

# Warrensburgh Historical Society Quarterly

VOLUME 24 ISSUE 1

SPRING 2019

## THE STORY OF JACOBS & TONEY

By Jack Toney *as related to Paul Gilchrist*

This year, spring's gentle breezes parted the mists of time just long enough for us to look back over a century and view the origins and evolution of the longest-existing family business in Warrensburgh. The Deli and Meat Store of the North has had a few names over its ten decades, but to old timers in Warrensburgh, it will always be known as Jacobs & Toney.

Jimmy Toney disembarked onto Ellis Island at the age of 12 with his father and an older brother in 1911 from the Christian part of Syria [which became Lebanon after World War 1 and the demise of the Turkish Empire]. His father was a farmer who raised olives, oranges, and peanuts.

Many men from the old country came to America to earn money and send it back home to wives, children, and old folks, and then eventually come back themselves. So Jimmy's mother and a brother stayed in Syria. His father, after 3 weeks on Ellis Island, brought the two boys to a relative named Mr. Abbott in South Glens Falls, stayed with them for 6 months, and returned to Syria. Jimmy saw his dad again in 1945 but never saw his

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mother again.

Louie Jacobs and cousins Jimmy and Mike Jacobs, also from Syria, moved to Glens Falls in 1915 and started Jacobs & Co., selling fruit in Warrensburgh procured at the Hovey market near the Glens Falls railroad depot.

Jimmy Toney worked with a Joe Shimas, who ran the Sugar Bowl making candy and ice cream at a site where Burger King is today. Jimmy sold various items from a pushcart. Mr. Abbott found him work in a cement plant in winter. They went up to Warrensburgh by trolley to visit the Jacobs boys, who had been in business 9 months but were not doing so well. Jimmy Toney and Joe Shimas joined Jacobs & Co. based on experience, not money.

It was renamed Adirondack Candy Kitchen around 1922 and made candy and ice cream, sold fruit; and a soda fountain was put in. They did much business from the Music Hall crowds next door. The five of them stayed together for about five years.

The Toney and Jacobs boys attended the Greek Orthodox Church in South Glens Falls (similar to the Christian Church they'd known in Syria).

Joe Shimas went back to Glens Falls and started Boston Candy Kitchen. Jimmy Toney and Louie Jacobs stayed in Warrensburgh as handshake partners - they didn't have a written agreement until 1940. Jimmy Jacobs opened a grocery in North Creek that was later purchased by Louie Jacobs' nephew, Jim Morewood, who had worked five years for Louie and Jimmy.

Mike Jacobs went to Hague, had a fruit and candy store during the summer, and in winter provided produce to Joe in Glens Falls, to Jimmy in North Creek, and to Jacobs & Toney in Warrensburgh.

As Adirondack Candy Kitchen's business  
*Toney (continued on page 7)*

## BEFORE ELECTRICITY IN WARRENSBURGH

By Sandi Parisi, Town Historian

◆ Lighting consisted of kerosene lamps, candles, fireplaces and gas lamps. It would take 100 candles to equal the light of one 60-watt bulb.

◆ You kept your fresh food in "safes" and pantries kept in the coolest place in the house, away from direct sunlight. Ice boxes were used, and the "ice man" delivered it. Smoking, salting and drying food were also good ways to extend the shelf life of produce. Shopping was done more frequently.

◆ You had to cook over an open fire, such as on a metal stovetop or in a fireplace. Ovens for making bread and other baked goods relied on firewood, coal or gas heated stoves.

◆ You heated your home by a fireplace or stove and draping an extra blanket over yourself. Some people had coal furnaces in the basement.

◆ Washboards were used, and later manual washing machines were invented. They used compressed air and suction mechanisms to churn dirty laundry around in the soapy water and removed dirt and stains. The clothes were rinsed in several tubs of clean water to remove the soap, and then hung outside to dry.

◆ People used charcoal clothes irons, or heated an iron on a hot surface, like a wood stove. Later a petrol (gas) iron was invented with an incremental heat control.

