * * * * * * * *

HISTORICAL SITES:

The Historic Area Markers that you see around town were erected by theWilson Historical Soc. Many of them are identical to State Markersbut they are still the property of the Society and the town of Wilson.

To date, the Society has erected fourteen markers identifying the following historical areas: The "Billy Sherman" gravesite on the north side of Wilson Burt road east of the village; The "Reuben Wilson Landing" near the intersection of Maple Road and Rt. 18; The "Port of Entry" Plaque on the large stone at the entrance to the Wilson Boathouse Restaurant; "The Collegiate Institute" marker near the entrance to the Wilson Town Hall; the "Tabor Bridge" on the East Branch of 12Mile Creek where it crosses Lake Street; the "Anchor Farm" on the east side of Rt. 425 just south of the village; the "Wright Homestead" east side of Daniels Road north of the New Road; the "1824 Log Cabin" on Chestnut Road just east of North Road(Log Cabin is covered with siding); "Hojack Park", the name given to the museum grounds which were mostly donated by the late Dr. George Badger of Lockport; the "1836 Pease Homestead" at the corner of Maple and Wilson/Burt roads.the "Site of the former Randall Rd. Cemeteryon the west sideof Randall Rd. north of the New Road; Site of "The First Schoolhouse" in the village of Wilsonwhere the Wilson House Restaurant now stands;and the "Site of the former "Kruse Brick Kiln" on the east side of Beebe north of Ide Road; also the "Clinton Pettit Home", 1835, where Ira Pettit grew up. Ira was the subject of the book "Diary of a Deadman" written by Jean P. Ray.

All markers are the property of the Wilson Hist. Soc., and Town of Wilson, but any erected on State property or right-of-ways are subject to State jurisdiction.

A sincere noteof "Thanks" to Jan Sporleder, Chrm. of the Historical Sites Comm., who has done an exceptionally fine job ordering and arranging for them to be installed by our cooperative Town Highway Department. Jan has also been involved with their maintenance and re-painting when necessary.

* * * * * * * * * *

WILSON TUSCARORA STATE PARK

You may enter Park free before 10AM and after 6PM. Always free if walking or riding bicycle. Senior Citizens may enter free Monday through Friday by showing Driver's License.

I I I I I I I I I I

SOUNDINGS:

Smile, and remember---when life gives you rain.....He gives you rainbows.

* * * * * * * * * *

Tact is the unsaid part of what you are thinking.

Oct. 2000 Vol.29 No.9
(Coleman Printing)

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

NEWSLETTER

Wilson Historical Society
WILSON, NEW YORK 14172-9763

Oct. 2000

SUCCESSFUL FIELD DAY:

Wilson Volunteer Fire Co. #1 Field Days were held in the village from August 24th through August 26th with a Las Vegas Night scheduled each day of the event. Good weather and good attendance was reported.

Live music was provided on Friday and Saturday nights by Jonesie and the Cruisers, but perhaps the biggest hit of all was the Fire Company's famous Chicken Chowder served on Saturday. The recipe for the chowder is reported to be ca. 80 years old, and it is carefully protected by the members. It is said that the "Proof is in the pudding", and Chowder Chaireman, Richard Zipp said that seven55 gallon kettles of chowder were made up for the event, and five of the kettles were sold out by one o'clock--one hour after servings were started.

Also on Saturday at 5:00 o'clock the annual fire fighters parade took place and, this year, Paul Thompson, Field Day Chairman, announced thatthe 2000 Millennium parade would recognize a number of Wilson's "Golden Agers" as Grand Marshalls.

Those selected were Emma Schrader; Don Croop; Ralph Dinse; Charles "Chuck" Messersmith; Arthur Schnoor; Howard Schotz; and Marion and Ora Pettit.

* * * * * * * * * * *

BOARD MEETING 9/13/2000:

Vice-President Darrell Smith called the meeting to order with the following members present: Supervisor Jerry Dean; Celeste Crawford; Virginia Strablow; Marlene Schotz; Sally Smith; Janet Sporleder; Dorothy Maxfield; Wanda Burrows; Elton Kropp; Gordon Strablow; Pam Groff; Diane Muscoreil; Judy King; Lois Barnum; Bruce Muck; Kyle Andrews; Miles Linnabery; Wally Goodman; and Don Croop.

Judy King, Treas., reported a checking balance of $4,031 with an income of $2,292.41 to 9/13. Expenses for same period were: $4009.14. Motion made by Dorothy Maxfield, seconded by Gordon Strablow, to pay bills.Carried.

Jan Sporleder reported that markers that formerly cost $350now sell for ca. $500. She recomended that marker be ordered for museum's Randall Rd. schoolhouse. Wally Goodman made motion, seconded by Judy King that one marker for schoolhouse be ordered now. Carried.

Questions were answered regarding need for lighted sign to advertise coming events at the historical society. Motion made by Bruce Muck, seconded by Wally Goodman, to spend up to $1,000 for sign. Carried. Judy King will order sign from Ulrich Sign Co.

Marlene Schotz presented an offer from the Niagara Co. Tourismto be on their website for $80. Jerry Dean stated that the Town of Wilson is putting together a website of their ownwhich will include the Wilson Historical Society at no charge. Motion made by Dorothy Maxfield, seconded by Lois Barnum, to get on the Town's website. Carried.

Virginia Strablow proposed closing the museum on Sundays during December due to heating costs and lack of attendance. Wally Goodman made motion, seconded by Diane Muscoreil, to accept Virginia's proposal. Carried.

Excerpts from minutes presented by Pam Groff, Recording Secretary.

* * * * * * * * * * *

LOOKING BACK:

During the past 29 years, when doing research for the Newsletter, we were often intrigued by many,many amusing or unusual facts we turned up about Wilson. Here are a few of them:

There was once a large tree above the electric "lift" to Miller's Boathouse on Sunset Island. A circular bench was built around the trunk where "Jake" Miller and his friendsused to sit and swap "stories". After awhile, the popular meeting place became known as the "Liar's Bench".

* * * * * * * * * * *

In March, 1966, Amy Rebecca Schearer, daughter of Ron and Sue Schearer, was babtized at Exley United Methodist Church---the church that her 8th generation ancestor, Andrew Brown, helped Found. Squire Brown donated the land on which the church was built, and Amy's line of descent started with Mrs. Brown down through Mrs. Hackett, Mrs. Smith, Mrs. Houston,Mrs. Kaiser, Mrs. Argue, and Mrs. Schearer.

* * * * * * * * * *

In 1850 there were 199 men and 140 ladies enrolled in the Wilson Collegiate Institute which stood where the Town Hall is today. Of that number, 56 male and 61 female students were residents of Wilson.

* * * * * * * * * *

QUIPS: Automation is a technological process that does all the work. When we were young, it was called "Mother".

* * * * * * * * * * *

CLASS REUNION:

The alumnae of the Class of '45, Wilson Central School, celebrated their 55th re-union at Ebenezer's Restaurant in Wilson.

From a Class of 49 students, 21 attended with their wives and friends. Cliff Collins of Ransomville, reported that 15 Class members were deceased. Other members of his committee were Ruth Grzbouski Moore; Charles Ossman; and Allen Rohring.

Alumnae who attended were: Virginia Hillman Strablow of Wilson; Janet Burrows Ellis of Niagara Falls; Ellen Leetch Golde of Wilson; Lucille Farwell Kramer of Newfane; Theresa Banks Webster of Tonawanda; Gertrude Weber Palmer of Newfane; Jean Swigert Coleman of Newfane; Donna Reed Pettit of Wilson; Patricia Leffler Canfield of Youngstown; Elizabeth Read Cutty of Leesburg,Va.; and Ruth Gryzbouski Moore of Ransomville.

