

Wilson Historical Society

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS
PRESIDENT**

KYLE ANDREWS

1ST VICE PRESIDENT

DAN KING

2ND VICE PRESIDENT

ROBERT BOTZER

REC. SECRETARY

PAMELA GROFF

CORR. SECRETARY

DIANE MUSCOREIL

TREASURER

JUDY KING

TRUSTEES

1 YR. JAMIE ANDREWS

BRAD CLARK

JAMES MUSCOREIL

2 YR. LOIS BARNUM

WANDA BURROWS

WALLY GOODMAN

3 YR. JOSH BODIE

BOB CRAMER

BOB HULL

CURATOR

VACANT

PAST PRESIDENTS

DONALD BURROWS

GARY FITCH

SALLY SMITH

WALLY GOODMAN

HISTORIAN

FRANCIS GALLAGHER

WILSON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

42ND ANNUAL

MEMORIAL DAY FAIR

MONDAY, MAY 26TH, 2014

8:00 AM - 4:00 PM

HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUSEUM GROUNDS

ROUTE 425 TOWN OF WILSON

SUPER FLEA MARKET

250 VENDORS

FREE ENTERTAINMENT

FEATURING **THE BARROOM BUZZARDS**

GREAT FOOD INCLUDING CHIAVETTA'S CHICKEN BBQ

**FREE PARKING IN THE VILLAGE* WITH FREE SHUTTLE BUS SERVICE
TO THE GROUNDS**

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED THROUGHOUT THE DAY!

CALL 751-6704

**THERE WILL BE A MEMORIAL SERVICE AT THE FAIR-
GROUNDS AT 12:00 P.M. TO HONOR OUR VETERANS.**

Wilson Town Historian Francis Gallagher will be presented his program on

"The Cobblestone Corridor:

Historical Architecture with a Truly Local And Unique Style"

At the Sanborn Historical Society May 27th, 7:00 pm

EXCERPTS FROM BOARD OF DIRECTOR MEETINGS

OCTOBER 2013 ~ MARCH 2014

- Approval was given for the willow tree removal by Jakes' Tree Service in the amount of \$350.
- Bob Cramer reported that the fascia was placed on the caboose, a cap on the gutters after the roof project and windows were replaced in the log cabin. Many more repair projects still need to be done.
- Ideas for future programs were the Choir of Nations and a quilting program.
- Bob Hull will speak to Gary Pettit about the WHS Veterans Memorial which need to be fixed.
- The Wilson Lions Club would like to hold a Garlic Festival on the Society ground in September. They would also like the Society to join them in running the event. Permission granted.
- Bob Cramer presented a roofing proposal from Nate Vanderbeck for \$1800 ~ Motion by Wally seconded by Bob Hull and approved.
- John Sinclair reported that \$1500 was received for car parts he sold that belonged to Dean Johnson, who donated the money to the Society. John is working on the Pierce Arrow.
- Wanda reported no problems with the recent Craft Show but that in the future we should request an insurance policy to cover any damages/injuries.
- Mary Palacios found a plaque naming deceased Wilson veterans and gave it to the Society.
- The Barbecue Competition part of the Blue/Brew/Ques Father's Day Event weekend will be held here on the Society grounds. The Woodcock brothers will replace electric service in the Fit-tro Building.
- Four projects are planned for 2014 ~ Fixing the entrance sign, painting of the depot, an electric line run to the schoolhouse and pole barn and interior painting of the old kitchen in the Depot, renaming it the Railway Express Room.
- The quilt donated by Julie Godfrey is on display in the Barnum Building. Tickets will be sold for \$1.00 each or 6 for \$5.00. A motion was made and seconded to approved the printing of the quilt tickets.
- There was a discussion on the cost of sending out newsletters. \$1682 was spent on 3 issues,
- Bob Hull suggested getting a car club involved in the running of the Car Show at the Fair, and possibly combining a car show with the Summer Concert held in the summer.



Sweet April Showers Do Spring May Flowers



Don Burrows portrayed Reuben Wilson at the 200th Anniversary Re-enactment of the British capture of Fort Niagara and the subsequent burning of the Niagara Frontier.

