

THE YELLOW WASP

Lima Historical Society

February 2025



Demystifying the Livingston County Poorhouse

By Holly Watson

Livingston County Historian

February 20, 2025 7PM

Lima Town Hall 2nd Floor

(Accessible via elevator at west side door)

Co-Sponsored with the Lima Public Library

On Thursday, February 20th at 7 pm, Holly Watson, the Livingston County Historian, will present a compelling talk on the county poorhouse that existed in Geneseo during the early 19th and 20th centuries. Many of you may be familiar with the old building. As Holly will explain, poorhouses often have a complex history, but historical records can help us understand the evolution of care at these institutions, and dignify the poorhouse residents so they are not forgotten.

The Livingston County Poorhouse (later the County Home) provided care to county residents from the 1820s through the 1960s. Over the years, the Poorhouse evolved, along with perspectives about people experiencing loss, poverty, and mental illness. The program will trace these changes and what life in the Poorhouse might have been like, concluding with a discussion on recent preservation initiatives for the former buildings and the remaining Poorhouse cemeteries.

The talk will be presented at the Lima Town Hall at 7 pm. The public is welcome.

Admission is free.

Help with An Unsolved Mystery??

There are two diaries in our museum that were written by an unknown girl or young woman between 1857 and 1860. They were among documents that came to us from Erastus Chapin who was originally from Bloomfield and was in the Civil War. The diaries speak of doing laundry and cleaning the house a great deal, but she seems to have a wide circle of friends whose main source of entertainment is apparently “taking tea with friends.”

She often speaks of visits from Elijah and Sarah who come to Lima along with Delia and visit with Mr. Silas C. Atwell who we know died in 1884 and was buried in the Presbyterian Lima (see links to cemetery listings on page 2). They also go to Mr. P. Clark’s and to the Swick’s. She tells of her mother passing away, at which time Johnathan and Mary were sent for, bringing little Laura with them. Mrs. Wilbur Moses was a big help to her after her mother’s death. Any clues??

LHS Calendar of Events

PLEASE CLIP AND SAVE

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Thursday, February 13th | Hybrid Board meeting by ZOOM and in person at 7pm. Location TBD
Members welcome to attend. Contact us on our website for details. |
| Thursday, February 20th | <i>Demystifying the Livingston County Poorhouse</i> by Holly Watson, Livingston County Historian. Lima Town Hall, 7 pm. Co -sponsored with Lima Public Library. |
| Thursday, March 13th | Hybrid Board meeting by ZOOM and in person at 7pm. Location TBD
Members welcome to attend. Contact us on our website for details. |
| Thursday, April 10th | Hybrid Board meeting by ZOOM and in person at 7pm. Location TBD
Members welcome to attend. Contact us on our website for details. |
| Sunday, May 18th | LHS Annual Dinner Meeting. Location TBD. "Women of the Civil War" Music with Don Dwyer. |

LIMA HISTORICAL SOCIETY 1850 ROCHESTER ST. LIMA NY 14485 (585-624-1050)
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Searching Livingston County Cemeteries

We often get inquiries from the public about ancestors who lived in Lima throughout its nearly 250-year history. Our cemeteries, are, of course a rich source of information about individuals, but it is sometimes it is unwieldy to track down specific individuals by name. We have found the following sources very useful for local cemetery searches:

Livingston County Historian's Records Index

http://www.friendsofcems.org/livingston/default.htm?SQL.asp?CemNumber=8&_2

A New Sign for the Tennie Burton Museum

Sadly, our museum sign in the front yard has fallen into considerable disrepair in recent years. Duane Fuller has done his utmost to keep putting it back together, but we have agreed that the time has come to replace it. A creative committee of Gail Fuller, Kathie Reynolds and Elizabeth Osta were enlisted and are presently hard at work coming up with design ideas, suitable colors, and bids from sign makers for review by other board members and submission to the Village of Lima for approval.

Our thanks to the late Al Lacy who made the existing sign.

Museum Helpers Needed

Not much has been going on in the museum this winter beyond checking for heat and squirrel invasions. Thankfully we are good on both counts. Kudos to all of you who trudged up the driveway in rain, snow and sleet to check on the building.

We are eager to get back to work in April in preparation for the museum opening to the public in May. As always, we need volunteers to help sort, catalogue, and label all the historical items that will be coming in from members and other Lima residents as they normally do each spring.

