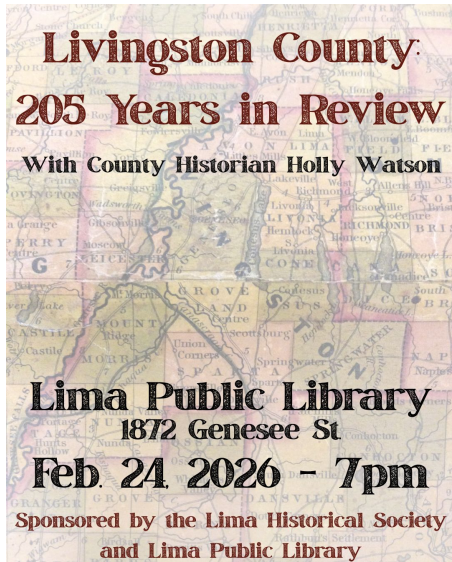


THE YELLOW WASP

Lima Historical Society

February 2026



FEBRUARY LHS MEETING

Livingston County: 205 Years in Review
By Holly Watson

Tuesday, February 24th at 7pm
Lima Public Library
1872 Genesee St. Lima NY

We are looking forward to this slide-illustrated history of Livingston County to be engagingly narrated by Holly Watson, our Livingston County Historian. She highlights the fact that Livingston County is 205 years old this February 2026, and asks what better time to reminisce about how the county fits into our region, how it developed, and what makes it special?

Please join County Historian Holly Watson for an exploration of Livingston County's journey and celebrate why it's a great place to live, work, and play. This presentation is free and open to the public.

St. Rose of Lima Roman Catholic Church

The St. Rose Roman Catholic Church Complex on Lake Avenue in Lima, as we know it today, was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1988. It consists of four structures: the church, the rectory, the school building known as Brendan Hall, and the convent which housed the St. Joseph nuns who taught there. Officially the parish was incorporated in 1868, but its history actually goes back much earlier according to a detailed report by Frances Gotsik (1987).

The earliest Catholics to have settled in Lima arrived from Ireland during the 1830s, apparently from County Tipperary (Thomas Martin, James Eagan, Michael Courneen and John Brennan). These men are said to have travelled to Rochester for Mass until 1842, when they brought a priest by horse and sleigh for the first Mass in Lima at John Brennan's home (*located at today's 1945 Lake Ave*) (Gotsik 1987:1, citing Rev. John Ball's history of the parish).

Others Irish immigrants followed, many escaping the Irish potato famine of 1845-47. They came in hopes of finding land, employment, and a better life for themselves and their families. Many are said to have worked as laborers or domestics on the GWS/Genesee College campus, and as household help and tenant farmers for some of Lima's landowning residents (Gotsik 1987:2, citing Rev. Ball). Although still low in numbers, they formed the St. Rose of Lima parish in 1848 and built a small wood frame church at a cost of \$350 (equal to ca \$14,500 today). Just a few years later, however, as the numbers of Catholics in Lima grew, the parish had a priest in residence, and they had opened the first school. Many of these Irish Catholic families settled into the neighborhood close to their church, in an area known as "Dublin" An 1858 village map indicates the homes of Kinans, Malones, Haggertys, Fahys, Eagans, OHaras, Mooneys, and McMahons in this neighborhood. Nevertheless, the St. Rose parish was not officially (continued on p. 3)



National Register of Historic Places

LHS Calendar of Events

PLEASE CLIP AND SAVE

- Thursday, Feb. 12th 2026 6:30 PM LHS Board of Trustees Meeting by Zoom. Please contact us if you wish to attend.
- Tuesday, Feb. 24th 2026 7:00 PM LHS/Lima Public Library Meeting “Livingston County: 205 Years in Review”
by Holly Watson, Livingston County Historian. Meeting at the Lima Public Library.
- Thursday, April 9th 2026 6:30 PM LHS Board of Trustees Meeting by Zoom. Please contact us if you wish to attend.
- Sunday, May 17th 2026 Time ?? LHS Annual Dinner Meeting at the Lima Presbyterian Church: Dining Room. “Mendon Ponds Park: Fairchild’s Dream” by Diane Ham and Jack Butler. Details to come.

TENNIE BURTON MUSEUM 1850 ROCHESTER ST. LIMA NY 14485 (585-624-1050)

www.limahistorical.org

<https://www.facebook.com/LHSTENNIEBURTON/>

limahistoricalsociety@gmail.com

Many Thanks to Our Members

We are extremely grateful for the generous donations received from many members at the end of this past year. These funds will allow us to undertake some of the collections’ projects envisioned for the coming year, including digital scanning of our very large body of historic photos, thus making them more accessible.

We also appreciate the donation of several good-sized bodies of historic family artifacts and personal documents that were given to the museum throughout 2025. These will add greatly to our Tennie Burton Museum collections and family files. If you wish to help catalog them, contact us.