◆ Farm chores were done by the shadowed light of lanterns. Farmers had to water and milk their cows by hand. In dry weather they hauled endless buckets from a well.

◆ Christmas trees were lit by using candles

*Parisi (continued on page 6)*

**PRESIDENT'S COLUMN**

**SOCIETY PAGE**

They say absence makes the heart grow fonder, and in the case of my relationship with Warrensburg, that has certainly proven to be true. Born and raised here in the 60's and 70's, I loved my hometown as a child. But I can honestly say that there were many times I *ached* for it in my 37 years away.

I have been back in this area for a little over a year now, and the "old-timer/newcomer" category I fall into has proven to be an interesting one. I have been delighted to find that the mountains, lakes and rivers are all exactly where they are supposed to be and that I can still drive most of the roads blindfolded! But it is also very evident to me that a lot of water has passed under Warrensburg's bridges since my departure in 1980. I've had a great time discovering what's new - the restaurants and shops, the Farmer's Market, and a Garage Sale weekend that completely takes over!

But even more surprising to me has not been what is *new* in Warrensburg, but what was *there all along* that I never knew. One visit to the Museum of Local History and a whole new world opened to me - the world of Warrensburg's amazing past. I must have slept through my local history lessons! I never knew that this was once a town known for horse racing. I had never paid attention to the names of the bridges and the fascinating story behind each one. I wasn't aware of the commitment prominent residents had to education, and the schools that existed long before my alma mater - dear old WCS - was built. And that doesn't even scratch the surface!

Stepping into the role of Historical Society President is a great fit for me as I explore all that I missed. It has been wonderful to work with Society members and Museum volunteers who share a passion for preserving Warrensburg's incredibly rich history. My love and respect for this little town and its people increases daily.

*President (continued on page 3)*

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**BECOME A CONTRIBUTOR**

A friendly call to writers, photographers & local history admirers alike:

Send us copies of Warrensburg artifact photographs and writings of Yesteryear.

Email Paul or Serena

**Board Members**

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**TOWN HISTORIAN** Sandi Parisi  
**MUSEUM DIRECTOR** Steve Parisi

**Please Update Your Email**

If your email has changed, please update the Society at:  
whs7396@yahoo.com

**IN MEMORIAM**  
Marilyn Hayes

**MEMBERSHIP**

**CURRENT: 240**

**UPCOMING EVENTS 2019:**

- ♦ June 16<sup>th</sup> - Warrensburgh Architecture with Delbert Chambers'
- ♦ July 7<sup>th</sup> - Outdoor Recreation
- ♦ August 4<sup>th</sup> - Sticky Wicket
- ♦ September 27<sup>th</sup> - Evening Graveyard Walk
- ♦ September 28<sup>th</sup> - Afternoon Graveyard Walk
- ♦ September 29<sup>th</sup> - Dinner with the Dead @ Lizzie Keays
- ♦ December 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> - Christmas in Warrensburg Weekend

**Warrensburgh Historical Society**

**Website:** www.whs12885.org

**Email:** whs7396@yahoo.com

**BOARD MEETINGS**

The Board of Directors will meet in the Town Historian's Office at 6:30pm on the **FIRST** Wednesday of each month in the Shirt Factory Building at 100 River Street. Email Beth to confirm: whs7396@yahoo.com

**NOTICE**

The recording of history is an interpretive, and ever changing study. Therefore, the Warrensburgh Historical Society, or its Board of Directors, or members shall not be held liable for the accuracy, or authenticity of the material herein.

**MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION**

If you would like to join and receive the Quarterly by mail, please send a check for the amount of the membership classification, with name, address, and phone number to:

**Warrensburgh Historical Society**  
P.O. Box 441,  
Warrensburg, N.Y. 12885

MEMBERSHIP RATES			
Students	\$5.00	Contributing	\$55.00
Individual	\$15.00	Business	\$50.00
Family	\$25.00	Institutional	\$100.00
Senior (62+)	\$10.00	Life (Individual only)	\$300.00
Senior Family	\$18.00		

**We welcome and encourage corrections, comments, and additional information as well as articles from our readers.**

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*President (continued from page 1)*

Thank you for being an appreciator of Warrensburg's past and for supporting the Historical Society. If you are not currently a Society member, please join us! An action-packed year is underway. The Annual Member's Meeting at Lizzie Keays took place in late February, and a visit from kids in the "In the Zone" program was held at the museum in March. The "Artifacts Tea" in April encouraged locals to stump us with historical items and their uses. In May we learned about Warrensburg's beautiful architecture in a talk by Delbert Chambers. Looking ahead to summer we have a new exhibit opening at the museum in July, and our annual Sticky Wicket tournament in August. Both are events you won't want to miss!

Please email me at the Society with any questions or comments. The address is: [whs7396@yahoo.com](mailto:whs7396@yahoo.com). It will be great to hear from you.

Warrensburg's history awaits us all!

*Beth Kinghorn*

## PRESIDENT

### KING DESCENDANTS VISIT WARRENSBURG

BY PAUL GILCHRIST

Many of our readers will remember the big Greek Revival house in the photo that stood where Tops parking lot is today. It was built by Peletiah Richards in 1832 and inherited by his daughter, Minerva King, in 1870. She continued to run it as a farm which included 36 acres of land that went



*The King House, 1950 (aka Gilchrist Manor).  
Photo courtesy of Paul Gilchrist*

from King Street all the way to Hackensack Mountain. When she died in 1895, one of her sons, Fred King, took it over and sold off that acreage as

building lots. When Fred died in 1941, his estate sold the house and three acres to Paul and Helen Gilchrist, who built and operated a motel, cottages, and a rooming house there until 1968. The house burned in the winter of 1976.



*The King Family on the front lawn of their home. The woman in the middle must be Minerva; the man to her right, her father Peletiah, who lived until 1870; and the four young men her sons. Note the Napoleonic hand-in-vest pose of Peletiah. It seems strange the windows are shuttered. Photo p.84 in "Warrensburg New York, 200 years of People, Places and Events."*

It has been at least 50 years since any descendants of the King family have been known to visit Warrensburg. However, two sisters came to town on May 1<sup>st</sup> for a three-day visit to learn all they could about the house and their forebears who lived there. In the photo below are Pat Tomlinson from California and Kathy Kyte from Massachusetts, granddaughters of Fred King. Minerva King was their great-grandmother and Peletiah Richards was their great-great-grandfather.

Sandi and Steve Parisi, Paul Gilchrist, and Liz Sebald were delighted to meet with them for hours and provide a great deal of information from the Museum archives and the Town Historian's office, including photographs of the house and family, and inspection of diaries kept by Fred King and others. It's especially pleasing to be able to supply someone with photos of their ancestors.



*Pat Tomlinson and Kathy Kyte are granddaughters of Fred King.*

## FROM THE MUSEUM

Weather on Wednesday, February 13<sup>th</sup> prevented the Museum from opening.

Thanks to popular reception our 20<sup>th</sup> Century Toys exhibit was extended through March 13<sup>th</sup>. It was also able to accommodate the "In the Zone" group visits on March 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>. The calendar will be filled out with several smaller exhibits until the summer exhibit is installed in June. Most notably our "Recent Acquisitions" display.

Beth Kinghorn continues to dazzle Facebook followers of the Museum, with near daily postings. During February over 9,800 "Post Engagements" occurred, up by 704% from the previous month. New page "Likes" were up 928% since January! The most popular post in February was about Sit'n Bull Ranch, which garnered a lot of reminiscing.

On February 20<sup>th</sup> Harold McKinney, representing RSVP, visited the museum to discuss our involvement with that organization. Quite a few of our Greeters are signed up with them, and provide hundreds of hours of volunteer time.

