

# COUNTRY FAIR WITH LOCAL FARE & PLOWING DAY



Presented by the  
Interlaken Historical Society

Brook Farm  
8228 Route 96, Interlaken

Saturday, September 22, 2012  
10:00 a.m. — 4:00 p.m.

## Welcome

On behalf of the Interlaken Historical Society and the Plowing Day Committee, welcome to the 2012 Country Fair with Local Fare and Plowing Day.

It is the hope of all involved that you will enjoy your day and gain a better understanding of the many ways foods and fibers are locally grown and produced.

Please visit the exhibits, and ask questions. After the event we would invite you to share your thoughts and photographs through our Facebook page, (<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Interlaken-Historical-Society>)

## Schedule

- 10:00 Open
- 11:00 Presentation in the Barn:  
*With the Grain*
- 12:00 Parade of Animals and Tractors
- 1:00 Plowing Demonstrations
- All Day Exhibits and Vendors
  - Kids Games
  - Grape Stomping
  - Food
  - Gift Basket Drawings
- 4:00 Closed

Free Admission — Donations Welcome

## Dedication

The Interlaken Historical Society wishes to dedicate this year's Country Fair with Local Fare and Plowing Day to:

## Wayne Morrison

1932—2012

Printer

Historian

Friend to all

Wayne was a printer and published for 65 years and was the owner and operator of W. E. Morrison & Co. in Ovid. Wayne has left an unparalleled record of local history.

As one person stated:

*Wayne didn't live in the past,  
the past lived in him.*



*L H Owen Elevator Frontenac Point*

## **Exhibitors and Vendors in the Barn**

Harry McCue, Wheelwright  
Lodi Historical Society  
Eber Hubman, Old Time Fiddler  
Duane Waid, Bees, Honey and Candles  
Pins & Needles Sewing Group,  
Contemporary Quilts  
Barbara Stewart & Mary Jean Welser,  
Antique & Contemporary Quilts  
Schaefer Hand Dyed Yarns  
Cornell Agricultural Museum Antique Models –  
Plows, Threshers, etc. Gerry Rehkugler, Pro-  
fessor Emeritus  
Black Sheep Spinners  
Mary Jean Welser & Marty Schlabach,  
Heirloom Apples and Vegetables  
Backbone Ridge History Group,  
1920s Kitchen on the Backbone  
Rich Hoven, Early Post & Beam Construction  
Christine Houseworth, Alpaca Products  
Geneva Historical Society, Agricultural Tile  
Exhibit & Sale of Old Fashioned Games  
Schrader Farm Meat Market  
Interlaken Public Library  
Interlaken Historical Society, Hands-on Antique  
Grain Processing (on first level of the barn)  
Cornell Small Farm Program

### **Exhibitors and Vendors Outdoors**

Daring Drake, Local Produce  
Randy Williams, Simply Maple Syrup  
Connie Pell, Homemade Pies  
Owl Ridge Alpacas, Petting Animals & Products  
Lucas Vineyards, Grape Stomping  
A& S Poultry Farm, Poultry Equipment,  
Organic Eggs, Produce  
Greg Zoller, Blacksmith & Author  
Dave & Rita's Farm Market & Bakers, Breads,  
Fruits, Vegetables, Specialty Desserts  
Matt Frey, Barnyard Animals  
Geneva Historical Society, Old Fashioned  
Children's Games  
Interlaken Volunteer Fire Department  
Searsburg Church, Quilt Raffle and Homemade  
Products  
Vanillen Dairy, Brown Swiss Cow, Calf and  
Cheese  
Wide Awake Bakery, Stefan Senders and Liz  
Brown

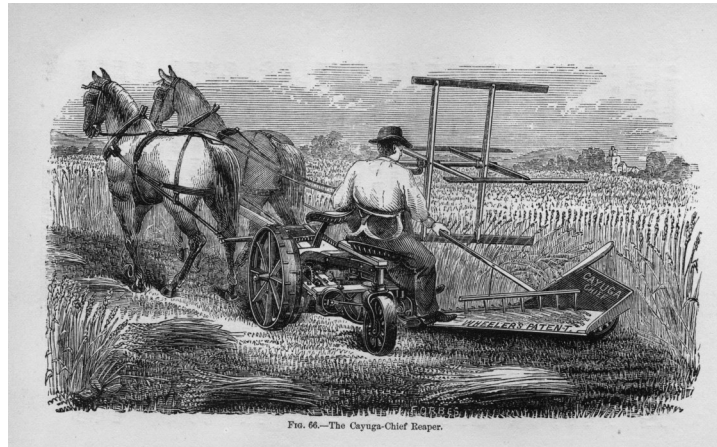
### **Food Vendors**

Interlaken Community Action Group  
Route 96 Diner  
Cayuga Lake Creamery  
Copper Oven at Cayuga Ridge

## With the Grain

The ongoing story of two centuries of grain farming and milling between the lakes - from the earliest European settlers, hand-sowing wheat between the stumps in their clearings, to the recent resurgence of interest in producing and using local flours. We'll look at farms and mills both old and new, historic varieties of grain, and changes and innovations in methods and equipment.

Join Liz Brown who, with her husband, owns the Wide Awake Bakery in Mecklenburg, NY. Working in partnership with Oechsner Farms and Farmer Ground Flour, they make bread, pasta, and pastries with locally grown and milled grains.