Holiday Artisan Fundraising Event

Erika Reinhardt and Jim Roggow were very successful in organizing and carrying out a community fundraising event at the Town Hall in late November. The goal was to raise funds by renting tables to various jewelry vendors and raffling lovely baskets for the benefit of several non-profit organizations in town, including the Lima Historical Society. LHS members, Elizabeth Osta and Fran Gotcsik, assisted. The Lima Historical Society was presented with a share of the proceeds. Thank you to all who made this happen.

Are You Interested in Being on the LHS Board of Trustees??

We have several Trustees whose terms are expiring this year and who are retiring from further service to the society. Therefore a Member Nominating Committee has been formed to consider nominees for the LHS Ballot to be voted on by members in April 2026. If you are interested and willing to be included on the ballot, please contact us at: limahistoricalsociety@gmail.com

Trustee terms are three years. See LHS By-Laws on our website: *About Us* for trustee responsibilities. Think about it. We would love to have you.

LHS BARN SALE

Many of you have inquired as to when we would be having our next barn sale. The answer is **this summer—August 6th/7th/8th**. Please save and drop off good, saleable items on Thursday **August 6th** at the Gotcsik’s home at 7364 East Main Street, Lima. Sales Sat.-Sun.

Cleaning the Tennie Burton Museum

We are looking to hire a small cleaning crew to clean the Tennie Burton Museum before we open on Memorial Day. If you, or anyone you know, is interested, please contact us: limahistoricalsociety@gmail.com

PLANK ROAD (Rt. 15A South in Lima)

According to Douglas Morgan, “The Rochester and Hemlock Lake Plank Road Company” constructed the 23 mi. toll road from Rochester to Hemlock Lake in the 1850’s. A section of it in Lima is known as Plank Road; the most southerly toll house on the route to was located just south of St. Rose Church in Lima. The toll house building was refurbished and relocated to the Genesee Country Village and Museum in Mumford in 1975, and may now be seen there. It included a home for the toll keeper and family alongside the covered entryway through which travelers would pass and pay their tolls.

Plank roads were built using huge timbers “sixteen feet long and twelve inches thick” laid vertically in the first course. The next course of three-inch planks of white oak were laid crosswise. No nails were used in construction of the roads; it was merely the weight of the wooden planks that kept everything in place. Tolls were insignificant, but wear from wagon wheels and horses’ hooves meant a great deal of repair and rebuilding at the company’s expense, so plank roads did not last very long here or elsewhere. They were eventually covered by gravel roadways.

References: Morgan, Douglas, “The Story of Lima’s Toll House” *The Lima Recorder*, March 24, 2016.

St. Rose of Lima Roman Catholic Church and School (continued from p.1)

“incorporated” until 1868 as part of the newly-formed diocese of Rochester under Bishop Bernard McQuaid. At that time, the parish had “missions” in Honeoye Falls, Rush, Avon, Livonia, Sibleyville, West Bloomfield, and Conesus.

Interestingly, in 1869, as Genesee College was in the process of removing faculty and students from its Lima campus to Syracuse, Bishop McQuaid discouraged the interest of St. Rose parishioners in building a new church, seemingly because of his own plans to “erect a catholic college” in Lima. Obviously that idea was abandoned for unknown reasons, and in 1870 construction began on the present-day St. Rose church. Of brick construction, it was designed by noted architect, Andrew J. Warner, a friend of Bishop McQuaid, and built by Benjamin Long of Lima. Two unfortunate incidents hampered progress on the building of the church. The front wall of the partially-built church collapsed during construction, and the emerging structure was also struck by lightning while construction was underway. The church was completed in 1872 and dedicated the following year. Construction costs amounted to \$21,000 in 1872 (*equal to nearly \$600,000 today*), and were paid by way of funds raised by the St. Rose congregants, loans on insurance policies, and several donations, including one from Anthony (Tone) Yorks, who is said to have also helped support the building of the Lima Presbyterian Church shortly thereafter (1873/74), a church that was also designed by architect Warner (Gotcsik, personal communication 2026).

As early as 1850, a modest school was opened at St. Rose, but only six years later it was replaced by a frame building that served as many as 80 students who were taught by Catholic lay teachers. The school was apparently moved into the old church building when the new church was completed in 1872 and was then relocated south of the new church. Sisters of St. Joseph came to teach in the school and enrollment increased to 200 students by 1875. A high school curriculum was added to the St. Rose school in 1889—the first high school in the Rochester diocese. The present brick school, located on the corner of Lake Ave (then St Mary’s St.) and Dublin St., was built in 1894 at a cost of \$25,000 (equal to more than \$900,000 today), had three well-lit and well-ventilated classrooms on the first floor and a large open hall on the second.

