

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Media Contacts:**

Christine Worth, Wayne County Tourism Director / Bicentennial Committee Member  
[cworth@co.wayne.ny.us](mailto:cworth@co.wayne.ny.us) 315-946-5469

Deb Hall, Wayne County Planning / Bicentennial Committee Member  
[dhall@co.wayne.ny.us](mailto:dhall@co.wayne.ny.us) 315-946-5919 / 315-576-0415

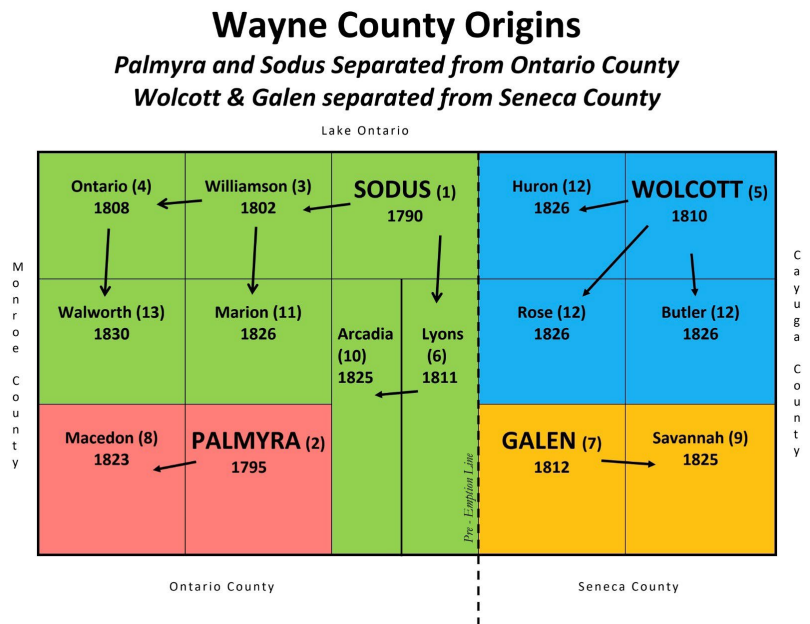
## Bells will Ring for Wayne County’s 200<sup>th</sup> *April 11<sup>th</sup> is “Founders Day” Celebration*

(March 16, 2023) **Lyons, NY** – On April 11, 1823, by an Act of both houses in the New York State legislature, Wayne County was recognized as the 54<sup>th</sup> county in the state. In honor of this event, a commemorative *Founders Day* celebration will take place on Tuesday, April 11<sup>th</sup> starting at 10:50 a.m. with a local bell choir on Church St. in Lyons, the County seat. The ceremony will then commence with the ringing of bells all around the county at 10:58 a.m. which will continue for two minutes, signifying a community’s call to gather. This event is open to the public.

The main event will feature Palmyra American Legion Color Guard, Wayne County Sheriff’s Honor Guard, a rifle salute, musical performances by local students, a commemorative U.S. postal cancellation cachet, and the reading of the official County proclamation. Federal and State dignitaries will also extend official citations and proclamations to County leaders followed by the unveiling and dedication of an historic marker at the steps of the iconic 1854 courthouse.

New York State Canal Corporation Director Brian U. Stratton said, “Wayne County is a bustling agricultural and recreational hub with a rich history that is tied directly to New York’s iconic Erie Canal. For decades, the local farming industry thrived and grew as products were shipped along the canal to bustling ports for the world’s consumption. Today, visitors enjoy access to the canal and adjacent trails through canal side parks in Macedon, Palmyra, Newark, Lyons, and Clyde as they boat, kayak, fish, hike, and cycle. It is an honor to celebrate the growth and longevity of Wayne County with our community partners, and we look forward to the Erie Canal continuing to play a vital role in the development of the area for decades to come.”

Following the celebration, a private lunch reception will be held at the Lyons Community Center (9 Manhattan St.) until 1:30 p.m. when the public is again invited to join in the celebration. The afternoon program at the Community Center will include a special presentation by New York State



Historian, Devin Lander. “I am honored to be asked to take part in Wayne County’s 200<sup>th</sup> birthday,” Lander said. “I grew up in nearby Steuben County and understand the deep and vital history of this part of New York State. Commemorations like these allow us the opportunity to look back at our history to better understand where we have been, where we are, and where we are going.”