Also, Richard L. Robinson of Ransomville; The Rev. Paul F. Markell of Hamburg,NY; Clifford L. Collins of Ransomville; Charles L. Ossman of Tonawanda; Earl H. Carrigan of Rochester, NY; Douglas Canfield of Ransomville; Richard Figura of Ransomville;James F. Coulter of Lockport; Allen L. Rohring of Wilson; and Donald E. Mosher of Newfane.

Honored by their classmates were, Pat Canfield who celebrated her birthday at the reunion; and Jim and Shirley Coulter for reaching their 50th Wedding Anniversary.

Rev. Paul Markell gave grace before dinner which was followed by an evening of reminiscing, and distribution of gold Mellennium coins and table decorations.

* * * * * * * * * * *

WEDDING BELLS:

John Schotz, son of Jim and Marlene Schotz, was married on June 24th,2000, to Marcia Winkler of Belleville, Illinois. The ceremony took place in the Rose Garden at the St. Louis Botanical Gardens.

John graduated from the Wilson Central High School in 1991 and in 1995 from the Milwaukee School of Engineering witha degree in Architectural Engineering. He has been employed by Ahern Fire Protection, Inc. at its St. Louis office since graduation. John and Marcia have purchased a home in Belleville,Il.

* * * * * * * * * * *

CABIN MOVED:

Dr. Rexford G. Tugwell, known as "Rex" to his friends in the village of Wilson where he spent most of his boyhood years.During those boyhood years he was an inveterate reader, and some of his favorite authors were Plutark, Dickens, and Thomas Hardy.

"Rex" wrote excellent poetry during his youth, and was Class Poet at Masten Park High School in Buffalo where he attended.

Although a studious person, "Rex" was an active, husky youth, and enjoyed Boxing, swimming, and boating. Unlike many boys his age, he was shy around girls.

During his college days, "Rex" did most of the work building himself a study behind his parent's summer home. The building was a small log cabinwith a huge fireplace on one side, and it was here in the Tugwell Cabin that he did most of his writing.

Now, thanks to the generosity of Floyd Clark, the cabin has been donated to the Society, and placed on a cement pad just north of the 1903 Caboose.

Renovation of the cabin and reconstruction of the fireplace are expected to be completed in the near fture.

* * * * * * * * * * *

IN MEMORIAM:

Elizabeth R. Cole, 87, died September 3,2000 at Inter Community Hospital at Newfane. She was born in Gowanda, the daughter of Eber and Ruth Bull Russell

She was a member of Exley United Methodist Church, the Inter/Community Hospital Auxiliary, and an Honorary/Charter member of the Wilson Historical Society. She enjoyed baking, cooking, and candy making, and also bowled with the Senior Citizen Bowling League at Townline Bowl.

Bessie was a descendent of Cassandra Southwick, the subject of one of John Greenleaf Whittier's better known legendary poems. Also her father, Eber Russell was a Historian and authoity on Indian Culture at Perrysburg, New York.

She is survived by her husband, Fenton Cole; Two children, Robert L. (Gail) Cole of Macedon, N.Y., and Mrs. Audrey (Wayne) Orr of Ransomville, NY; Two sisters, Ruth Smith of Sinclairville, and Louise Gleason of Perrysburg; Two grandchildren, Lisa Mark and Anita Robbins; Also two Great-g-grandchiuldren, Danny and Emily Robbins.

A Memorial Service was held at Exley United Methodist Church and burial was in Glenwood Cemetery with services conducted by Rev. Ken Babcock.

* * * * * * * * * * *

We just learned that Edith M. Wilson, mother of John Cable, passed away recently. Edith was the wife of Laurence N. Cable of Lancaster, NY.The Wilson Historical Society extends its condolences to the family of John Cable of Ocala, Fl., who, as a youth, spent much of his free time in Wilson.

John graduated from Buffalo University and taught in the Wilson Central Schools from 1956 to 1967. He is a Life Member of the Wilson Hist. Soc., and his roots go deep as his great grandparents were: Timothy Wilson and Elizabeth Todd; also Frederick Faery and Emily Rowe.

* * * * * * * * * * *

MUSEUM PROGRESS:

A gasoline engine golf cart has been purchased for the museum for $250.00. The flagpole has been taken down and given a fresh coat of paint. The Tugwell cabin has been put in place on a cement pad by Clark's Riggers. 12 sheets of plywood or particle board have been purchased for use as shelving in the Storage Barn.

* * * * * * * * * * *

TO ALL POLITICIANS:

Every leader has to look back once-in-a-while to make sure he still has followers.

* * * * * * * * * * *

HISTORIC WINDMILL:

In the early 1900's most farms in our area had windmills which were used to pump water for livestock as well as domestic use. Today, working windmills are few and far between,however, one in excellent shape stands on the Wilson Historical Society's Museum grounds, and for that we can thank Charles "Chuck" Messersmith, a Life Member of the Society.

Windmills have been around for a long time, and are probably man's first source of energy. The one erected by "Chuck" on the museum grounds originated in Ogden Utah, and was brought to Wilson by James Reynolds who donated it to the Wilson Museum.

"Chuck" Messersmith volunteered to take on the project of repairing and putting the windmill in place, but he soon discovered that the mechanism that drives the windmill was badly in need of repair. Also, parts were missing, but through the efforts and persistance of "Chuck" he managed to get everything assembled. Now, thanks to "Chuck" the Society has a rare,workable windmill on the museum grounds.

Some of the persons who helped "Chuck" on the project included Ed Hastings, who built a reservoir and covered it with a cement platform on which the framework of the windmill was bolted into place. Don Sinclair of "Valair" replaced the Pitman Arm bearings, also the main bearing, and straightened the Air Motor center post with his hydraulic press. Dan King of "King's Sheet Metal" fabricated nine "sails" and eleven "ribs", and also made a new directional Vane and repaired the furl ring. Fred Fowler patched a hole in the Oil Reservoir with fibre glass, and Carl Johnsonmade seven upper sail brackets and helped "Chuck" straighten and assemble them.

On May 4, 1984, "Red" Clark's Riggers lifted the windmill in place with his crane, and "Chuck" Messersmith bolted everything together with some help from Ed Seefeldt, Art Schnoor, Ray Allgeier, "Bud" Ward, and Sid Pettit.

It is doubtful if the windmill would have ever been repaired or erected without "Chuck's" dedication to the project. And best of all, he has kept the windmill in tip top shape by oiling the running parts and inspecting the windmill each Spring and Fall.

In 1996 it was again found necessary to have Don Sinclair weld a couple parts, and Art Schnoor replaced the wood platform flooring beneath the Fan. Miles Linnabery painted the Sails and Vane, and John Davis, the industrial arts teacher at school, built a new brake for the Fan.

"Chuck" now has the Windmill in great shape for the Millennium Year, b ut feels he has now reached the time when climbing and caring for the windmill is getting toodifficult for him. He would like to have someone offer to take his place and would gladly show them how to keep the moving parts oiled each Spring or Fall.

So much work and "loving care" have gone into the windmill to date, it would be a shame to see the windmill fall into a state of neglect.

* * * * * * * * * * *

MUSEUM MEMORY:

Museum attendants can never be sure how many visitors will show up Sunday afternoons--especially if a Buffalo Bill football game is being televised. We reca ll one day, however, when the late Whit Barnum "perked" up attemdamce. Never one to be idle, Whit was burning rivets off the newly acquired windmill when suddenly the grass caught fire from sparksfrom his torch. He called the Fire Co., and they quickly came and put out the fire.

Later, when Whit was asked if he had any visitors to the museum that day he replied in his laconic manner, "Well, we had about 15 fireman here."

