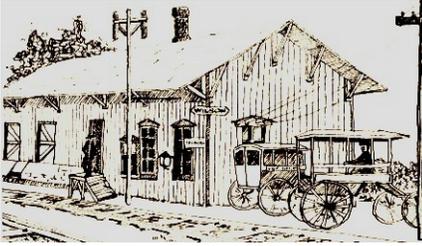


APRIL 2014



Wilson Historical Society

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WILSON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PRESENTS

ABRAHAM LINCOLN



PLEASE JOIN US!

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 9TH

7:00 pm ~ BARNUM BUILDING

645 LAKE STREET, WILSON

FOR

DAVID KREUTZ, RE-ENACTOR AS

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

(POSSIBLY JOINED BY FRIEND GENERAL GRANT!)

REFRESHMENTS WILL BE AVAILABLE

EXCERPTS FROM BOARD OF DIRECTOR MEETINGS**OCTOBER 2014 ~ DECEMBER 2014**

- 30 people were in attendance for The Men of Batter M program by Ed Jackson
- Postal Permit will not be renewed
- Society is looking for male mannequins to use for display of men's clothing in the Depot
- Fundraising ideas for the Town of Wilson Centennial were discussed.
- The 1904 Covert is running!!
- The Depot painting project is finished, with thanks to the work release men.
- The mower needs to be serviced for the winter, and a new mower should be considered.
- There was a discussion on membership notification. Possible ideas are to indicate renewal dates on the address labels of the newsletter. Also suggested was using PayPal for payments.
- John Sinclair discussed the mildew on all the walls in the Barnum Building and there was a discussion on how best to remove it.
- Bob Cramer had several items: He brought a list of directions for the care of all buildings; He questioned whether Board members and officers should be allowed to participate in future raffles.; Julia Godfrey deserves a heartfelt thanks for her generous donations of the cost of materials for the quilt; next year we should coordinate with the Baptist Church for the Christmas Concert to be on their Very County Christmas schedule
- Francis Gallagher announced the speaker for the February 9th meeting will be David Kreutz, an Abraham Lincoln reenactor, who may bring his friend General Grant along!
- John Sinclair spoke to the local boy scouts about the History of Wilson, and they have offered to help the Society when needed.
- Fair meeting will begin next month.



Fashion Passes, Style Remains



OUR ANNUAL CHRISTMAS CONCERT WITH THE SANBORN BAND WAS A BIG HIT IN DECEMBER, WITH WALLY GOODMAN AGAIN LEADING THE GROUP AND A GOOD CROWD ON HAND!

AND THE LUCKY WINNER IS WANDA BURROWS! THE DRAWING FOR THE KALEIDOSCOPE QUILT FOLLOWED THE BAND CONCERT AND WANDA WAS THE LUCKY WINNER. OTHER PRIZES WERE ALSO AWARDED



SUPERVISOR JOE JASTRZEMSKI HONORED OUR HISTORICAN, FRANCIS GALLAGHER, FOR ALL OF HIS WORK RESEARCHING AND RECORDING THE HISTORY OF OUR TOWN. WELL DESERVED FRANCIS!

A WINTRY LOOK AT THE MUSEUM.



Did You Know?

Wilson was the boyhood home of one of the twentieth century's most influential people whose face once appeared on the cover of a well-known news magazine. Most of you have driven by a large blue barn located at 425 Lake Street and noticed the name Tugwell Place painted on the side. From 1904 until 1911, Rexford G Tugwell lived there. Many of the younger readers might now be saying to yourself "I've never heard of him, How important and influential could he have been?" The answer is very much so, for some of the economic influences of Tugwell's ideas and programs are still part of the nation's fabric today.

Rexford Tugwell was an Ivy League educated economist who was not afraid to experiment on a large scale. He was also a member of Franklin Roosevelt's Brain Trust, which consisted of a small group of Columbia professors handpicked by Roosevelt in 1932 and charged with coming up with the ideas and reforms that would come to be known as The New Deal.

Tugwell's autobiography, *The Light of Other Days* encompasses his life until about age 20. This account sheds some light on why and how Tugwell came to hold the beliefs and values associated with the New Deal programs he helped plan and implement. In addition, for anyone wondering what everyday life was like in Western New York's small villages and cities like Buffalo a little over 100 years ago, Tugwell paints a very clear and fascinating picture, especially if one is familiar with the area. For example, it was a period of great technological transition. Tugwell describes how people in Wilson primarily got around by horse and buggy or train. Cars were becoming more numerous but were rather undependable and the roads were not yet paved. This precluded travel in the spring and fall mud season. Trains had surpassed boats as the most efficient way to transport goods to and from market, and the days of making a living fishing out of Wilson Harbor had all but vanished. Fisherman partially compensated by ferrying passengers back and forth between Wilson, Olcott and Youngstown in good weather. This great transition was perfectly suited for Rexford Tugwell and those like him who would come of age during a time of crisis that would call for experimentation and new methods for solving the worst economic disaster the nation had ever encountered.

