

History Markers — 1981, D&C, "Marks of our history"

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DEMOCRAT AND CHRONICLE, ROCHESTER, N.Y., WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17, 1981

Television 2C
Deaths 15C
Want ads 15-20C
Comics 21C

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Are Americans buying royal wedding? You bet

By CYNTHIA DAGNAL
Chicago Sun-Times

By now, everyone in America — and everywhere else — knows that Prince Charles, future king of England, will wed Lady Diana Spencer on July 29 at St. Paul's Cathedral.

But the question was, until recently, does anyone in America care?

The answer is a resounding, "You bet!" according to U.S. importers and retail outlets, who, deluged with requests for wedding paraphernalia, are rushing to cash in on the multimillion-dollar commemorative bonanza.

Interest in the royal wedding, has, of course, reached manic proportions in Britain. The *London Observer* recently reported that window space along the route to and near St. Paul's Cathedral in London is now selling for about 2,000 pounds, or more than \$4,000. That price tag, ironically, is apparently affordable only to the American press, which seems willing to pay any price to beat out the British and everyone else for coverage.

Stateside memorabilia fanciers meanwhile, are almost as rabid as their press representatives.

Brown, trade promotion spokesman for Chicago's British consulate, has received calls from all over the country, including from one wealthy Anglophile who intends to buy "all the plates and silver items he can get his hands on" for a sumptuous formal wedding day dinner at his mansion.

Lord Piers Anthony Wedgwood, now touring the United States as a sixth-generation representative of the famed, 222-year-old, Wedgwood China Co., has been amazed at America's reaction to the royal wedding.

"All I can say is that we as a company

have been dealing with commemorative items for 200 years, and certainly we have not experienced this kind of demand during this century."

As expected, royal wedding items run the gamut. There's the sublime, like silverware and jewelry from the Crown Jewellers, Garrard and Co. Ltd., and a very exclusive oval-shaped mahogany breakfast table, carved with silhouettes of Charles and Diana, the Royal Crest, and Prince of Wales feathers. And there's the ridiculous, like the jigsaw puzzles, key fobs and iron-on transfers.

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Marks of our history

By BOB MINZESHEIMER
D&C Staff Writer

We passed the roadside marker in Hamlin — named for U.S. Vice President Hannibal Hamlin, it said — and headed north, looking for a trace of local communists.

We passed the Hamlin Car Wash — nothing there — and two miles north on Lake Road, we found it, nearly hidden behind a telephone pole.

A sign said this was the site of "The Clarkson Phalanx," a "2,000-acre Fourieristic community" that lasted from 1844 to 1846. Right here, in what is now peaceful Hamlin, "400 persons conducted an unsuccessful experiment in communal living and agricultural, industrial and social reform."

The sign left it at that; we would have to go to a library to read about Charles Fourier and his ideas for a communistic society.

But the roadside marker had aroused our interest. On a quiet country road, aided by a little imagination, we had come face to face with history. And that would make Shirley Cox Husted happy.

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Clarkson Phalanx marker is in Hamlin; Alexander Milliner lived in Adams Basin and Old Ridge Road is Greece's traffic-clogged Ridge Road today.

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2C ROCHESTER DEMOCRAT AND CHRONICLE
Wednesday, June 17, 1981

Marks of history

From Page 1C

Mrs. Husted is the Monroe County Historian, the protector and booster of roadside historical markers. She contends with frustrated sharpshooters who use the markers for target practice, with snowplow operators and errant motorists who, history or no history, have knocked down markers, and with unabashed collectors who dig up the markers and take them home.

But the markers that remain, she said, can serve a useful purpose.

"We live in such a mobile, rootless society that few people know anything about local history," she said. "But when you find out something significant happened someplace you know, history can come alive."

She soon may get some help. With the cooperation of several hundred local and county historians in Monroe County, the state is conducting an inventory of the roadside historical markers. The last survey, made in 1949, counted 3,000 markers.

"But we really don't know how many have gone up or been lost since then," said Edmund Winslow, an historian in the State Division of Historical and Anthropological Services in Albany. The survey results are to be published next spring.

Monroe County has about 170 historical markers erected by the state, county, towns and villages. Another 30 are missing — victims of vandals or errant motorists.

If you slow down, a marker will tell you that traffic-clogged Ridge Road in Greece was once an Indian trail, "molded by the great glacier." One marks where Alexander Milliner, the drummer boy for George Washington, once lived in Adams Basin, and another tells what routes were used by the French army of Denonville on its way through what is now Perinton to attack the Senecas.

They mark the one-time homes of the famous (Susan B. Anthony) and the forgotten (Frances Willard, the "great Temperance leader" who was born in Churchville, but moved to Ohio two years later).