* * * * * * * * * * *

Many Wilsonians may remember the "Docksetter", the boat that ferried residents and visitors from the Wilson Boathouse to Sunset Island. It was named after the people who sat on the Boathouse dock waiting to catch a ride to the Island. The boat wasbuilt from Cypress grown in LA., AND FIRST USED IN 1938. It was 30' longwith a 9' beam, and drew 28" of water. It carried 30 TO 40 PEOPLE OR 1½ tons of fish.

* * * * * * * * * * *

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS:

Please note that membership renewals for the year 2001 are now being accepted. We urge you to renew before January 1st so your names will be included on the new Membership Roll.

* * * * * * * * * * *

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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

NAME.....

ADDRESS..... PHONE ( ).....

P.O.BOX..... CITY..... STATE..... ZIP CODE.....

Please check box if address/Name has recently changed. ☐

Please indicate previous last name, if applicable.....

JUNIOR (UNDER 18) $1.00 each

NAME..... AGE.....

NAME..... AGE.....

NAME..... AGE.....

COUPLE $8.00.....

SINGLE $5.00.....

LIFE (Single).$150.00.....

LIFE (Couple) $250.00.....

HONORARY MEMBER (85+) FREE.....

BUILDING FUND DONATION $.....

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED.....

APPLICATIONS AND MONEY DUE BY JANUARY 1ST

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

SANDY HOLDEN P.O.BOX 319 WILSON,NY 14172

SUNDAY HOSTS & HOSTESSESS:

October 1st:	Jack & Dorothy Maxfield; Tom & Gail Walders.	Open: Dorothy Maxfield.
October 8th:	John & Jane Demmin; Maxwell & Shirley Hunter.	Open: Miles Linnabery
October 15th:	Ted & Melva Bull; Jean Swanson; Ruth Thomas.	Open: Elton Kropp.
October 22nd:	Howard & Leona Hunter; Ed & Edith Goodnight.	Open: Bill Rose.
October 29th:	Mildred Neville; Pam Groff; Gordon & Virginia.	Open: Gordon Strablow.
November 5th:	Robert & Ann Botzer; Charles & Ann Horton.	Open: Donald Burrows.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Virginia Strablow has been Sunday Hostess Chairman since 1996. We just learned that she has decided to resign as Hostess Chairman as of Jan. 1, 2001. We will be sorry to lose her as she has been one of the best todate. In the past four years she has never once failed to get her hostess schedule ready for the Newsletter

We would also like to mention that if you are scheduled to serve as a host or hostess when a Buffalo Bill football game is being televized, you and any guests are welcome to watch the game on the museum set in the Patterson Room.

* * * * * * * * * * *

"FLEA" MARKET:

The annual Labor Day Fleamarket on the Museum grounds was held this year under less than favorable conditions. Sponsored by Exley United Methodist Church, the event opened with an early morning misty rain tending to dampen everyones' spirits. A sizeable crowd braved the weather,however, to enjoy the fine display of "fleas" and partake in the tasty variety of foods including a Chiavetta Chicken Bar-B-Que, hot dogs, funnel cakes, home made pies, coffee, donuts, and Pepsi. Activities were generally coordinated by Shirley and "Micky" Hunter, and they wish to thank all church members and others who "pitched" in.

* * * * * * * * * * *

PORSCHE RAFFLE:

Wally Goodman announced that thePorsche car raffle will be held at the 2,001 Memorial Day Fair. Ticket prices are: 1-$2; 3-$5; 7-$10; 10-$14; 15-$20; 40-$50;and 100-$100. Tickets are in books of ten, and members may pick up books to sell by calling Wally(751-6583 or Bill Rose, 751-3771. Wally says "We need everyone's help.".Wouldn'tit be nice to own a Porsche for $2.00?

* * * * * * * * * *

HOLLOWEEN PARTY:

Sally Smith received approval from the Board of Directors to hold a Holloween Party in the Barnum Building from 1-4PM, October 22, 2000. All ages invited to attend: Judging at 2PM.

* * * * * * * * *

MORE HISTORY "TID-BITS":

In 1958, surveying instruments used by V. Dox and Jessie Haner to "lay out" Wilson, were exhibited in the Niagara County Historical Society Museum in Lockport, NY. Dox and Haner also surveyed sections of the Erie Canal, and two of the village streets in Wilson are named after them.

* * * * * * * * * * *

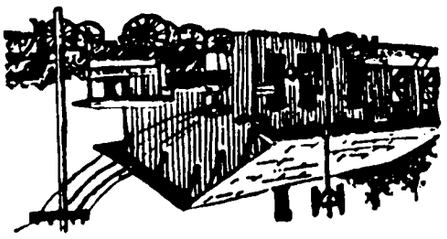
In 1830, steam engines weren't too speedy--especially the ones on the old "Shortline" between Lockport and Niagara Falls. Mrs. W. Storres of Lockport challenged one of the train's crews to a race. She told them that if they would give her a one hour start, she could beat the train to Niagara Falls by walking the distance of 24 miles. They agreed, and the race went off as planned. When the train reached Niagara Falls, Mrs. Storres was sitting on the steps of the "cataract House" waiting for them. She had won her bet--a silk handkerchief.

* * * * * * * * * * *

SOUNDINGS:

Happiness is not based on possessions, power, or prestige, but on relationships with people you love and respect.

++++++



Wilson Historical Society
WILSON, NEW YORK 14172-9763

NEWSLETTER

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor
(Coleman Printing)
Nov. 2000 Vol.29 No. 9

NON PROFIT ORG.
U. S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 8
WILSON, N.Y.

Nov. 2000

THE WILSON ADVANTAGE::

If you took a look around this past summer, you'll agree, Wilson is not standing still. Flower-filled tubs lined the streets--many of which had been freshly paved, and conveniently placed benches and tables invited everyone to sit down, rest, and take time to "smell the roses". A brand new bridge over the Creek on West Young Street, permits a safe approach to Wilson from the West where a variety of shops are ready to meet everyone's needs.

Included among these are the most recently established businesses, the Garden Gate Floral and Gift Shop, the Wilson Community Pharmacy, the Tranquil Blend Coffee Shop, and the Farm and Garden Supply.

Ever since the town of Wilson was established in 1818 it has been a thriving agricultural community with hundreds of acres of vegetables, and beautiful orchards laden with apples, peaches, cherries, prunes, plums, and grape vineyards.Fishing and boating have always been popular in the well-protected harbor, which, in the mid 1800's,was the site for many ship building activities. In the late 1800's, Wilson became well-known as a Resort Area, and in the beginning of the 21st century, this tradition is being revived.

Major industries include the Pfeiffer/Marzetti Foods, the 3rd large salad dressing bottling Company in the Nation; and the Wilson Central School system rates as one of the better schools in Niagara County.Six yacht clubs and marinas service the Harbor which also features Clark's Park, the Harbor Shops, Ebenezer's Grill, the Wilson Boathouse Restaurant, and Community Pool.

Other improvements in clude the Gazebo overlook and Memorial Marker for Lt. Michael Whitcop along the Lake Ontario shore; also the beautiful Veterans' Memorial in Greenwood Cemetery, as well as the extensive renovations being made at the Boathouse, Walair Industries, and the Wilson Harbor Park.

For those who enjoy eating out, we believe the Wilson House Restaurant in the village, and Ebenezer's Grill and the Wilson Boathouse Restaurant at the Harbor, provide some of the best quality foods in Niagara County. Other popular places to eat are Brownie's Custard Stand near the Harbor or Jim's in the village.

Increasing activities at the Harbor are highlighted by a "Harbor Fest" in August; Band Concerts at Clark's Park; Fishing Derbies for Kids and Adults; the 5K Races "Salmon Run" and "Fun Run", and live entertainment at the Boathouse.