Respectfully,

*Steve Parisi*

Museum Director



### WARRENSBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY ELECTS PRESIDENT

Beth Kinghorn was recently elected to the presidency of the Board of Directors of the Warrensburg Historical Society. A recent addition to the Board, Beth returned to Warrensburg in early 2018 from Virginia. Born and raised in Warrensburg, she graduated from Warrensburg Central School in 1980, and moved to Richmond, Virginia where she earned a Bachelor's degree from Randolph-Macon College and a Master's degree from the Presbyterian School of Christian Education. While Beth's primary career has been as an educator, she is also a writer, and

*Society (continued on page 6)*

The week of March 14<sup>th</sup>, on Monday and Tuesday we had some very special visitors at the museum! Amy Chambers and 1<sup>st</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> graders in the after school program "In the Zone" searched for items in a museum display 'scavenger hunt'. It was great to see the kids with the history of their town!

We welcome groups of all ages at the museum! Tours can be scheduled on a day and time convenient for you. Please contact Museum Director Steve Parisi at (518) 232-7349 for more information.



## Warrensburg and Queensbury High Schools Student Debate Sponsored by the Warren County Historical Society





**Artifacts Discovery & Social**

Sunday, April 14, 3 PM

**At the Museum—3754 Main Street**  
 Bring a treasured object from home and tell us its history, or challenge our audience to figure out what it is! We'll show you some of ours too.

Savory and Sweet Refreshments

Come early! Museum opens at 1:00 PM (Entrance/parking at rear of building)

**FREE – Public Welcome**

Sponsored by

Warrensburgh Historical Society

L-R: Sandi Parisi displays a pair of Norwegian child's mittens that were Steve's; the item Steve Parisi holds his grandmother's sewing box; Sarah Farrar brought an English tea caddy and cup plate made of blue and white transfer ware circa 1840 - 1860.

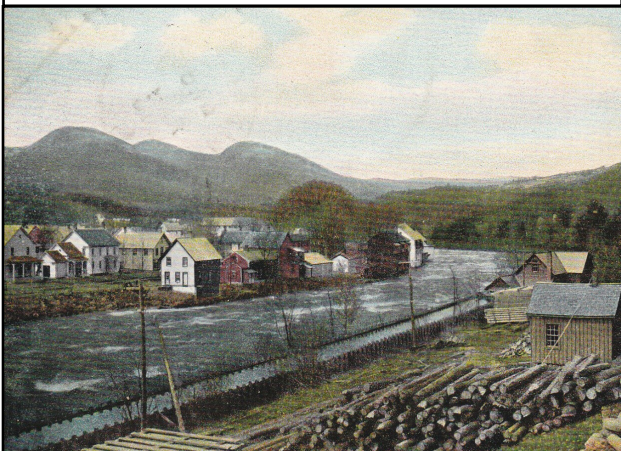


*fire on Main St. W'burg*

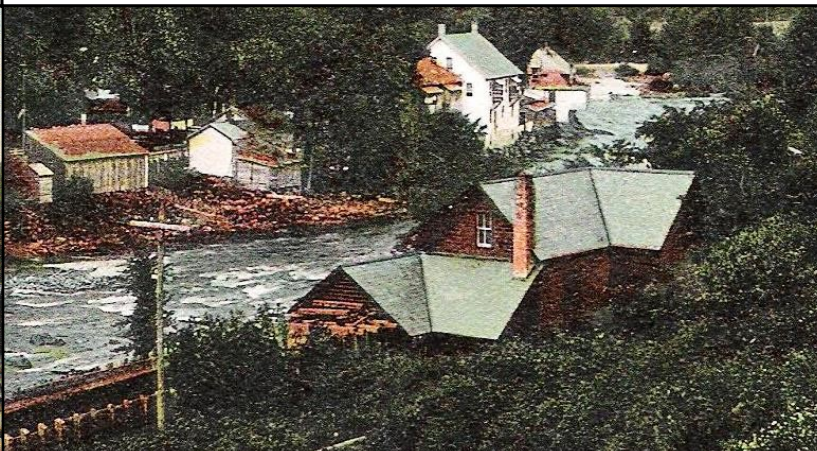
Ruins of the Music Hall after Dec. 1950 fire  
 Warrensburgh Museum of Local History Collection



Adirondack Fruit Store Circa 1957  
 (Photo Courtesy of Jennifer Toney Nadler)



The masthead photo on page 1 shows John Smith's sawmill on the right. Behind the sawmill, the penstock in these two photos carried water from the sawmill dam several hundred feet to John Smith's electricity generator that powered the first street lights in Warrensburgh in 1894. See "Then there was light" on page 6, column 1.