As county historian, Mrs. Husted deals with people who want a marker in their front yard because they think it may enhance their property value or with others who live in an historical house but don't want anything to do with a sign that announces that fact to the rest of the world.

Consider the fate of the marker the county was set to erect outside the house on Elmwood Avenue in Brighton that was once home to the late Kenneth Keating, the senator and ambassador. Keating gave the house to the University of Rochester, which, as Mrs. Husted said, welcomed

an historical marker.

Before the marker was up, however, the house was sold, and the new owner thought a sign outside "would be an invitation to the world to come knocking on her door," Mrs. Husted said. "The county has a right of way and we could put it up without her permission, but we don't like to operate that way. We're waiting, hoping she changes her mind."

Mrs. Husted also gets requests from people proposing signs on their property to commemorate a link, no matter how faint, to history. For instance, there's a bar in Irondequoit named after the French explorer Denonville that thought a marker would look nice outside.

"But Denonville had gone down the other side of the bay," said Mrs. Husted, ever the historian. "We couldn't put up a marker where he hadn't even been."

Then there's a problem that confronts all historians: What's myth and what's documented history. When the state education department erected several thousand markers between 1927 and 1932 as part of the state's sesquicentennial celebration, it didn't check the accuracy of all the inscriptions.

Mrs. Husted points out a marker in Fairport that is said to be in front of a house built in 1794. Not so, she said.

"The house is clearly Victorian and couldn't have been built until a hundred years later. But try to tell that to the owner of the house."

Winslow, the state historian, acknowledges some markers are in error because they were based on wrong information or because the foundry that made the marker got a date wrong. It's too costly to change the markers, he said, but the guide will note and correct whatever errors are found.

Mrs. Husted faces other problems. In times of budget cuts and rising taxes, history isn't exactly a high priority.

The county historian's \$27,000 annual budget includes \$250 allocated for markers — enough to cover the cost of constructing and erecting one sign, and, as Mrs. Husted says, "We lose more than that each year."

As part of the Bicentennial celebration in 1976, her office got an extra \$5,000 and erected 13 markers, most having to do with people who fought in the American Revolution. But she said the county's signs still slight the contributions of women and blacks.

The problem, she said, is a lack of money. The state stopped putting up roadside markers in 1932 in favor of the larger regional signs found in Thruway rest areas. Monroe County made its largest contribution in 1959 by adding 65 markers. But now with no money allocated to maintain the signs, Mrs. Husted calls upon Boy Scouts and the Army Reserves to paint the signs. As she puts it, "The 401st Regiment came to our rescue."

Talking about the markers reminds her of a story from her childhood in Parma when she was bored by the way history was taught in school — "just memorizing dates and the names of the rich and powerful."

Then someone told her about how a small nearby store once was part of the underground railroad, the route escaped slaves used on their way to freedom in Canada.

"That was something I could relate to," she said, "so I did a report on the underground railroad for school. I've been fascinated by history ever since. Someday I hope to get a sign in front of that store."

Winslow said the survey results will be published next spring by the Heart of the Lakes Publishing Co., a small firm in Interlaken, between Cayuga and Seneca lakes, which specializes in reprinting county histories.

Walter Steesy, president of the firm, said the price of the guide hasn't been set yet, "but whatever it is, it won't be too much. We want to it be widely used."

New York, he said, is one of the few states without such a guide. He recalled how as a child, he and his family used a similar guide to visit the Civil War battlefields of Virginia.

"The signs were all numbered, so we knew exactly what was coming up and where to slow down and what had happened there a hundred years ago."

prime time at a glance

CH	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30
8	Kotter	Real People	Diff'rent Strokes		Facts of Life	Quincy	
10	Family Feud	Movie: <i>Silent Victory: The Kitty O'Neil Story</i>				CBS Reports: <i>In Defense of the U.S.</i>	
13	Joker's Wild	Charlie's Angels		Movie: <i>Telefon</i>			
21	MacNeil/Lehrer	American Odyssey		Fabulous Philadelphia		Masterpiece Documentaries	
31	Baseball: Rochester Red Wings vs. Richmond Braves						To be announced

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Fig. 1. (page 1), and Fig. 2. (this page). These clippings are moderately reduced in size by the same amount relative to each other. Text is readable by zooming in.

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PRODUCTION NOTES

2015.08.12

The clipping was lent to Norm Frisch for scanning
 by Mary E. Smith, Town of Hamlin Historian emerita

2015.08.18

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 CanoScan 9000F Mark II scanner in greyscale mode at 300ppi and saved
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2015.09.16

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GENERAL INFORMATION LINKS

New York State Historic Markers

<http://www.nysm.nysed.gov/services/marker/srvmarkers.html>

Gen web

<http://www.mcnygenealogy.com/pics/index.php?category/83>