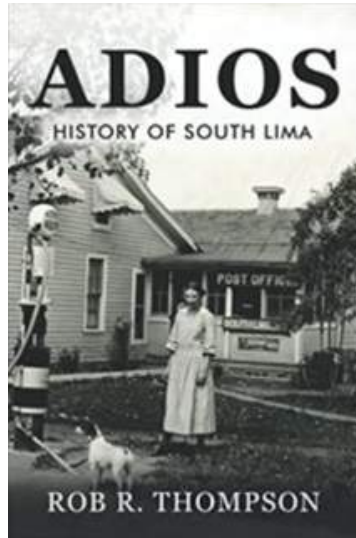


THE YELLOW WASP

Lima Historical Society

February 2022



**Adios: History of South Lima
By Rob Thompson**

**February 19, 2022 11:00 to 2:00
Lima Public Library- Meeting Room
1872 Genesee Street**

**Co-Sponsored by Lima Historical Society
and Friends of Lima Public Library**

The Lima Historical Society is proud to co-sponsor this talk by Rob Thompson on his new book *Adios-History of South Lima*. He will introduce the reader to many unknown facts about South Lima—from the Seneca presence there, to its founding and the mystery of ‘The Bucket of Blood.’ Rob Thompson’s well researched compilation and profound use of rich imagery delivers readers back to a far simpler time when time itself was more unconditional.

Rob Thompson was born and raised in South Lima, working the muck as a kid. His family lived in and owned what was the second South Lima Hotel. He graduated from Livonia High School in 1982. He earned a Master in English Literature from Mercy College, is a member of the Charles Dickens and Janes Austen Societies. He has published twenty books including *Grandma’s Drum* a story of a South Lima Christmas. Rob’s current project is that of the Sullivan Expedition. He and his wife Kendra live in Attica.

Masks will be required

Admission free

Did You Know?

Did you know that Lima was home to an interesting utopian experiment in social and economic communal life during the nineteenth century? Western and central New York State has often been referred to as “the burned over district” due to the religious fervor that swept through the area in the early to mid-nineteenth century, bringing with it religious movements and experiments in idealized communal living (e.g., Shakers. Oneida Community), with the hopes of achieving a better way of life. One such utopian community was established in the hamlet of North Bloomfield located in the far northeast corner of the Town of Lima.

Known as the Bloomfield or Union Association, it was based on the ideas of Charles Fourier (France 1772-1837) who espoused cooperative communities where domestic arrangements, agricultural, and other labor were apportioned to its members, according to their natural strengths (Fourierism). Established in March 1844, the association of 150 individuals is said to have owned 500 acres and a complex of buildings located on the west side of Ideson Rd. in North Bloomfield. The group began to dissolve (ca 1846), apparently due to individual versus association ownership disputes. Later, some buildings were moved to other locations. Photo on right shows property still shown on 1852 Map of Lima as owned by the Association.



*Former Association property on
Ideson Rd*

National Register of Historic Places: Lima Town Multiple Resource Area, Section 8:19, 1989; Miscellaneous Records, liber 1, page 139, Livingston County Court House, Genesee, NY: Noyes, J.H. History of American Socialisms, pp. 296-297, Hillary House, 1961. Wikipedia: list of Fourierist Associations in United States.

LHS Calendar of Events

PLEASE CLIP AND SAVE

- Wednesday, February 9th Board meeting by ZOOM at 7pm. Members welcome to attend. Contact us by email.
- Saturday, February 19th Talk at Lima Public Library 11 to 2pm. *Adios: History of South Lima* By Rob Thompson. Co-sponsored by Lima Public Library and Lima Historical Society.
- May Date TBD LHS Annual Meeting. Details to be announced.
June Date TBD LHS Barn Sale. Details to be announced.

LIMA HISTORICAL SOCIETY 1850 ROCHESTER ST. LIMA NY 14485 (585-624-1050)

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Condolences to the Families of LHS Life Members: Bruce Mayer, Les Morse and Arletta Porazzo



Former LHS Board Member Bruce H. Mayer (1944-2021)

Bruce was a tireless volunteer in the community and found joy in doing it. These included Boy Scouts, Lima Historical Society for many years, Friends of the Lima Public Library, Friends in Service Here and the Lima Golden Agers Club. He served on the Lima Town Board for 28 years, and was Lima's representative to the Livingston County Traffic and Safety Committee.

When Bruce wasn't volunteering, he and his wife Dinah were active in their church and celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in 2017. Or you could find him at work on one of his hobbies like his G-Scale train or the garden pond. Bruce also enjoyed traveling with the Canal Society to various historical canal locations. He worked for Wegman Foods and retired after 25 plus years. He was a Vietnam veteran.

Thanks to Dinah and son Dennis for these thoughts on Bruce.

In Appreciation

Thank you to the many loyal LHS members who contributed so generously to our 2021 Year-End Donation Campaign. These additional resources will help us to achieve the goals set forth last fall for the rehabilitation of the Tennie Burton Museum, as well as the necessary waterline connection, and driveway sealing. They should also help in obtaining needed assistance with artifact and document rehousing within the museum. We are grateful.