Electric Plant page 44 "Warrensburgh NY 200 Years People, Places & Events" WHS 2013

**PAUL RETIRES AS PRESIDENT**

At the February meeting of the WHS board of directors, Paul advised the board that, while he would like to continue on as a director, he would retire as president at the March board meeting, when officers are elected for the coming year. Paul became president in 2010. He now serves as vice-president and will continue to participate in all Society activities, such as the Quarterly, WCS Enrichment Program, Tannery Park project, and Sticky Wicket.



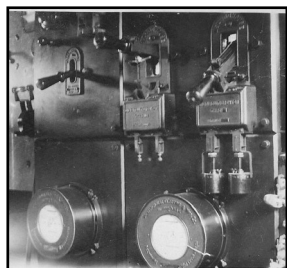
The WHS board of directors present Paul with a certificate of appreciation at the April meeting. L-R: Margaret McMahon, Candice Healy, Liz Sebald, Beth Kinghorn, Paul Gilchrist, Dot Langworthy, Mark Brown, Sandi and Steve Parisi.

*Parisi (continued from page 1)*

mounted on holders that had a dish of thin foil to catch hot wax.

- ♦Entertainment at home was “home made” by either someone playing an instrument, telling or reading stories, playing cards, dancing or board games. Children played outside more often with toys and with their friends. Adults were socially active and were open to attending or hosting gatherings and parties. Social and fraternal organizations were very popular.
- ♦Communication was done in person or through the postal service.
- ♦Sewing was either done by hand, or if you could afford a sewing machine, you pushed your foot down a on pedal underneath the machine, which would pull on a cord attached to a wheel, which would then turn, moving a shaft that made the needle moved up and down.
- ♦Baths were taken in the river or creek, and in winter, water had to be hauled in first and heated either in the fireplace or on the stove and then poured into a washtub on the kitchen floor. Baths were usually taken on Saturday night for church on Sunday.

#### And Then There Was Light



*Smith Electrical Panel*

In 1879 Thomas Edison was finally able to produce a reliable long-lasting electric light bulb in his laboratory, and the by the end of the 1880's, small electrical stations based on Edison's designs were in a number of U.S. cities, but each station was able to power only a few city blocks.

But...

Being an up and coming community, the records of Warrensburgh News, February 23, 1893 state that John G. Smith had secured the lease of property owned by the Burhans Tannery Mill. He hired laborers who converted a building on the property to an Electric Light Station. This site was across the river further downstream from the grist mill and

used the water power from the Schroon River.

It was Mr. Smith's desire to have a well-equipped plant that would furnish incandescent electric lamps at a price within the reach of everyone, not to exceed the cost of burning kerosene lamps. The plant was one of the most thoroughly equipped electric light plants in New York State.

He began setting poles and stringing wires to all sections of Main Street. Most hotels and several merchants and residents were interested. Lamp bulbs would be sold at \$5.00 each to the users.

It was recorded that the current was turned on the evening of January 17, 1894 at 7:30 and brilliantly illuminated the businesses and patrons that had originally signed on. There were about 300 lights that first night and quickly others, who had been waiting to see, signed up. The cost was \$5.00 per lamp per year.

Originally the electricity was only turned on at nighttime. Later on the ladies of the community asked that it be turned on Tuesdays so they could do their ironing.

By 1901 electric light poles were set on Main Street in the Village with 25 candle power lamps and by 1922 plans were in progress to install new lights with ten times more candle power lamps.

By 1930 only 10 percent of Americans who lived in rural areas had electric power. In 1935 Franklin D. Roosevelt created the Rural Electric Administration to bring electricity to rural areas, including much of Thurman.

