



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Media Contacts:

Gene Bavis, Wayne County Bicentennial Committee, Co-Chair  
Walworth Town Historian, [genebavis71@gmail.com](mailto:genebavis71@gmail.com), 315-573-2768

Rosa Fox, Wayne County Bicentennial Committee, Co-Chair  
Huron Town Historian, [rfox@townofhuron.org](mailto:rfox@townofhuron.org), 315-573-4493

# Wayne County Bicentennial Book of Memories

## *Local Residents Share their Voices*

**Wayne County, NY – January 9, 2023** – It is quite rare and wonderful to celebrate a 200-year anniversary. For Wayne County, this rare and wonderful celebration is taking shape through a variety of plans leading up to April 11, 2023, the date when 200 years ago, New York State recognized the County's formation. To acknowledge and celebrate his milestone, a Bicentennial Committee was formed in April of 2019 to define and execute many activities and projects for this multi-year tribute. One such project completed in December 2022 was the release of a book written by local residents and compiled by a group of volunteers. *Voices of Wayne County: A Bicentennial Commemorative Book* is a 434-page time capsule of life in Wayne County.

A request for submissions was announced in 2021 for anyone in the county to share their personal memories of living and working in Wayne County. Individuals submitted short stories, poetry, photos, and artwork which brought this collective history to life. Memories of life on the farm, experiences in the villages and town centers, memorable family occasions, school functions, work, and play have all added to this nostalgic recollection that only occurs with the passage of time. With 140 submissions and 120 images from over 60 contributors, this book creatively expresses a central theme: There is great historic value in preserving Wayne County memories for present and future generations.

Funding for the printing of 1,500 copies came from a special combination of contributors. The Rochester Area Community Foundation awarded \$5,000 through a NYS Council for the Arts regrant program. Wayne County Historian, Peter Evans, conveyed a total of \$4,930 from two special county funds - the Dan Kane Memorial Fund, honoring the late county administrator, and the Taylor History Award, honoring Mildred Taylor, the first and only woman to represent Wayne County in the NYS Assembly from 1946 to 1960. One of Assemblywoman Taylor's final bequests was for a fund to be invested for future publication of a collection of the best written chapter or chapters, story or stories, on Wayne County History.



“Wayne County is pleased to contribute the remainder of these two funds toward the bicentennial memories book,” states Evans. “Our benefactors, who knew this day would come, would have surely supported this project.” One hundred copies will be presented to local Towns, Libraries, Historical Societies, and Schools. The remaining copies will be sold to the public through local historical societies and various retailers.

The memory book subcommittee chair and creative editor, Amber Linson, pulled together a committee of five residents to review each submission. “It proved to be more than we anticipated since we expected to receive one or two stories from each town. Instead, we received more than fifteen for some towns, stated Linson, who designed the book layout and cover. “I could not have done it without so many wonderful submissions nor without the help of my other committee members. We just hope that people will consider this book a keepsake for many generations.”

Committee co-chairs, Gene Bavis and Rosa Fox are adding this finished project to a growing list of items and activities that have been created or are being planned for 2023. “Life in Wayne County is best understood through the voices of its people,” Fox comments. “Through all the projects and events of the bicentennial, we hope to provide people with opportunities to explore, discover, visit and celebrate all that makes Wayne County historic to the core!”

“Our ideas from three years ago are being solidified into tangible relics by the hard work and dedication of so many sub-committee members,” Bavis said. “And there is so much more to come.” *Voices of Wayne County* may be purchased online through the Wayne County Historical Society. Visit: <https://www.waynehistory.org/product-page/voices-of-wayne-county>. To find other locations the book is being sold and for more information on upcoming events and projects being planned, visit [WayneCounty200.com](http://WayneCounty200.com).

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*About Wayne County's Bicentennial* - On April 11, 1823, by act of the New York State Legislature, Wayne County came into existence. It was the last county to be "set off" from portions of Ontario and Seneca Counties. On April 11, 2023, the Wayne County Bicentennial Committee will kick off a year-long countywide celebration to commemorate its 200th anniversary. Activities will include a birthday Gala on May 13<sup>th</sup>, a 200-mile Torch Relay, County Fair and Family Fun Day in August, and local town events throughout the year. Completed projects include Memory Book, 2-year calendar, Activity Book, information cards, and parade float. Wayne County is composed of 15 towns (Arcadia, Butler, Galen, Huron, Lyons, Macedon, Marion, Ontario, Palmyra, Rose, Savannah, Sodus, Walworth, Williamson, and Wolcott) and seven villages (Clyde, Newark, Palmyra, Sodus, Sodus Point, Red Creek and Wolcott) with nearly 90,000 residents. Please visit [www.waynecounty200.com](http://www.waynecounty200.com) for more details about the Wayne County Bicentennial.