Tugwell's accomplishments, appointments and the people he associated with over his lifetime that he could call friends are impressive by anyone's standards. Upon graduating from The Wharton School of Business in Pennsylvania with B.A. , M.A. and PHD degrees in economics, he taught at the University of Washington, American University in Paris, and eventually on to Columbia University. At some point during his early academic career Tugwell developed a deeply held belief that government economic planning could reduce the wastefulness of capitalism. He felt so strongly about it that he thought the Constitution needed to be amended to better enable economic planning. He wrote extensively on the subject, and it captured the attention of Franklin Roosevelt as he was preparing to run for president.

When Tugwell was invited to join FDR's team of advisors known as the Brain Trust, it was because Roosevelt wanted input from all political viewpoints. The Braintrust was comprised of intellectuals on both the right and left. Partly because of his upbringing, which will be discussed later, Tugwell leaned left and had more empathy for the common man than most of his peers. Suffice it to say, Tugwell was not merely an academic without practical experience of how the real world functioned when he became a member of the Brain Trust. This made him different than some of his colleagues who came from much wealthier and genteel backgrounds.

In 1933, Tugwell was appointed as Assistant Secretary and later in 1934 to Undersecretary of the United States Department of Agriculture. No longer an advisor, he helped create the AAA or Agricultural Adjustment Administration and served as its director. One of the AAA's first ideas was called the Agricultural Adjustment Act. It was a program which paid farmers to not plant crops. This reduced supply and kept prices from falling which had been the root cause of much rural poverty in the years after WWI. Tugwell may have gotten further inspiration for this idea after witnessing the volatile price fluctuations of the fruit crops in Niagara County and the economic devastation it caused to area farmers. With regard to the Agricultural Adjustment Act, it was not meant as a subsidy but as a way to keep prices up. The program was a success. In 1935, the income generated by farms was 50 percent, higher than it was in 1932.

Tugwell was also instrumental in creating the Soil Conservation Service in 1933. Its main function was to educate farmers to the benefits of restricting cultivation, and restoring poor quality land by adopting better agricultural practices. This was timely because it was during the Great Dust Bowl era on the Great Plains. It was also around this time that Tugwell's popularity and influence reached its zenith. On June 26th 1934 he appeared on the cover of *Time Magazine*. The accompanying article centered on his belief that government can and should solve the huge social and economic problems that confront nations. The magazine referred to Tugwell as "Topman of the Brain Trust"

Tugwell also played a key role in the establishment of the 1938 Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, the forerunner of the FDA. Originally written and named after him in 1933 while he was Assistant Secretary of Agriculture. The act was shelved until 1938 when Tugwell was no longer serving in the Roosevelt Administration.

In April of 1935, Tugwell and Roosevelt created the Resettlement Administration or RA, a unit of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration. Its purpose was to create healthy communities for the rural unemployed by relocating them to areas affording better access to urban employment. The most ambitious part of the RA's plans was the creation of suburban satellite cities called "Greenbelt" towns. The idea being was the urban poor would then leave the old cities to live in the newly created Greenbelt town. Once the urban slums were vacated, they would be razed and replaced by green space or parks. Three such towns were created in Greenbelt MD, Greendale, WI and Greenhills, Ohio. It was the resettlement program where Tugwell reached the limits of what the country and Congress would allow to be implemented. A lawsuit was file and the resettlement program was ruled unconstitutional and an infringement of state power by the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia. In addition, the RA was named an illegal delegation of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration's power.

Tugwell had long received criticism over the years for his socialist tendencies and had even been called Rex the Red. However, the resettlement program earned him widespread condemnation as a Communist and un-American because of its social planning aspects.

Because of the uproar, he resigned from the Roosevelt administration at the end of 1936. Despite the accusations, Tugwell never was affiliated with the Communist Party and was at all times a loyal American albeit with slightly different ideas/

Tugwell was not out of work long. Almost immediately, he was appointed VP of the American Molasses Co. Later, in 1938, he was appointed the first director of the New York City Planning Commission by New York's reformist mayor, Fiorello LaGuardia.

From 1941 to 1946, Tugwell served as the last Appointed American Governor of Puerto Rico. While in this post, he worked with the legislature to create the Puerto Rico Planning, Urbanization, and Zoning Board in 1942. Tugwell supported Puerto Rican self-government through amendment to the Organic Act in 1948. As he prepared to retire, he was instrumental in getting the first Puerto Rican appointed to governor, Jesus T. Pinero. Tugwell also served as Chancellor of the University of Puerto Rico.

After leaving Puerto Rico, Tugwell returned to teaching at a variety of institutions, including the University of Chicago, where he helped develop their planning program. It was also during this time, immediately after the atomic bombings of Hiroshima & Nagasaki, that Tugwell came to believe global planning was the only sure way to prevent a future nuclear catastrophe. For this reason, from 1945 to 1948, he participated in the Committee to Frame a World Constitution.

To be continued

Francis Gallagher, Wilson Town Historian



Rex G. Tugwell

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UPCOMING EVENTS

February 9th ~ Abraham Lincoln, Up Close and Personal

April 4th ~ Annual Wilson Lions Club Easter Egg Hunt

May 25th ~ 43rd Annual Memorial Day Fair

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