Village promotions feature the annual Memorial Day Fair at the Museum grounds; also "Easter Egg Hunt", Labor Day Flea Market, Ice Cream Socials, and Holloween Party--all held ot the Wilson Museum. Friday "Cruise Nights" are held in the village from May to September, also the annual Invitational Soccer Tournament; Christmas Lighting Contest, and "Little Apple" Ball drop on New Year's Eve. And of course that great chicken chowder at the Wilson Fire Co.#1 Fielday, as well as their excellent Fish Frys during the Lenten Season.

And if that isn't enough to keep you busy, you can always visit nearby Tuscarora State Park with its many hiking trails, picnic grounds, and boating and launching facilities.

* * * * * * * * * *

HISTORIC HOUSE:

Clarence O. Lewis once wrote that the old Reuben Wilson House at the West end of Young St., should be a Niagara County Landmark. In 1976, as a Bicentennial Project, the Wilson Historical Society erected a historic marker at the site.

The original log house was completed in 1818, and by 1824 a two-story frame house was built around it incorporating the log walls of the original structure. That same year, Reuben Wilson was appointed Postmaster and he opened a store and postoffice in the house. In 1829 a tavern was added.

It is said that a stone marker from which all the 1st surveys in Wilson were made, is buried in the front yard.

* * * * * * * * * *

LADIES CONTROLLED VOTE:

In 1898, a news item in the Wilson "Star" stated that one hundred votes were cast in the annual school election. The ladies, who didn't yet have the right to vote, turned out to "Make it interesting". The "Star" further observed, "The women probably told their husbands how to vote, so why do they need Womens' Suffrage.?"

* * * * * * * * * *

QUIPS:

The best way to give advice to your children is to find out what they want and then advice them to do it.

* * * * * * * * * *

BOARD MEETING-OCT. 11TH:

Pres. Gary Fitch called meeting to order with the following members present: Darrell Smith; Sally Smith; Gordon Strablow; Pam Groff; Diane Muscoreil; Bruce Muck; Bill Rose; Ollie Clark; Floyd Clark; Miles Linnabery; Art Schnoor, Don Croop; Jerry Dean, town Supervisor; Don Burrows; Eleanor Myers; Celeste Crawford; Marlene Schotz: & Dorothy Maxfield.

Treasurer's report was given by Don Burrows. Checking Balance, $2,690.40, bills to be paid, $680.73. Motion made by Dorothy Maxfield, seconded by Don Croop to pay bills presented.

Dianne Muscoreil, Cor. Sec., will send thank you letters to the Village and to Sunset Bay Marina for their assistance with the flagpole.

Quotes for lighted sign to advertise society events was presented and discussed. Motion made by Miles Linnabery, seconded by Diane Muscoreil, to approve purchase of Model C sign which is two-sided, lighted, wired and installed for a cost of $4,485. Motion carried. Miles Linnabery and Sally Smith volunteered to be responsible for changing lettering on sign.

The plaque given to the Society by the AAA for our participation in the Century of Cars was displayed, and will be kept in the Car Building.

Porsche raffle tickets are available. See Bill Rose or Wally Goodman for books to sell.

Don Burrows thanked Gordon Strablow for all the painting and work he has done on the caboose. He hopes to complete the renovation after apple harvest.

Miles Linnabery has been asked to be on the committee for next year's Apple Festival.Miles attended this year's exhibit for two days and received $35 in donations.

The flagpole is in place near the depot and painted, thanks to "Ollie" Clark and village personell. Apparently someone removed our flag from the depot, so Diane will contact Rep. John LaFalce and see if he can get a new one donated to us.

Gary would like to build shelves in the Storage Barn with cement blocks and plywood at an estimated cost of $430.00. Motion made by "Red" Clark, seconded by Dorothy Maxfield, to authorize purchase of materials needed. Motion carried.

Discussion held on re-prositioning Tugwell Cabin Red Clark will see Ed Hastings about it.

The Wilson Librarian has copies of all the Wilson "Stars" on microfilm. She would like to put them on a disc for computer access. She is being invited to the December meeting for more information.

The above are excerpts from the minutes of the Oct. meeting submitted by Pam Groff, Secretary.

* * * * * * * * * *

SINGERS NOT IDLE;

Many of us may recall watching Pres. Reagan's Inaugural Parade on TV, but few were aware our Honorary member, Grace Singer, was thrilled to watch it in person. She also attended the Inaugural ball held at the Space Center, then spent a few days with her sister-in-law, Helen Idle of Gaithorsburg, Md. before returning to Wilson.

Which reminds us that Tom Singer's cousin, Dunning Idle IV, son of Helen Singer Idle, paid a visit to Wilson this summer in July. Also, Dunning Idle V of Albuquerque,NM, grandson of Dunning Idle III, also visited Wilson.

* * * * * * * * * *

FAIRY TALE ROMANCE:

Mark Singer, a Life Member of the Wilson Hist. Soc., was married to MaryElizabeth Gregory at San Francisco,CA, on Sept. 9, 2000. Father Sam of St. John's Episcopal Church in Wilson, traveled to San Francisco especially to perform the wedding ceremony. Others from Wilson who attended were Tom and Jacqueline Singer; his grandmother, Grace Singer; Janet Sporleder; Floyd and Mary Clark; also Ken & Marlene Taylor of Sanborn; and Hazel and Bob Walker of Olcott.

Mark,9, met Mary Gregory 7, at Lafayette, CA in 1967. They then "Ignored" eachother for the next 32 years until, at a birthday party in England for Mark's eldest sister, Vivianne, they met and suddenly discovered each other again.

It is interesting to note that Mary studied broadcasting in college and had an interesting career at CNN. She is now the executive producer of the Larry King Show Live. Mark has a Master's Degree from Buffalo Univ. in Library Computer Sciences and Information, and is a librarian at the Los Angeles Public Library.

* * * * * * * * * *

TUGWELL REMEMBERED:

Rex Tugwell grew up and attended school in Wilson, but he graduated from Masden Park High, Buffalo, in 1911. His boyhood years in Wilson, however, helped shape his life, and one of his early achievements was when he became Wilson Correspondent for the Niagara Gazette.

Rex's boyhood days were in the era when the "backhouse" was still very much in use; Drinking water came from wells; carbide lamps were beginning to be replaced by kerosene; boardwalks were giving way to cement; gravel roads were replacing dirt roads, but automobiles still had to battle mud-choked roads. Only the more adventuresome would attempt to drive to Niagara Falls or Bufflo, and it was the period when the "Hojack" railroad was the main source of transportation in and out of Wilson.

Rex graduated from the Univ. of Pennsylvania, and became a Professor of economics at Columbia University. While there he was asked to join the Roosevelt Administration as Under Secretary of Agriculture. As a member of Roosevelt's "Brain Trust", he helped draft most of the legislation that helped America recover from the "Great Depression" of the 1930's.

Rex died in 1979 at the age of 88 at Santa Barbara, CA, and was buried in the Evergreen Cemetery at Sinclairsville, NY.

A good picture of the Tugwell Cabin in it's original location is shown on page 3 of Wilson Sketchbook II. It would be appreciated if any Newsletter readers have information or pictures related to the Tugwell family to please send "copies" to Eleanor Myers, town historian, who is getting information together for the Cabin Dedication when renovation is completed.

* * * * * * * * * *

BON MOT: One good thing about the future...it comes one day at a time.

* * * * * * * * * *

IN MEMORIAM:

Frances J. Cake, 79, of Wilson, died September 22, 2000 at Gasport, NY, following a brief illness. She worked at the Suits Flower Shop in Wrights Corners during the 1960's. She was a homemaker andenjoyed gardening and china painting. She also enjoyed rollerskating at Skateland in Lockport. She was a member of the Wilson Hist. Soc. since 1989.