The afternoon program will also include a brief dedication of the Wayne County Bicentennial Book, *Voices of Wayne County*, in honor of Larry Ann Evans who passed away in December 2020. She was a prolific historian and writer who was also the Director of the Wayne County Museum and co-chair of the Bicentennial Committee. There will also be more musical performances from local students, displays from all 15 towns and their villages, Bicentennial sponsors’ recognition, and commemorative items for sale including the book, t-shirts, posters, and more.

Newly elected Congresswoman Claudia Tenney (NY-24) sent congratulations on the auspicious occasion. “Being named after General Anthony Wayne, an American Revolutionary War hero and statesman, says a lot,” wrote Tenney. “Wayne County has played such an important role in so many chapters of our nation’s history. It is home to 35 miles the historic Erie Canal which helped accelerate the industrial revolution, as well as home to many stations of the Underground Railroad that helped free thousands of enslaved people. The county continues to contribute to the nation's prosperity by being the top apple-producing county in New York State and among the highest in the nation! To the nearly 91,000 New Yorkers who call this beautiful county home, congratulations on this historic occasion. It is an honor to represent Wayne County in Congress, and I am delighted to recognize and celebrate your bicentennial.”



Local State Senator Pamela Helming commended the county saying, “Since its founding, Wayne County has been synonymous with a history steeped in culture. Beginning with the First People of the Cayuga and Seneca Nations, and evolving into the agricultural center of New York State through the hard work of farmers who made Wayne County the number one producer of apples. Over these past 200 years, Wayne County has also developed into a tourist destination, where visitors flock to the Lake Ontario shoreline and travel to the abundant number of farms and farm markets to taste delicious food and beverages produced locally. I am proud to represent Wayne County in the New York State Senate and I extend my heartiest congratulations on the occasion of their bicentennial.”

U.S. Senator Charles Schumer said, “From apple orchards to the shores of Lake Ontario, Wayne County’s beauty and history have played a unique role in New York State these past 200 years. It is an honor to represent and continuously visit this community, and I’m grateful to have had the opportunity to meet so many devoted and respected community members throughout the years. Congratulations on your bicentennial, and I look forward to seeing Wayne County and its residents thrive for many years to come.”

The morning ceremony will be livestreamed through the Wayne County NY YouTube page [youtube.com/@waynecountyny8419](https://www.youtube.com/@waynecountyny8419). This day will kick off a year-long series of Bicentennial celebrations which include two main events. First, a Birthday Gala on Saturday, May 13 at Carey Lake in Macedon/Walworth, followed by a 5-day, 200-mile Torch Relay around Wayne County in August leading up to Family Fun Day at the Wayne County Fair. Other events and celebrations are being

managed by individual towns and villages, and by the Bicentennial Committee and its co-chairs, Gene Bavis and Rosa Fox.

Wayne County Board of Supervisors appointed committee co-chairs in 2018 to start the planning process. Phil Eygnor, Huron Supervisor and County Chairman, said of the co-chairs, “These two individuals have excelled in their roles to make the Bicentennial something the Board of Supervisors is very proud of. It is my hope the entire community will take some time to participate in one of the many events that are planned for 2023.”

County Administrator Rick House commented, “Having been born and raised in Wayne County, raising my family in Wayne County and working my entire adult life for Wayne County, I am excited and honored to take part in this bicentennial celebration. Wayne County holds so much beauty; from the rolling hills, to the miles of orchards, to the lake views and much more. The mix of agriculture, small business, beautiful county and town parks, all make Wayne County a perfect place to live and raise families. I am proud to share in this celebration of 200 years of Wayne County growth and most importantly, to recognize the people who have lived, worked, played in and built this County.” For more information on the Founding Day Celebration and other Bicentennial events, please visit [www.WayneCounty200.com](http://www.WayneCounty200.com).

###