Discussions with the Rochester Catholic diocesan historian, Rev. Robert McNamara, reflected on a most unusual situation regarding the St. Rose school. As early as 1868, it was integrated with the public school system in Lima, incorporating non-Catholic children, and receiving some of its funding from the Village of Lima, making it a parochial/public entity. Also, at the time, although Lima had an elementary school, it had no public high school until 1918 (Jenks1964:20). Thus, it appears that the St. Rose high school must have served as an attractive local option, rather than a private high school, such as Genesee Wesleyan Seminary, for high school age residents of Lima. In 1894, an amendment to the NYS constitution outlawed the payment of public moneys, such as those being paid by the Village of Lima for St. Rose students, “to schools under denominational influence.” Lima, nevertheless, did not cease to be a public/parochial school until 1903. The parochial elementary school at St Rose continued until the 1960s and the high school until 1946. References: Gotcsik, Frances, 1987: *St. Rose History*, report on file at the Tennie Burton Museum; Jenks, Mabel 1964: Lima 1788-1964).

2026 Lima Historical Society

Lifetime, Honorary and Renewed Annual Members (**Sustaining members)

| | | | |
|--|----------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Skip/Jennifer Adams | Susan and Jurgen Gobien** | Marilyn MacIntyre | John Rutkowski |
| Gretchen/Jim Alday | Fran and George Gotcsik** | Barbara May | |
| Whitney Alexander** | Michael Grills** | Dinah Mayer | Larry Schroeder** |
| Eric and Ginny Baker** | Hugh and Susan Harrington | Wendy Melenbacker | Martha/John Sempowski |
| Sally Bloom/Robert Wiggins** | Marilyn Herke | | Edna Shanks |
| Don and Jennie Brown | Marty Hogan | Vincent Milliken** | Guy Smith family |
| Jane Chatterton | | Robert Minemier | David Spencer |
| Jim and Judien Cooper | Carey Holdsworth | Douglas Morgan | Bill Stremovihgt |
| Randy Dartt** | Greg and Lori Hunt** | John and Sharon Neenan | Charles Thompson |
| Meredith Davenport | Lyle (Eri) Jenks Family | James O’Grady | Nancy Treuthart |
| Robert Deming | Maureen Kingston | Osta/VanArsdale family** | Jenny Tubbs |
| Stephanie Dempsey | John and Kathleen Knop** | Harvey and Donna Palmer ** | Chris Turk |
| Ben Dodzweit** | Steve and Teri Kruk** | Colleen Plimpton** | Mary Jule Welch |
| Louise Dolliver | Jean Lacey | Steve Plavcan | Charmaine Yarka |
| Kent and Linda Fellows | Dennis Lakis | David Redding | Barbara Yorks |
| Richard Garey Sr. | Nick and Anne Lamendola ** | Judy Reinhardt | |
| Marty/Cathy Gardner** | Anita Layfield** | Rose Reynolds | |
| Beverly Garling | Joseph Leary** | Pat Reynolds | |
| Beverly Gillette | Elizabeth Luhowy | Reinhardt/Roggow family | |
| Scott Gillette | Gabriel Luhowy | William Ruth | |
| Honorary: John Bailey, Cindy DePuy, Carol Le Feber Hayes, Lima Historian, Lima Town Board, Lima Public Library, Lima Village Trustees | | | |
| Livingston County Historian, Dan Marcellus, Sandi Shusda, Jerry Warsaw. Please contact us if we have incorrectly left your name off the list above. | | | |

**1850 Rochester St.
P.O. Box 532
Lima NY 14485**



| |
|--|
| Lima Historical Society |
| Officers and Trustees |
| President: Martha Sempowski |
| Vice President: John Serafin |
| Treasurer: Frances Gotsik |
| Recording Secretary: open position |
| Trustees: Elizabeth Osta |
| Dan Marcellus |
| Courtney Rowe -Lenahan |
| Barbara May |
| Erika Reinhardt-Roggow |
| Jim Roggow |
| Marty Hogan |
| Buildings and Grounds: Jim Roggow |
| Membership: Elizabeth Osta |
| Museum: K.Reynolds, F. Gotsik B. May, J. Serafin, M. Sempowski |
| Preservation: Frances Gotsik |
| Technology: Dan Marcellus |
| Yellow Wasp editor: Martha Sempowski |
| Webmaster: Robert Deming |
| www.limahistorical.org |

LHS Membership For 2026

**If you do not see your name in the list inside
Please renew your LHS membership
on our website**

www.limahistorical.org

or notify us if there is an error

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Copy Town Enterprise 7306 E Main St, Lima, NY (585) 624-5074</p> <p>Commercial Printing Services Color Copying copytown4@gmail.com</p> | <p>American Hotel</p> <p><i>At the Crossroads of Western New York</i></p> <p>americanhotelloflima.com</p> |
| <p>Spinelli' s Catering and Event Space, Fairport NY 14450</p> <p>585-430-1186</p> <p>info@spinellichefservices.com</p> | <p>SKYPORT Who's Got Your Data? WWW.SKYPORT-IT.COM</p> |