She is survived by a son, Kelton (Patricia) Cake of Gasport, NY; a brother, Donald Wiegand of Kitchener, Ontario; and 3 grandsons, Joseph and Jacob Cake of Lockport, and Mike Cake of Gasport.

Services were held at the Howard Sherrie Funeral Home in Newfane, NY with Rev. John Wetherwax officiating, and burial was in Greenwood Cemetery in Wilson.

* * * * * * * * *

PROJECT FIZZLED:

In June, 1975,(at the suggestion of the Wilson Bicentennial Comm.,) the Village and Town Boards took action to designate the Forsythia Bush as the official flowering shrub for the town of Wilson. The Committee then purchased 100 bushes from Mark's Nursery, and planted them around town at suggested sites such as the Town Hall; Little League Park; Wilson Museum; Water District Building; and Greenwood Cemetery. Some were also made available to the six churches in Wilson. "Chuck" Campbell headed up the Planting Committee which consisted of Norman Thilk, John Weiler; Joe Higgins; Burt Jennings; Karl Wright; Jess Willard, and village and town maintenance crews.

If the project had taken hold, Wilson today could have been as famous for its Forsythia, as Rochester,NY is for it's Lilacs.

* * * * * * * * * *

INFORMATION SOUGHT:

A history Committee is gathering information and pictures in relation to the Exley Methodist Church175th Anniversary. If you can help please forward material to Marion Campbell, History Coordinator for the church project. We suggest you make copies of any information you might have rather than release original documents. Thank you.

* * * * * * * * * *

THANK YOU, VIRGINIA:

Virginia Strablow has submitted her final list of hostesses for the year 2,000, and we especially wish to thank her for her dedication to the society over the past 4 years. The Sunday Hostess Chairman is one of the most important museum positions, for without people to watch the facilities on Sunday afternoons, it could not be open to the public and there would be no reason to have a Museum.

Virginia wishes to thank the many members who have given so generously of their time to be hostesses. Your cooperation has been a great asset, not only to the Museum, but to the Community as well. Visitors always express pleasure for the courteous treatment given them, and that not only speaks well for the Museum, but is a big A+ for the Town of Wilson also.

* * * * * * * * * *

Nov. 5:	Robert & Ann Botzer; Charles & Ann Horton.	Open: Don Burrows.
Nov. 12:	Elton & June Kropp; Bruce & Bonnie Muck.	Open: Elton Kropp
Nov. 19:	Ed & Marilyn Allgeier; Walter & Jamie Moxham.	Open: Celeste Crawford.
Nov. 26:	"Ollie" & Helen Clark; Gary Pettit.	Open: "Ollie" Clark.

* * * * * * * * * *

THROUGH RAIN, SLEET, & SNOW:

An item in the Wilson "Star" noted that on March 29, 1894, a letter was received at Wilson Post Office that was mailed from Niagara Falls on Jan. 19, 1882. The Editor of the "Star" dryly commented: "We always knew the R.W. & O. was slow, but this beats all records."

* * * * * * * * * *

BON MOT: Life is a journey, not a guided tour.

* * * * * * * * * *

++++++

RECENT ACQUISITIONS:

Wilson Central School,Wally Goodman: Copies of the 1999 and 2000 "Crests".

Bernard & Rena Israel: Card Table advertising local businesses; 23 Books; Package of Ink Blotters;. (Table in excellent condition.)

Elaine Moon: One Zither; and One 1889 Encyclopedia.

Shirley Stephenson: One old can of Powdered Boric Acid. (Found in cottage at Roosevelt Beach by daughters, Lorraine and Katherine Dierick.

Joyce Richards, Lancaster,NY: On permanent loan: Variety of Wilson related Cards; programs; booklets. (List on file.)

William Dobbins, Lockport,NY: Geography Book used by Ira Pettit.

AAA: History of the Auto Club in Western New York and Plaque of "Covert" for Car Building.

Marjorie Arnold, Tonawanda,NY: Twenty-eight Books for display in Schoolhouse.

Hazel Walker, Olcott, NY: One complete Manikin and one Partil Manikin. Once used at Flora Hatch Fashion Shop. (Manikins in good condition.)

Virginia Klaiber, Gettsville,NY: Cooking Pot on Tripod for display in Fittro Shop.

Bob & Pat Woolson, Ransomville,NY: Ten old Schoolbooks.

Donald Baron of Florida: Box of Magazines.

* * * * * * * * * *

CEMETERY WREATHS:

The Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Comm., is again offering Douglas Fir Christmas Wreathswhich are about 24 inches with large red bows and stands. Wreaths will be placed in Cemetery in early December and removed in the Spring. Cost for entire service is $25.00 and orders must be placed and paid for prior to Tuesday, November 21,2000. For more information, call the Town Clerk's Office at 751-6704 Checks made payable to Town of Wilson and mail orders sent to 375 Lake Street, P.O.Box 537, Wilson, NY 14172-0537.

* * * * * * * * * *

DONATIONS:

Generous donations of $100.00 have been given to the Wilson Hist. Soc. Building Fund ByRachel Flagler, Lockport,NY; and Leah Bigalow, Lockport, NY.

A $28.00 dollar donation was received from Gary & Bonnie Mittlefehlt of Wilson.

Other generous donation from $10.00 to $25.00 dollarshave been received from: Miss Helen Stevens of Wilson, NY; Bernice McLaughlin of Ransomville, NY; Mildred Neville of Wilson,NY; Beverly Woolson of Wilson,NY; Elvin & Nancy Simmons of Wilson, NY; Norman MacAskill of Niagara Falls, NY; Winona Hamblin of Niagara Falls, NY;and Mark & Phyliss Huntington of Lockport,NY.

We also wish to acknowledgea $100.00 gift to the Memorial fund from John Cable of Ocala, FL, in memory of his mother, Edith Wilson Cable.

* * * * * * * * * *

MUSEUM ACTIVITY:

The following turned out to clean out the Fittro Shop on Sept. 16th: Dan King, Ollie Clark, Miles Linnabery; Gordon Strablow; Darrell Smith; Sally Smith; and Joshua Smith.

Gordon Strablow has sanded the caboose and given it a second coat of paint. The project will be completed when a couple windows are replaced, and the NYC Insignia put on the side.

Pres. Fitch arranged through Ollie Clark to have the village remove the rock that had been dug up around the flagpole. The flagpole is now reset, painted--and looks great.

The storage barn is cleaned up, and the firetruck placed along the south wall. Gary plans to build in shelving with cement blocks and plywood.

* * * * * * * * * *

WEDDING BELLS:

Andrew Muck, son of Bruce & Bonnie Muck of Wilson, married Kelly Lynn Polinsky at Colgate Univ. on June 24, 00. Andrew graduatedfrom Wilson Central and Colgate, and is attending John Hopkins School of Medicine. Kelly Lynn also graduated from Colgate.

* * * * * * * * * *

QUIPS: Happiness is the by product of unselfish living.

* * * * * * * * * *

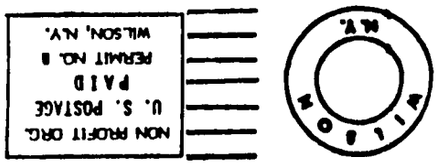
(Coleman Printing)

December 2000 Vol.29 No. 10

DONALD W. CROOP, Editor

NEWSLETTER

Wilson Historical Society
WILSON, NEW YORK 14172-9763



Dec. 2000

CHRISTMAS CHEER:

As the Holidays approach, many of us are probably aware that we will be celebrating the last Christmas of the twentieth Century, which ends December 31, 2000.

