

THE YELLOW WASP

Lima Historical Society

April 2026



*Ponds Press, 2023 Trade paperback,
ISBN: 9798989065400 (courtesy of the authors)*

ANNUAL LHS DINNER MEETING
Sunday, May 17th
Lima Presbyterian Church

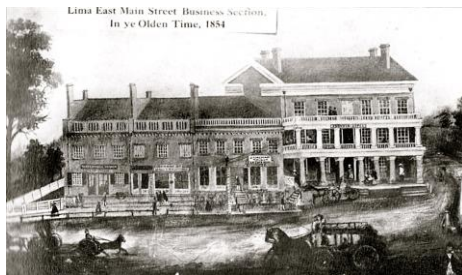
Program at 4PM
Dinner to Follow at 5PM

Mendon Ponds Park: Fairchild's Dream
By Jack Butler and Diane Ham

This beautifully- illustrated presentation, based on their 2023 book, will focus on the history, glacial geology, flora and fauna, former residents, and unusual features of our nearby Mendon Ponds Park. It will reveal several little known 'secrets' to be found within the park's 2,700 acres. The program will begin promptly at 4PM, so please arrive early to find your seat.

A delicious buffet dinner catered by Spinelli's will follow the presentation. The cost is \$30 (all-inclusive) per person. Please see the enclosed reservation form for the dinner, along with the 2026 ballot for election of the LHS Board of Trustees.

Lima Presbyterian Church, 7295 West Main Street, Lima NY.



The American Hotel and the Reynolds Family

There has been a three-story hotel, a landmark, on the four corners in Lima for at least 175 years (see 1854 sketch on postcard above). Sadly, a devastating fire destroyed that building, along with two adjoining ones in 1865, but by 1868 new construction had taken place (see above photo of the hotel taken in 1908 on the right, and another from 1900 in *The Yellow Wasp*, February 2002, www.limahistorical.org for details). There are many unknowns about earlier hotel ownership, but since 1920, it has been owned and operated by the Reynolds family—in fact, four generations of them. John K. Reynolds who came from Ireland to NYC through Ellis Island, purchased the hotel at that time according to his grandson, Patrick. He began offering three meals a day in the restaurant and beverages in the bar. Prohibition (1920 -1933) had “ruled out” the sale of alcohol in the hotel bar, but soft drinks were provided at a soda fountain. With the repeal of prohibition (cont. on page 3)

LHS Calendar of Events

PLEASE CLIP AND SAVE

- Saturday April 25th Noon to 6 PM *Be Well in Lima Volunteer Fair.* Lima Town Hall, LHS will be represented.
- Sunday, May 17th 4 PM Program LHS Annual Dinner Meeting at the Lima Presbyterian Church “Mendon Ponds Park: Fairchild’s Dream” by Diane Ham and Jack Butler. All welcome. Buffet dinner follows. Make reservations by May 8th. See enclosed form.
- 5 PM Dinner
- Saturday, July 4th *LHS Semi-quincentennial Activities:*
 - 1) Create and distribute a driving tour of homes and burial places of Lima’s more than 20 Revolutionary War veterans
 - 2) Open a Revolutionary War exhibit at Tennie Burton Museum
 - 3) Create a float and participate in the 10:00 a.m. Parade
- Friday, July 31st & Saturday, Aug 1st *Lima Crossroads Festival* Join us at our booth on the Presbyterian Church lawn

Help for all activities is always welcome!

www.limahistorical.org

585-624-1050

limahistoricalsociety@gmail.com

Sincere Condolences

The Lima Historical Society extends its deepest sympathies to the family and friends of Beverly Gillette, a Sustaining Life Member of our organization. Many thanks to the family for choosing LHS to receive memorial donations. Bev was post-mistress in Lima for many years—and a friend to all. She will be greatly missed by the entire Lima community.



Be Well in Lima Volunteer Fair Saturday April 25th, Noon–4 pm, Lima Town Hall

The Lima Historical Society will be participating along with other volunteer groups in town. Come and see what various groups have to offer and how you might become more involved with LHS and other community organizations.

Lima Crossroads Festival July 30th–August 2nd

On Friday and Saturday (July 31 and Aug. 1) LHS will have a booth representing our organization on the Presbyterian Church lawn and be welcoming the many festivalgoers who are now attracted to this huge, popular Lima event. Please join us and lend your support.

Antiques Roadshow June 17th Genesee Country Village and Museum, Mumford NY

The LHS has submitted two items from our collections for potential inclusion in this event: a wooden newspaper clipping roller and an inkstand, both of which date to the mid -1800’s. We have not yet heard whether they have been chosen for the show Be sure to check your email for notice if they are to be included. Unfortunately, in-person tickets are not now available.