Wilson Historical Society Membership Form

June 1, 2014 – May 31, 2015

Individual (\$15) Name(s): _____

Couple/Family (\$15) Mailing Address: _____

Life Member (\$150 single/\$250 couple)

Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

Checks payable to: Wilson Historical Society, P.O. Box 830, Wilson, NY 14172

Did You Know?

Recently, I received a request for information about The Hub Hotel from a family in Pittsburgh who had personal ties to a longtime Wilson landmark. Kathy Burchs' husband, Mike, used to visit Wilson as a small boy during the summers where his great grandfather, Hub Ferrin, owned and operated The Hub Hotel. According to Mrs. Burch, visiting Wilson and hanging out at the Hub were some of her husband's earliest and most fond memories. What follows is a brief history of what I was able to uncover.

On the site of the present day Fireman's Tavern on Young Street in Wilson a much larger and regionally famous hotel known as the Hub Hotel stood for over 80 years. The Hub, as it came to be known, began its existence in 1901 after a disastrous fire destroyed most of the businesses on the north side of Young Street. It was one of several hotels that catered to summer tourists who came to escape the heat of the city. However, it's probably best and most fondly remembered for the years that H.W. Ferrin and his wife, Ida, owned the establishment.

The story begins in Springville, NY where Herbert Ferrin had previously been a fruit and dairy farmer. In 1897 or 1898, Ferrin's farm and livestock were lost to fire. There was insurance on the property, but not the livestock. Perhaps desiring to try a new path in life, or in modern terms, a career change, he relocated to Wilson to start over. He purchased the Hub Hotel property from Freeman Emerson whose barbershop was destroyed in a fire. Because the village needed a barbershop to replace the one lost in the fire, Ferrin included a new barbershop and billiard hall to go along with the fourteen or so rooms available for rent.

In 1913 the Sutherland Hotel burned down. Though the event was tragic, it ended up benefiting the Ferrins. Former patrons of the Sutherland would go to Hub's barbershop/billiard hall and complain there was no place to eat in town. Ida Ferrin thought about this, and decided to begin making lunches for the visitors. This experiment was so successful that Ferrins decided to open a restaurant. Business was good, but Herbert Ferrin thought he could do better so he applied for a license to serve alcohol. This was a controversial decision given that the temperance movement was very popular and wielded significant political power at the time. Ferrin apparently stirred up a hornets nest because local opposition to his proposal was fierce and organized. An article from the October 14, 1913 issue of *The Niagara Gazette* captures the sentiment of the time.

H.W. Ferrin, proprietor of The Hub Hotel, who recently circulated a petition for the submission of the liquor license question at the November election, has hit hard up against an obstacle which bids fair to shatter his hope of becoming a purveyor of wet goods. He is confronted with the apparently impossible task of securing the permission of two-thirds of the residents within a certain distance of the hotel, and as a result, he may withdraw the petition if such a procedure is sanctioned by law.

The temperance element in the township has entered upon a most aggressive campaign for the next few weeks before the election. A one column reading notice signed by the local committee is being run in the local paper each week, setting forth arguments why the town should remain "dry" and a series of mass meetings is being held in one or another of the local churches every Sunday evening.

*For more information on the temperance movement in Wilson and the fight to keep Hub Ferrin from getting his liquor license, see the accompanying article in this newsletter from The October 10th and 17th, 1913 edition of *The Wilson Star*

Apparently the pressure became too much for Ferrin and he withdrew his petition a few days later. Despite the setback, The Hub Hotel was thriving and it wasn't long before an expansion was undertaken. The June 6th 1916 edition of the Niagara Falls Gazette, describes the work and changes that occurred over these years:

On account of increased patronage, several more rooms were added a couple of years ago and now the parlor, dining room, and kitchen are being placed on the ground floor and the 14 bedrooms will be increased to 22. The lobby and barber shop will also remain downstairs, but the pool room will be done away with.

The new Hub Hotel became a very popular place to eat. The specialty was Ida's chicken and biscuit dinners served on Sundays. People would come from miles around and line up out into the street in order to sample her famous dinners. The Ferrin's daughters, Vera Pease and Almira Burch, used to wait on tables. Other waitresses included Marie Reynolds, Jean Wilson Kress and Phyllis Chapman Hageman.