Not generally known is the fact that it was in the 1890's before all states in the Union accepted Christmas as a National Holiday. However, Christmas was celebrated in America much earlier than that, and books such as the "Christmas Carol" and the "Night Before Christmas" were very popular in the mid 1800's.

In the late 1800's, few trees were set up in private homes but were generally placed in churches or other public places.

Trees were lighted up with real candles, and many times caught fire when not watched carefully.Usually the candles were lit just long enough for everyone to see--then put out. Tree branches were usually covered with bonbons, baskets of sweetmeats, fancy cakes, red apples, gingerbread, painted eggs, paper ornaments, and strings of popcorn.

Gifts were usually homemade and consisted of things like jewelry, scarfs, gloves, sleds, tool boxes , dolls, and clothing.

Turkey or roast goose were generally the main course for an 1860 dinner, but they also had stuffed hams or stewed oysters. Desserts were mostlyfruit cakes, plum pudding, or mince and apple pie.

Children especially look forward to Christmas trees, decorations, and giftsand of course to that mystical old gentleman, Santa Claus, who has been making his rounds with Reindeer,toys, and sled for many, many years.

It was in 1949 when Gene Autry, the singing cowboy, recorded his biggest selling hit record, "Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer."

The song developed from a promotional booklet put out by Montgomery Ward featuring the poem about the special reindeer. When the poem was set to lyrics, Autry recorded it, and to this day remains one of thepopular somgs played at Christmas.

So keep your eyes open--if you're lucky you may catch a glimpse of Santa. In the meantime, "Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good night," from your Newsletter Editor and Sandy Holden who addresses and sends the newsletter to you.

* * * * * * * * * *

HOBO "BASH":

Remember that day on June 15, 1981 when a "Hobo Party" was held on the Museum grounds to dedicate the new "Hojack Park" Marker erected by Jan Sporleder and her historical Sites Committee? Over 100 Hobos and their "ladies" assembled at the museum where everyone enjoyed Bea Rockwood's delicious "Hobo Stew.

During the meal a musical group called the "Hobo Band" entertained guests with selections from some of "Boxcar Willy's" latest hits.

Special recognition was then given by Pres. Argue to the "best dressed" members who showed up for the Party: "Freight Car Franny",(Edna Robinson); "Weary Willie",(Don Croop); and "Box Car Annie", (Millie Croop.)

* * * * * * * * * *

WEATHER WOES:

We have heard people remark recently that it took a long time for summer to get to Wilson this year, and when it did it only lasted three days. Well, if you think that was unusual, look back to the year 1816 shortly after the pioneers were trying to recover from the War of 1812.

In January and February that year it was so warm people only used their fires to cook meals. In March and April it got cooler, and in May, snow and sleet was reported for 17 days. In June, there was frost or snow on everyday but three, and the weather bureau recorded it as the coldest ever experienced in this latitude. On July 4th, New England reported that all lakes and streams were covered with a quarter inch of ice--and in August, it got even worse. An item in the "Elizabeth Pioneer" stated that ice formed an inch thick and killed every green thing in the Country.

In 1817, corn that had been saved from the 1915 harvest, sold for $10 a bushel, and was then used only for seed. It was also said that thousands might have perished if it hadn't been for the abundance of wild game. It was further believed that ash which spread around the world after the eruption of Mt. Temboro in the Duth East Indies, may have caused the cold weather.

So perhaps we don't have too much to complain about, weatherwise, in the year 2000.

* * * * * * * * * *

BON MOT: To make a success of old age, you've got to start young.

* * * * * * * * * *

CAR GENIUS:

One of Wilson's former residents, George Whiteside, started his career in Wilson when he helped build the "Niagara Automobile", a product of the Wilson Auto mobile Manufacturing Co., which was organized by Stanley Dwight on Oct. 22, 1900.

When the Wilson Auto Co. closed because of lackof funds, George Whiteside went to work for the E.R. Thomas Auto Co. in Buffalo, where he helped produce the famous "Around the World Car." In fact, because of his mechanical genius, George was made head foreman of the Thomas Co.

One time when we were on a trip to Georgia, we stopped at Stone Mt. where we visited the excellent antique car museum there. We struck up a conversation with the Curator, Thomas Protsman, who revealed that he had been well acquainted with George Whiteside.

Whiteside went to Georgia after he left Buffalo, and he and Protsman became good friends. In fact, when Whiteside died, Mr. Protsman told us he was Executor of Whiteside's Estate. He went on to say that Whiteside was a remarkable person, and when he was 93 years old, he shingled the roof on his house all by himself.

No telling what might have happened if the Wilson Auto Co. had been able to stay in business. The late Fay Campbell told us that he rode in the first car made at the Brook's Machine Shop which was located next to the Bush-Chapman Grist Mill on West Young Street.In fact, the Grist Mill produced the steam used at Brook's Machine Shop.

Fay said the first car built looked like a buggy seat on a platform with four wheels, but the progress of Dwight's new automobile company was hardly a "bed of roses". When, for instance Brooks requested permission from the Village Board to test-drive the new "Niagara Automobile" through village streets, his request was denied. The Board believed that the noisy machine would not only scare horses, but residents as well. Brooks wouldn't take no for an answer, however, and finally convinced the Board that many horses were not properly "broken in", and were more of a menace to residents than his well-controlled automobile.

* * * * * * * * * *

REGULAR MEETING:

An excellent program about ghosts at Fort Niagara was presented by Bob Emerson, curator, at the October meeting. In December, the regular meeting will be held on Dec. 18th because Christmas falls on the 4th Monday.

In keeping with the approaching Holiday Season, a musical Hand-Bell program will be given by Joan Sulicki, who will discuss the history of hand bells, how made, etc. As always, the public is invited, and refreshments are served after meetings.

* * * * * * * * * *

MEMBERSHIP NEWS:

Please welcomeour latest new members: Tom and Melody Masters of Ransomville,NY; Ms Marjorie Batt of Niagara Falls, NY; Mary Ellen Ganshaw of Wilson, NY;

Also, Joel Masters, Jr. Member, of Ransomville,NY.

Honorary Members: William E. Ganshaw, of Wilson; Kay Ness of Wilson; and Winona Hamblin of Niagara Falls.

We thank the following members for their generous donations of up to $25 to the Building Fund: Paul & Catherine Harold of Chatham,Va., Lillian Ulrich of Palm Bay, Fl., James and Carole Cornell, of Boston, Mass., Carilyn and James Warblow of Niagara Falls, NY., James P. Harold of Arlington, Va., Frank Manning of Wilson, NY., Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Sherer of Wilson, NY., Howard & Leona Hunter of Wilson, NY., Judith Harold of Philadelphia, Pa., Chester and Charlotte McArthur of Florida., Jack & Melinda Hutchison of Sanborn, NY., James & Marlene Schotz of Wilson, NY.,

* * * * * * * * * *

PHARMACY PROMOTES WILSON:

Leanne Haley-Brown has made many fine improvements in and around her Wilson Community Pharmacy which, needless to say, has greatly spruced up the area across from the First Baptist Church of Wilson.

Anyone who paid a visitto see the colorful "Buffalo Herd" will be pleased to know that one of the "Herd" is now grazing peacefully beside the Wilson Pharmacy--thanks to Leanne who acquired it. The "Herd" was promoted in Buffaloto raise funds for Cancer research.

* * * * * * * * * *

MAJOR DERBY PLANNED:

Cyd Bennett, deputy commissioner for Tourism in Niagara County, has announced that Niagara, Erie, and Ontario Counties will join together to create the largest Fishing Derby ever held in New York State.

The purpose is to attract thousands of fishing enthusiasts along the Niagara River and Lake Ontario. The date set for the Derby will be from September 8 to September 23rd, 2001.