In 1910 Mr. Smith built his dream home on Hudson Street. There was not a knot or flaw in any of the wood used, the electric light fixtures, heating plant and kitchen facilities were the best that money could buy.

Many of the items listed can be found in Discover Warrensburgh, the Warrensburgh Museum of Local History.



*Smith Electrical Building  
See also two photos on page 5*

*Society (continued from page 3)* is starting a business as a professional organizer. She is the proud mother of two grown sons.



*Beth Kinghorn*

Other officers elected to the Board are: immediate past president Paul Gilchrist as vice president, Margaret McMahon as Secretary and Candice Healy as treasurer. The Board also includes Dorothy Langworthy, Liz Sebald and Mark Brown. Directors are elected for three-year terms. The Town Historian, Sandi Parisi, and Museum Director, Steve Parisi, are permanent non-voting, board members.

The Warrensburgh Historical Society operates the Warrensburgh Museum for the Town of Warrensburgh. It also hosts periodic programs open to the public and conducts an educational outreach to both the elementary and junior/senior high schools. A Graveyard Walk is held in the fall. Membership currently stands at more than 160, both individual and business. Its current principal fundraisers are the Annual Sticky Wicket Croquet Tournament and an annual kayak raffle. The Society can be found at: [www.whs12885.org](http://www.whs12885.org) and on Facebook at both Warrensburgh Historical Society and Warrensburgh Museum of Local History. The museum, located at 3754 Main Street, is open Wednesdays 12:00pm to 4:00 pm and Sundays 1:00pm to 3:00pm. Admission is always free.

progressed, it changed names to Adirondack Fruit Store in 1929 after they began to sell groceries about 1925. Besides the produce from Mike Jacobs, they bought eggs from Earnest Hoover's farm in Thurman and milk from Howard Hull's dairy (where Kit-n-Kin is now). They purchased from other local sources whenever possible.

In the days before the World War II, canned goods were quite rare. Many products came in bulk 50 pound sacks. Jimmy and Louie would scoop flour, sugar, beans, or salt and sell it by the scoop or pound. They switched from ice cream and candy to groceries in the 1930s and 1940s even though the A&P was across the street (recently Marco Polo's) and the Grand Union was next to the Colonial Arms Hotel. Other small stores around town also sold groceries, but all made a living.

An ice house was attached to the store, and ice cut from Echo Lake and Tripp Lake was sold to local people year round to refrigerate their iceboxes. A thick layer of sawdust was put over the ice to preserve it through the summer.

The old Warrensburg High School had one bus kept in a barn behind the store. There was also a barn for extra trolley cars. The northern terminus of the trolley was across the street from where Rite Aid Pharmacy is now.

As the years went on, Adirondack Fruit Store continued to do very well despite all the competition. The two families lived in the two apartments upstairs. Louie had met his wife, Anna, in South Glens Falls at the Greek Orthodox Church. They had three children (Louise, Nick, and Bobbie). Susie Toney came from Ithaca; Jimmy met her at a funeral there. They had two children (Jack and Lorraine). Because they attended the Greek Orthodox Church, many people thought they were Greek; hence, the store was often called Jimmy the Greek's.

Whenever the store got busy, a knock on the radiator pipe would bring family members down to help. This meant lower employee expenses than for the A&P and Grand Union. Louie and Jimmy had one car - didn't need two, because one was always working. Work was typically from 6:00 a.m. until well into the evening. They each took one day off every two weeks.

Louie took a trip back to Lebanon to visit family, but Jimmy never did. However, they both kept the tradition of sending money back to family in the old country until they died. Jimmy Toney died in 1967, Louie in 1974. Anna died in 1989, Susie in 2007.

Louie and Jimmy were members of both Kiwanis and the Masonic Lodge. As small

organizations in early years, membership was like family. Joe Anselmo was another immigrant who found fellowship.