Museum Committee Needs Help

The museum committee would truly welcome help on a wide variety of tasks relating to our collections this spring and summer. They include inventorying and/or photographing artifacts and documents, scanning historic photographs, rehousing things in storage, or data entry into our Collections Database. This is a chance to view some of Lima's history up close. Choose something that interests you and contact us by email or website.

Barn Sale

After a hiatus of a couple pandemic years, resulting in an overcrowded museum garage, we are hoping once again to have a Barn sale in early June. Please set aside any gently used and saleable items that you might want to donate to the LHS for resale. Details as to the exact date, locale, and dropoff location, are still under discussion, but we wanted to get everyone thinking about it. Volunteers will also be needed to help at the sale. Please think about that as well.

Lima Mural Update

The *LivCo Walls* project is moving quickly with plans for Lima's downtown mural. Several LHS members took part in the review of and voting on the artists' proposals for Lima. We also hope to be deeply involved in the celebration of the mural opening on July 9, 2022. For more information, please contact Louise Wadsworth, Downtown Coordinator of the Livingston County Development Co., lwadsworth@co.livingston.ny.us.

Rebuilding American Hotel After Disastrous 1865 Fire by Fran Gotcsik

When I recently decided to organize some drawers beneath a bookcase, I had no idea what I had stashed there but felt it was worth a look. The first page I found was a copy from Geneseo's April 14, 1868 *Livingston Republican*. There before me was an article which not only announced the completion of Lima's "new and magnificent Hotel," which would "vie with any House west of New York City," but also revealed some interesting and unknown aspects of Lima's social and architectural history!



1900 Lima, NY Four Corners facing south

Social History: The article noted the intent for the Hotel was "to carry it on as a teetotal House, for the term of five years." Those leasing the property were relying on the "support of a portion of our population styling themselves the 'Hill'." Instead, students were not allowed to board and take rooms thus "cooling the zeal and ardor of would be teetotal proprietors." The article added that the Hotel had "passed into the hand of Col. Jasper Marvin" and likely would not be "dictated and harassed by any sectional clique or party." The article uses the phrase "carry it on" implying that it may have been a teetotal hotel before. What was the nature of the community's relationship with the "Hill" at this time? I presume the student reference was to those of Genesee College, not Genesee Wesleyan Seminary. What is meant by the term "sectional clique or party"? The article also makes an oblique reference to an "uncertainty of affairs. This is understandable as in 1868 the future of Genesee College was in doubt. There was much discussion about the College closing and the faculty moving to Syracuse. In 1868, some community members even sued to stop the move, but Syracuse opened its doors in 1871 with a charter independent of Genesee College.

Architectural History: The article firmly establishes 1868 as the construction date for three Lima buildings, all destroyed by the fire of 1865. The other two commercial buildings were directly adjacent to the east: the present day CopyTown and former Swartz Pharmacy. The former Swartz Pharmacy began as E.D. Salmon, Druggist. CopyTown began as Joseph Chambers' dry goods store with both floors fully devoted to merchandise. As someone who has been captivated by Lima's architecture for almost 50 years, the last sentence of this newly discovered article was the best—a dream come true for me, because it provided the name of the American Hotel's builder and architect. "The new block is an ornament to our village, and reflects great credit upon its builder and architect, Mr. William Harmon, who has done not a little towards beautifying the place, which has gained for itself the appellation of being the "garden and flower-bed of Western New York."

Why is this important? There is very little local newspaper documentation from Lima before the 1920s. Papers were published in Lima since the mid-1800s, but sadly almost no issues survive. Documentation of Lima's history must rely on articles in papers from nearby communities. Also, few buildings had architects or master builders in the mid-nineteenth



William Harmon House Genesee St

century (there was no formal school of architecture until MIT in 1868) and, if they did, they were not always noted. I had known of some examples of Harmon's work and the high regard that he earned throughout the region. When Harmon died in 1866 while working on St. Michael's Church in Geneseo, the *Livingston Republican* described him thusly: "His skill as an architect is unsurpassed, and his own beautiful home bears evidence of his master mechanism. He valued his home and surrounded it with objects of beauty and exhibited extraordinary mechanical ingenuity and indomitable perseverance." Harmon had a major role in Lima's mid-nineteenth century development. He came from England to the U.S. in 1832 and lived in Westchester County, Auburn, and Mt. Morris before arriving in Lima in 1849 to build the imposing Greek Revival College Hall. In 1851, he completed his own home on Genesee Street,

a masterpiece of Gothic Revival architecture known even today throughout the region. In 1855, he built the Lima Baptist Church on East Main Street. Because of the use of similar

exterior or interior design elements, I believe Harmon likely built or remodeled homes on West Main, Harrison, Genesee, Rochester, and Bragg Streets. And because so much of our business district was rebuilt or remodeled during the time Harmon resided in Lima, 1849 to 1866, I had often wondered if he were the architect and builder of the Mason's Building (Harmon was a member of the Masons). However, I never thought about linking him to the Hotel. Happily my discovery in a drawer has confirmed that. Sadly, Harmon's death in 1866 meant he never saw this iconic Lima building complete.

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