Anglers will be able to compete for more than $100 000 in cash and prizes, and the event will focus on the Community and Children, who will have a chance to compete.

A study shows that 70% of the revenues generated by the event will come from persons living outside the area, and that anglers spend more than $1.7 Billion a year in New York State.

* * * * * * * * * *

REMEMBER WHEN...?

We wonder how many "old timers" danced to the music of the "Indigoers", a musical group in Wilson during the 1930's. Their theme song was "Mood Indigo", a popular hit of those days. Their rehearsal director was Marjorie Crossman Hurlburt, and the Band played for dances on Sunset Island from 1930 through 1934.

Members of the Band were Ron Hamblin, piano; Larry Pease, Sax; Richard Loomis, Sax; Harry Hamblin, trumpet; Pete Burmaster, Bass; and Willis Rockwood, drums.

* * * * * * * * * *

QUIPS:

Patience is a quality you love in the driver behind you, but hate in the one ahead of you.

* * * * * * * * * *

WILSONS "FINEST"

After moving to Wilson in 1934 and being a home-owner, it was a good feeling knowing that there was a dedicated Volunteer Fire Co. in Town and, a couple years later, that feeling was justified when we had a fire and had to call them. We had just returned home from Church when our neighbor, Fred Thilk, came overto tell us our barn was on fire. Mrs. Thilk called the Fire Co. and, even though the roads were very icy that day, they responded quickly.

Our efforts to put out the fire had been futile because our only source of water was an old chain pump that could only produce a pail of water in about 5 minutes. However, it only took a couple minutes for "Wilsons Finest" to get "Old Betsey" pumping water and the fire was put out quickly.

The only visible damage was a couple of burned barn boards and a dozen of very groggy and disgusted chickens. When the fire was completely out, we couldn't have agreed more with the volunteer fireman who said to the "Chief", "Well Chief, they can't call us cellar-savers anymore." Anyway, that was the day that we decided Wilson Fire Co. #1 was the best friend any resident of Wilson could have.

Wilson's first Fire Co. adopted their By-laws on August 24, 1924, and the first officers were A.E. Horton, Pres., Bill Lashner, Vice-Pres., Harry Biggins, Fire Chief, Frank Lashner, Asst. Fire Chief, Clare Coe, Treas., and H. W. Smith, Secretary.

The first Field Day was held August 30, 1924, to raise funds for the Co., and they are still held today as one of the Company's many fund-raising events.

The Volunteer Firemen of the 1920's and '30s laid the groundwork for today's modern, well-equipped Fire Co. making it equal with any other Fire Companies in NiaGARA County. In addition, its well-trained Fire Police; Rescue/Scuba Diving Team; and fine Ambulance Service are among the best; and its Medical Team was the first in Niagara County to provide Life Support to all local residents.

All that, along with a dedicated group of Volunteers and Womens' Auxiliary---are there any better reasons to support Wilson's fine Fire Fighting Organizations?

* * * * * * * * * * *

LONG DISTANCE TRAVELER:

Beatrice Stockwell Hicks, a Life Member of the Wilson Hist. Soc., spent the month of September in Wilson, and her sister, Marian Winger of Wilson, reported that "Bea" really liked the improvements around the Harbor and Wilson Boathouse Restaurant. She was particularly impressed with the "Welcome Home to Wilson" signs, and at the Museum she was pleased with the renovated old Randall Road Schoolhouse.

She drove the entire 5,350 mile round trip from San Francisco to Wilson and back all by herself. "Bea" joined the Wilson Society in 1976 and became a Life Member in 1987.

* * * * * * * * * * *

GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY:

William and Bernice McLaughlin of Ransomville celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary recently with dinner at John's Flaming Hearth, Niagara Falls. They were married in the Free Methodist Church at Ransomville on October 28, 1950.

Prior to retirement, Mr. McLaughlin prepared the IRS Tax forms with no charge to the Society. He became a member of the Wilson Hist. Soc. in 1974, and was honored with a Life Membership by the Board in July, 1990.

The McLaughlins have 5 children, Joanne Nemececk of Michigan; John McLaughlin of East Amherst; David McLaughlin of Lockport;, the Rev. Bruce McLaughlin of Ohio; and Mary Evans of Ransomville; also 12 grandchildren and 4 g-grandchildren.

* * * * * * * * * * *

IT'S A FACT:

Peter B. Porter, one of Niag. County's early leaders, introduced the Resolution in Congress that resulted in the War of 1812. His son, Peter A. Porter, , lost his life at Cold Harbor during the Civil War, and the GAR Post at Wilson was named in his Honor.

==========

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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

NAME.....

ADDRESS..... PHONE ( ) .....

P.O. BOX..... CITY..... STATE..... ZIP CODE.....

Please check box if address/name has changed recently ☐

Please indicate previous last name if applicable.....

JUNIOR (Under 18) $1.00 each

Name,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,Age.....

Name.....Age.....

Name.....Age.....

Couple $8.00.....

Single $5.00.....

LIFE (Single) $150.00.....

LIFE (Couple) $250.00.....

HONORARY MEMBER (85+) FREE.....

BUILDING FUND DONATION $..... TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED.....

Applications and money due by January 1,2001

Please make all checks payable to the Wilson Historical Society and return to

Sany Holden, P.O. Box 319 Wilson, NY 14172

HOLLOWEEN PARTY:

This year's Holloween Party sponsored by the Wilson Hist. Soc., was great, and many thanks to Darrell & Sally Smith and their helpers for making it possible.

The Barnum Building was decorated beatifully thanks to Audrey Collesano and the Smith family. Also a word of thanks to the judges, Stephanie Francassi, Albino Murawski, and Susan Sobiegray for making some tough decisions. Cider, donuts, cup cakes and cookies were available for everyone, also many delicious apples donated by Don and Wanda Burrows.

About 30 youngsters and accompanying adults attended the party and nearly everyone went home with a door prize, and we thank Sue Sobiegray for donating Holloween buckets as prizes.

Prior to judging costumes, several games were directed by Sally Smith including variations of "musical chairs" won by Kierston Simmons; "Simon Sez" won by Amy Frauen; also a Witch Game donated by Sue Sobiegray. In a contest to guess the number of candy corn and pumpkins in a jar, Devon Fowler won, guessing 307 of an actual 311 pieces.

The judges said it was very difficult to award prizes for winning costumes because all were so original and cute. , however, they did decide on the following:

0-2 years: 1st, Hannah Mombrea, Indian; 2nd, Cheyene Wagner, Bumble Bee; 3rd, Anthonena Delisi, Greek Goddess in tie with Kyle Wiesinger as Tiger.

3-4 years: 1st, Marissa Myers, Princess; 2nd, Kevin Wiesinger, M&M Candy; 3rd, Chelsea Smith, Big Bird;

5-6 years: 1st, Jason Delisi, Hercules; 2nd, Savannah King, Cowgirl; 3rd, Brooke Douglas, Cowgirl.

7-8: 1st, Heather Lehman, Glamorous Lady; 2nd, Patrick Granchelli, Ninja, tied with Amber Lehman as Ballerina Fairy. 3rd, Kierston Simmons, tied with Kayla Douglas, both dressed as Witches.

9-10 years1st, Tess Granchelli, Medeival Dragon Woman; 2nd, Devon Fowler, Dracula; and 3rd, Katelyn Smith, Fortune Teller.

11-12 years: 1st, Michelle Evans, Witch; 2nd, Emma Lee Pearce, Butterfly, tied with Scott Sobiegray, Soccer Head; 3rd, Amy Frauen, Sorceress, tied with David Anstead, Dementor.

13-16 years: 1st, Joseph Higgens, Grim Reaper; 2nd, Joshua Smith, Hockey Player; 3rd, Laura Evans, Hobo. Honorable mention in this group went to Andy Evans who paraded as himself.