From 1949 to 1954, the Toneys took in male student-teachers in their apartment over the store. One of them was Joe Donovan from Ithaca College. He became the coach at St. Mary's, then went to Providence College in Rhode Island and led it to the level of a powerhouse basketball program. [*Female student-teachers stayed at Gilchrist Manor just down the street - ed.*]

In 1964, Nick Jacobs and Jack took over the business, expanded into the store next door (formerly Sig Wachter's), and renamed it Jacobs & Toney IGA. They were partners for 14 years. Jack took over in 1978 when he bought out Nick. As in past decades, family members supplied the workforce. Jack's wife Laddie and daughters



Jack Toney, Tommy Grace, and Terry Scherer.  
Photo: Jennifer Toney Nadler

Jill and Jennifer put in those long hours that continued to make the business successful. In 2011, Jack turned the store over to Jennifer, who capably took the helm. Jack stays in practice behind the meat counter most mornings.

*Toney (continued on page A of Insert)*

#### STEWART'S ICE CREAM: COMMUNITY GIVING

The Warrensburg Historical Society is pleased to announce that we have once again received \$500.00 through the Stewart's Holiday Match Program. This program is funded by donations from Stewart's customers during the holiday season. These donations are matched by Stewart's Shops. This year the Holiday Match Program raised over 2 million dollars all of which goes directly to local programs and charities.

This grant provides support for our activities and programs that benefit children age 18 and under. We offer an after-school Enrichment Program for fourth graders at WCS which has focused for the last four years on teaching about glacial landforms in Warrensburg, architecture in Warrensburg, and introducing them to the museum through visits and tours.

The Society also offers programs and activities that involve other elementary grades, including involvement with the school's In The Zone after-school activities. We hope to further develop this relationship in the fall and perhaps rekindle our field trips with students from the junior and senior high school science classes.

Please enjoy the photographs of past Enrichment Programs online at:  
[www.stewartsshops.com/community-giving](http://www.stewartsshops.com/community-giving)



Bonus Mystery Photo. If you can identify this building, please email Paul at: [prg12824@yahoo.com](mailto:prg12824@yahoo.com) or leave a voicemail at 518-623-3162.

**MYSTERY PHOTO ANSWER**  
Winter 2018

The house in the Mystery Photo of the last issue still exists as part of the Alexander Funeral Home. It had been the home of fourth grade teacher Gladys Murphy before it was converted into a funeral home. Jack Toney, Linda Bennett, Betsy Remington, Alice Damp and Sue Kerr responded, but no one guessed it correctly. Jack and Betsy did correctly identify the double photo of Chuck Wheeler taken from the 1958 WCS Hackensack Yearbook.



*Mystery Photo – Winter 2018*

**IN MEMORIAM**  
Marilyn Hayes

We mourn the passing of Marilyn Hayes, who served as a member of the Board of Directors of the Society from 2005 through 2010. During that time and until she retired from active participation, she served on Programs, Scholarship, Sticky Wicket and Graveyard Walk committees. She was the "Go To" person to buy tickets for the Graveyard Walks.

Marilyn, who was 84 when she passed, was a world traveler. She had been a registered nurse at Glens Falls Hospital, Fort Hudson Nursing Home and Warrensburg Central School. She also served with Dr. Clinton Ed Lawrence's medical practice in Warrensburg.



*Photo Courtesy of Barbara Whitford*

**WIN TWO**  
*Old Town Kayaks*

(Loon 111/ Red / 11')  
(Heron Jr. / Sunrise Yellow / 7' 6")  
Total Value \$950  
Tickets \$3 each  
2 for \$5 or 5 for \$10



Benefit: Warrensburg Historical Society  
Tickets available at Warrensburgh Museum

**Drawing Sunday**  
October 6th at 2:00pm

(During the World's Largest Garage Sale)



*Serena Stone*

**MYSTERY PHOTO**

This building in Warrensburg still exists. If you can identify it, please email Paul at: [prg12824@yahoo.com](mailto:prg12824@yahoo.com) or leave a voicemail at 518-623-3162. Also see Bonus Mystery Photo on page 7.