Please join us if even for a few hours a week. Contact us on the LHS website above.

Interested in Joining the Historical Society Board of Trustees?

We are looking for several members to serve on the Lima Historical Society Board of Trustees. Ballots go out in April and the election will take place in May.

If you would like to join the LHS Board, please contact the Nominating Committee (Courtney Rowe-Lenahan or Erika Reinhardt-Roggow) via our website.

No previous experience is needed, and the best kept secret is that we have a lot of fun at our board meetings!! Great way to become more involved in local history.

BECOME A MEMBER OF THE LIMA HISTORICAL SOCIETY!!

A Letter From An LHS Member

Xmas Eve 2024

Renee and I have a special interest in preserving our history – local, state and national. Sadly, in this fast-paced digital world many younger people seem to be indifferent to the past – even the recent past. It's sobering to realize that at 77, so many commonplace artifacts of our youth are now considered relics of another era: phone booths, vinyl records, 8 track tapes, muscle cars, juke boxes, Kodak film, darkroom printing, prop planes, carbon paper copies, travel by train, hitch hiking, party lines, manual typewriters, library card catalog files. There were no PC's, no AI apps, no internet, no TIK TOK, Facebook, etc...

And yet, here we are. Retired and living in the pleasant Lima/Honeoye Falls area – surrounded by reminders of our communities' long history stretching back hundreds of years! Most of the residential and commercial buildings lining the main streets of both villages are at least 100 years old! One just needs to look around with a fresh set of eyes to see how much the past has shaped our present and how much our rapidly changing present will affect our future just in our lifetime...

I was very interested to hear about the project to scan a large collection of historic photos into the museum's digital database. I have a similar goal/project that I've put off for years – about 55 in fact. In high school and college, I was a photographer for yearbooks and papers. In 1969, upon graduating, I enlisted in the Army with the promise of journalism school. I had dreams of working for the *Stars & Stripes*... Obviously that never happened. Instead, I ended up assigned to the 7th Infantry Division in Korea, just behind the DMZ. To make a long story short, during my 13-month tour overseas I took and developed many rolls of Kodak B&W film and a few hundred color slides of the people and landscape. Most I never got to print but I still have several hundred color slides and 18 rolls of 36 frame negatives each. This is history, albeit a small window on the past, that will be lost unless I digitize and selectively publish the best to share with my nieces and relatives and those few in the public who might be interested. With that goal in mind, I would be very interested in learning more about your photographic process.

Respectfully, Doug Best

TAKEN DEC. 1969 - CAMP CASEY - TONGDACHON, SOUTH KOREA
AGE 22, JUST GRADUATED FROM SUNY FREDONIA LAST
SPRING... OLDER BROTHER IN VIETNAM, YOUNGER
BROTHER ON HEAVY CRUISER IN PACIFIC...



The Warners: Lima Pioneers

After Erika Reinhardt and her team of volunteers did cleanup work at the cemetery located behind the Presbyterian Church, we began searching the names of individuals buried in that cemetery and discovered that there were more than 50 named Warner there, and another 20 Warners in other cemeteries in town (see links on page 2 above for [Livingston County Cemetery Searches](#)).

The first Warners to arrive here in 1794 were Asahel and William Jr., two young men who walked through the wilderness from Connecticut with nothing but the packs on their backs. They purchased land with a log cabin on it in what is today's Town of Lima. After going back home and marrying their sweethearts, they returned in March of 1795 after a 22-day winter journey with their wives, brothers Daniel and Matthew, and father William Sr. Asahel bought up a great deal of land in the area and became very influential in business developments in Lima, as well as serving in the State Assembly (1812-13). Around 1810, he built the brick house on the SE corner of today's West Main St. and Michigan Ave. After the War of 1812 ended and the treaty between England and the US was signed, he hosted a very well-attended "Peace Party" in that home. His brother Matthew also built a large brick home in our present-day village. (See "Lima Walking Tour" under the [History](#) heading on our website www.limahistorical.org) for the locations of these two Warner brothers' homes and a wealth of information about other Lima homes.

(References: Lucille Van Gelder, "Notable People of Lima" 1918; Mabel Jenks, "The Crossroads of Western New York," 1964).

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Poorhouse*

**By Holly Watson
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