Sally Smith and all members of her "Holloween Crew" pitched in to clean up, and one hour after the party everything was good as new. Special thanks to Joseph Higgens; Devon Fowler; Scott Sobiegray; and Mary Jane Ziehm who also helped.

* * * * * * * * * *

PORSCHE RAFFLE:

Don't forget to get tickets for the Porsche Raffle to be held at next year's Memorial Day Fair. Youcan purchase one chance for $2, or better yet, get 3 tickets for $5 or a book of 10 for $14 dollars. Call Wally Goodman, Bill Rose, or Sally Smith--they'll be glad to make it possible for you to own and ride around in a Porsche for only $2.00. That's better than some of the lotteries being advertised.

* * * * * * * * * *

WILSON, "WINTER WONDERLAND":

Many years ago one winter, the roads were piled high with drifts. Emma Duxbury and her sister were driving a horse and cutter up Townline Rd. on the way to Harvey Duxbury's on the Randall Rd. where they planned to Baby Sit. Near the Ide Rd. they came to a drift so large that workmen had tunneled through it with shovels. When Emma drove her cutter half way through, she met a team of bob sleds driven by two men. The girls couldn't back up, and the men said they couldn't either. Finally, realizing it was up to them to do something, they managed to back their team up by prying up the runners on the bobsled. With the bobsled finally out of the way, Emma and her sister were able to reach the Randall Road withno furtherer problems.

* * * * * * * * * *

BON MOT: You know you are old when the candles cost more than the cake.

==========

MEMBERSHIP NOTICE:

If you haven't already renewed your membership dues for the year 2,001, we hope you will do so on this attached form. This will also make it possible for us to include your name on the new 2,001 Membership Roll.

This is the 3rd and last application form that will come with your Newsletter. You have helped build a great museum, and we have a few dedicated people keeping it going, Let's try and keep it that way--or even better.

"MOTIVATED MUSEUM MEMBERS MAY MOVE MOUNTAINS."
(and if you can't Floyd "Red" Clark will.)

BOARD MEETING:

The November 8th Board Meeting was called to order by Pres. Gary Fitch with 22 members of the Society in attendance. Darrell Smith, Gordon Strablow, Pam Groff, Diane Muscoreil, Judy King, Bruce Muck, Bill Rose, Ollie Clark, Floyd Clark, Miles Linnabery, Art Schnoor, Wally Goodman, Don Croop, Don Burrows, Jerry Dean, Celeste Crawford, Marlene Schotz, Sally Smith, Dorothy Maxfield, Wanda Burrows, and Elton Kropp. Quorum present.

Judy King, Treasurer, reported $4,074.71 in checking accountwith bills to be paid, $1,143.91. Motion made by Bill Rose, seconded by Bruce Muck, to pay bills presented. Motion Carried. Judy King reminded everyone that all receipts must be signed and bill identified before they are presented to her for payment.

Diane Muscoreil, Cor. Sec'y., reported that the Flag requested from Congressman John LaFalxe has been received and is in use. The Board thanks Mr. LaFalce for his quick response to the Society's request.

Installation of the new Sign was discussed, and it was decided that it will be a Memorial to the persons for which funds were donated. Background colors for the Sign will be decided by a committee appointed by Pres. Fitch: Celeste Crawford; Marlene Schotz; and Judy King. Location of the sign will be decided by another committee appointed by the President: Darrell Smith; Don Burrows; and Bill Rose.

Wally Goodman reported on the Porsche Raffle. He has arranged for Posters being made up for advertising, and a motion was made by Don Burrows, seconded by Dorothy Maxfield, to pay for the posters from funds raised by the Porsche Raffle Account. Motion Carried: Wally further stated that the old Cadillac has been sold for $100 and registration turned over to new owner.

"Red" Clark noted that the Tugwell Cabin has been relocated to a new "footer", and the former concrete pad will serve as a Patio with iron fencing around it. Motion made by Dorothy Maxfield, seconded by Gordon Strablow, to remove a nearby Cottonwood Tree. Motion Carried. "Red" Clark will contact Mr. Black of the Mohawk Tree Service about removal. Pres. Fitch appointed Eleanor Myers and Marlene Schotz to be co-chairmen of the Tugwell Cabin with "Red" Clark assisting.

Celeste Crawford volunteered to put up and decoratea Christmas tree in the Patterson Room. She also requested use of the museum on December 4th for a meeting of Delta Kappa Gamma.Motion made by Darrell Smithseconded by Wally Goodman, to grant request. Motion Carried.

Don Burrows reported that the Caboose is ready for remaining windows to be installed and for the Logo to be painted on the sides.

Elton Kropp, Grounds Chairman, reported that the last mowing of the grounds for this year was on October 31st. Also, the row of Spruce trees on the north side of the property have been fertilized--also Patch Work has been done around the Storage Barn. A Pothole in the Storage barn has been filled in, and an inventory sheet showing location of contents in barn has been mailed to all Board Members.

Miles Linnabery reported on the Niagara County Historian situation concerning Dave Dickinson. Even though the Legislature has decided to remove Dickinson as Historian,(because of a lower mark on Civil Service exams) the society will send letters to Chrm. Clyde Burmaster and Shirley Urtel expressing disappointment that the highly qualified Dickinson was removed.

Darrell and Sally Smith reported on the Holloween Party,(which is covered in an article on page 4 of this Newsletter.) Also, a letter was read from Esther Myers, who praised the Smiths for putting on such an entertaining and successful party.

Pres. Fitch stated that a meeting of the Planning Board would be held in November, The meeting, which was calledd by Art Schnoor, Chrm., was to discuss future matters of importance to the society Included might be turning the Depot into an exclusive museum exhibit Bldg., as originally intended by the late Pres., Dr. John Argue. Holding meetings in the Barnum Bldg., and discussing addition of new rest rooms in Barnum Building.

A letter from the Town of Wilson was read notifying the Society of a 3% increaseto the funds allotted to the historical society. Also, a one-time gift of $2,5000 to help the society pay for restoration projects. Pres. Fitch, on behalf of the Society, thanked Jerry Dean, Town Supervisor, and the town Coun cil for their generous support.

A short discussion was held on charging admission to groups touring the Museum, and it was decided that our policy of accepting free will offerings would be continued. It was noted, however, that if groups were to ask how mch to donate, Marlene Schotz, Chrm. of Tours, should use her own judgement.

Gary stated that Claire Coe has requested permission to use a picture of our schoolhouse in a publication. He has sent her a letter granting her request, but suggested she send a copy of the article for our museum records.

Wanda Burrows requested use of the Barnum Building on July 7, 2001from Noon to 6PM for the 50th Reunion of the Wilson Class of 1951. Motion made by Miles Linnabery, seconded by Judy King, to grant request. Motion carried.

"Red" Clark announced that he has a 1932 Milk Bottle that came from the Willowbrook Dairy once located on Bay Street. He is donating it to the museum.

The framed plate of a N.Y. Central Engine which was made up by Art Schnoor in Memory of James Waldron will be hung in the Caboose. A beautiful painting received from the estate of Joe Higgins, will be hung in the Tugwell Cabin.

Above items compiled from the minutes of the November Board meeting as submitted by Pam Groff, Recording Secretary.

* * * * * * * * * *

DID YOU KNOW.....On July 4, 1894, a celebration was held in Wilson to commemorate having electricityfor the first time. A beautiful celebrity of that day, Lillian Russel, was giving a performance in Buffalo at the timeLocal residents must have been thrilled when the famous Lady attended the Dedication Ceremonies held in Wilson.

* * * * * * * * * *

WE CAN ALL learn from the canary--it never sings a depressing song.