*A picture of an 18th century reaper called the Cayuga Chief published in 1870 by S. Edwards Todd in a book called The American Wheat Culturist.*

## **Seneca County Wheat Farming During the Civil War**

Miss Ethel Buckley, my high school history teacher, would often share tidbits of local history. One of these tidbits that has remained with me all these years is that many of the fine houses on Route 414 between Seneca Falls and Fayette were built by the profits that farmers made selling wheat during the years of the Civil War. I would tell students in my United States history courses this same story when we were studying the Civil War period. It is only recently, however, that I have been able to find some real documentation to support what Miss Buckley said. I found this information in reading a 1967 article written by David C. Smith. He based his article on the diaries of Henry K. Dey.

Henry K. Dey operated a 150-acre farm on the eastern shore of Seneca Lake where present-day Sampson State Park is located. Like most area farmers, Dey raised wheat as his basic cash crop. The wheat that was grown was both white (White Flint) and red (Old Red Chief) as well as some Mediterranean strains. All was winter wheat planted in September, with timothy or clover seed sown on the wheat field in April, and the crop harvested in late July.

Although Seneca County wheat farmers were having increasing difficulty competing with the prairie farms of the Great Plains, the Civil War created a great demand for whatever amount of wheat could be produced for market. The *Geneva Courier* carried this editorial:

Farmers—At this crisis in our country's history let not the farmer forget to make ample provisions for food for the thousands now rallying to hold up untarnished

and cause forever to float that Star Spangled Banner—the pride of the world....The farmers should double the amount of ground heretofore used for the various seeds and permit not a foot of soil to become accountless....We entreat every farmer in the town(s) of Seneca and old Ontario to feel that they have an individual responsibility resting upon them.

So, this editorial is an example of how many newspaper editors were pushing the idea that it was farmers' patriotic duty to plant all the wheat acreage that they could.

The increased demand for wheat during the Civil War years is reflected in the selling price of wheat. In 1862, Mr. Dey received about \$1.00 for his wheat. In 1863, he sold his white wheat for \$1.30 and his red wheat for \$1.18. In 1864 the selling price was \$2.00 a bushel, and it was \$2.50 in 1866. His total crop on his 32 acres planted that year was 564 bushels, for an average yield per acre just less than 18 bushels. That average yield was somewhat over the New York State average.

This means there was the wonderful situation in which wheat prices were increasing greatly and farmers were fulfilling a patriotic "duty" to produce as much wheat as they possibly could! It is not surprising at all that farmers would plant wheat on every possible acre of land that could be tilled. This situation—expanded number of acres planted at a time when wheat prices were more than doubling—clearly would lead to great profits being made. This was true for Henry K. Dey, so we can begin to assume it was true for other farmers in mid-Seneca County.



These great profits would logically make it possible for these farmers to then want to have a grander house to reflect their new relative “wealth.”

The information contained in Henry K. Dey’s diaries regarding total wheat production and selling prices for that wheat in the years of the Civil War strongly suggests that the houses along Route 414 were linked to wheat profits during the Civil War years. The most elegant of these houses was the one built by Henry Hoster just east of Route 414 on County Road 121. I remember Miss Buckley said that it cost about \$40,000 to build and furnish this house and the surrounding barns, but I haven’t been able to verify that part of the story yet. The elegance of this house is suggested in these words, quoted from the book *Landmarks of Seneca County*: “...The 1876 History of *Seneca County* has a picture of this elegant house in its original state with grounds that included statues placed at intervals about the lawn. The south façade shows beautiful workmanship in the paired, arched windows and their decorative brick trim....”

I have ascertained that prior to the Civil War the Henry Hoster family was living in a wooden house and that this wooden structure was moved north of his new brick house built after the war.

I hope that this article generates some interest in the work of historians—trying to find the “facts” to prove or disprove an oral tradition. Should anyone have specific information about these houses along Route 414, please contact me.

Walter Gable  
Seneca County Historian

**Donors to the**  
*Made in Covert & Interlaken Baskets*

Americana Vineyards & Winery  
Bellwether Hard Cider  
Cayuga Lake Creamery  
Lively Run Goat Dairy  
Lucas Vineyards  
Pine Tree Farms  
Schaefer Yarn Company  
Sweet Land Farm  
Waid's Honey & Candles

A special thank you to these local businesses who have donated items for the gift baskets. Winners will be drawn randomly throughout the day, and the names announced. All visitors will be invited to register upon arrival. Arrangements will be made to deliver any unclaimed winning baskets within a 25 mile radius of Interlaken.



*Bakery on Main Street,  
Interlaken*

## **Plowing Day Committee**

Donald Betzler

Ann Buddle

John Hunt

Roger Quennell

Bruce Radloff

Barbara Stewart

Marty Schlabach

Allan Buddle

Sally Hubbard

Doris Jennings

Youngiee Quennell

Dick Ross

Harold Stewart

Mary Jean Welser



*Threshing Machine with Steam Engine*

## **Interlaken Historical Society Trustees**

Diane Bassette Nelson

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Mary Jean Welser

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Karen King

Bill Schaffner

Harold Stewart

The Historical Society has two museums, the Farmers' Museum dedicated to things rural and our Community Museum, both with rotating displays. The Museums are open Saturdays in July and August and year-round by appointment. To schedule a visit, please call 607-280-2099 or email: [museum@interlakenhistory.org](mailto:museum@interlakenhistory.org)

**A Special Thank You  
to the following groups and individuals  
who have provided assistance for today's event**

Delavan Foundation  
John Hunt Family  
Persoon Family  
Hip Shot  
Interlaken Volunteer Fire Department  
Lucas Vineyards  
Two Cylinder Club  
Interlaken Community Action Group  
Brewer's Port-A-Johns  
Seneca Sledders Snowmobile Group  
Seneca County Area Shopper  
Willie's Water



*Mill on Mill Creek Lodi NY*