The November 26th, 1935 edition of *The Union Sun & Journal* praised The Hub's fare stating "There's a difference" and "the taste tells" are two expressions often voiced with visible degree of satisfaction by the many persons who regularly dine at the Hub Hotel in Wilson village." The article went on to say that the reason the food is so good is that Ida Ferrin takes personal charge of the kitchen. Dinners served were priced between 60 cents and \$1.00. Featured were chicken, steak, whitefish as well as other favorites.

The Hub's staying power was also partly due the many multifaceted and diverse needs it served over the years. For a time, in the late 20s, the county clerk set up an office to issue drivers licenses to nearby residents. For a number of years, the Hub was the site for meetings of the Wilson Lions Club as well as the Women's Business and Professional Club of Wilson.

The Ferrin's, having built up a successful business, were able to close during the winter months and retire to Florida. Eventually, they sold the Hub to Dwight Wilson in 1943. Wilson did not mess with success and kept the name Hub Hotel during his time of ownership. In more recent years, the Hub was run by Alex and Cecilia Andrasik who continued to uphold the reputation of the Hub being a good place to eat.

Sadly, on January 2nd, 1980, fire once again unleashed its fury on Young Street in Wilson. This time, The Hub Hotel was its victim. The hotel burned to the ground and was a total loss. Although the era of the large resort hotels had ended decades earlier, the Hub was a reminder of that busy time when Wilson was very popular tourist destination.

In closing, I would like to thank former Wilson Town Historian, Charles F Horton, who graciously shared his collection of old photographs of the Hub Hotel.

Submitted by

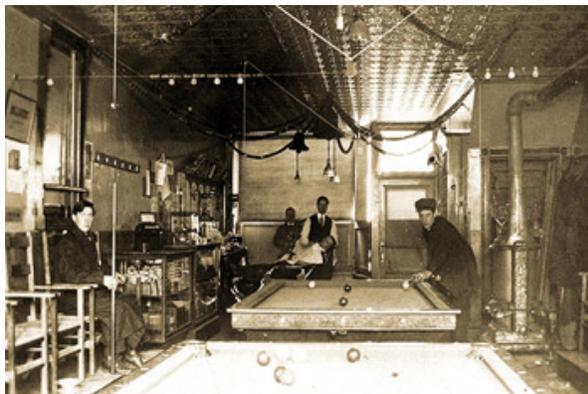
Francis Gallagher

Wilson Town Historian

HUB HOTEL
 Wilson, N. Y.
 Serving An Old-Fashioned
Thanksgiving Dinner
 THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 25TH
 12:00 to 2:00 P.M.



— SPECIAL —
Chicken Dinner
 EVERY SUNDAY
 \$1.00
 REAL HOME COOKING
Drive Down Sunday
HUB HOTEL
 WILSON, N. Y.
 An Ideal Place to Spend the Week End
 Cool Rooms — Good Meals



WWW.WILSONNEWYORK.COM

Wilson Historical Society
P.O. Box 830
Wilson, New York 14172
Editor: A. Diane Muscoreil
dmuscoreil@wilsonnewyork.com

NON PROFIT ORG
U. S. POSTAGE PAID

PERMIT NO. 12

RANSOMVILLE, NEW YORK



UPCOMING EVENTS

April 28th ~ “Do You Remember?? Memories of Wilson” ~ Come join us for a round table discussion of memories of the Town and Village in years gone by. 7:00 pm in the Barnum Building

May 26th ~ Memorial Day Fair ~ The 42nd Annual Memorial Day Fair takes place on the Society Grounds 8:00 AM ~ 4:00 PM

August 10th ~ Summer Band Concert with the Sanborn Fire Company Band conducted by Wally Goodman~ 1:30 pm in the Gazebo at the Wilson Historical Society

September 6th & 7th ~ Wilson Lions Garlic Festival at Wilson Historical Society

December 7th ~ Holiday Band Concert with the Sanborn Fire Company Band 1:30 pm at the Barnum Building