Lima’s Revolutionary War Veterans

Help Identify all our Veterans. If you know of any others, please email us. limahistoricalsociety@gmail.com

John Barnard, Benjamin Barlow, Austin Brown, Jehiel Bunnell, Jedidiah Cummins, Paul Davison, Jonathan Gould, Adonijah Day, Solomon Hovey, Benjamin Knapp, Col. Thomas Lee, Alexander Martin, Major Abner Morgan, Col. David Morgan, Captain John Morgan, Corporal John Morgan Jr, Zebulon Moses, Ichabod Munger, William Munger, Joseph Potter, Col. George Smith, Joseph Thorp, Jedidiah Watkins, Asahel Warner, William Bristol.

Thoughts on the Artemis II and NASA History

by Martha Sempowski

The recent, successful NASA mission to the moon by Artemis II brought to mind the Apollo 11—the first crewed landing on the lunar surface on July 20, 1969, during which Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin became the first humans to walk on the Moon. Humor me, please, with this photo of my two sons watching that historic moon landing on their grandparents’ television: Ian Sempowski on the left and Greg Sempowski on the right. Grampa John Gosling took the photo.



The American Hotel and the Reynolds Family (continued from page 1)

in 1933, the hotel once again became a successful licensed purveyor of alcohol in Lima—the only one at the time. Due to cuts in public spending during the World War II years, however, meals were reduced to lunches only. Sometime around 1940, Mr. Reynolds hired bartender Jimmy Hendricks who became a longstanding fixture of the American Hotel until his death nearly 50 years later.



In 1946, son John F. Reynolds (“Junior”) and his wife Aretha took over management of the hotel bar and restaurant. They had begun what would become a family of seven children (see photo on left taken in 1953). Thus, in 1942, they had hired Dorothy Magar, a young high school student, to help with the children. Shortly thereafter, Dorothy came to live at the hotel and became a part of the family, staying on with them for nearly 60 years until she retired in 1995; she passed away in 2006.

In 1971, Terry, the youngest of the Reynolds children, came home from college to help his parents run the business; Pat returned from the Navy to assist in 1974. Their father died in 1979 at only 68 years of age. A few years later, in 1983, Rose also came back to help with the cooking at the hotel, and her reputation for a huge and creative variety of home-made soups became a significant draw for the business. Terry left for Fort Lauderdale in 1987 where he worked as a sous-chef in a restaurant until his passing in 2004.



When Aretha Reynolds died in 1992, Pat became the owner of the hotel and ran it with the able assistance and lively wit of his sister Rose (Pat and Rose on the right). According to Rose the business was fortunate in having many loyal employees who worked in the kitchen, as well as the bar and restaurant (view on left) for a decade or more.



In 1987, the American Hotel was listed in the National Register of Historic Places as part of Lima’s Village Historic District. In 2021, the hotel was awarded a Genesee Valley Rural Revitalization Grant for repairs and upgrades to the façade and porches. In 2022, it was named to the New York State Historic Business Registry. (see 2008 photo of the hotel below).

Recently the American Hotel was purchased from Pat by a man originally from Lima, Brendan Flansburg, and his partner Beth McCabe, who is an English professor, and also has restaurant/bar experience (see below). They plan to create historically-decorated rooms tied to major historical literary periods. They are not looking toward major renovations,



however, and expect to be open by the end of this summer. The Lima Historical Society wishes them all well. *References: Livingston County News 4/9/26; The Sentinel 8/7/24; Genesee Valley Pennysaver 5/23/24; Facebook.*





Tennie Burton Museum
1850 Rochester St.
P.O. Box 532
Lima NY 14485

**Lima Historical Society
 Trustees and Officers**

President: Martha Sempowski
Vice President: John Serafin
Treasurer: Frances Gotsik
Secretary: Position Open

Trustees
Marty Hogan
Elizabeth Osta
Dan Marcellus
Barbars May
Courtney Rowe-Lenahan

Committees
Buildings & Grounds: Dan Marcellus
Membership: Elizabeth Osta
Museum: Fran Gotsik, Barb May, Kathie Reynolds, Martha Sempowski, John Serafin
Preservation: Fran Gotsik
Technology: Dan Marcellus
Yellow Wasp Editor: Martha Sempowski
Webmaster: Robert Deming

**Please See Enclosed
 Invitation
 To LHS Annual Dinner Meeting
 &
 LHS 2026 Ballot
 Board of Trustees**

Copy Town Enterprise
 7306 E Main St, Lima, NY
 (585) 624-5074

Commercial Printing Services
 Color Copying
 copytown4@gmail.com

American Hotel

*At the Crossroads of
 Western New York*

americanhotelloflima.com

**Spinelli's Catering and Event
 Space, Fairport NY 14450**

585-430-1186

info@spinellichefservices.com

SKYPORT
 Who's Got Your Data?
 www.skyport-it.com

