



Marking Memories

Sherman residents celebrate childhood experience nearly 70 years later

By **THOMAS SCHWENDLER**

editorial@post-journal.com

Louise Scofield Wiggers and Linda Pratt Page will never forget the summer of 1957.

Now, thanks to a new historic marker recently installed outside the Yorker Museum in Sherman, everyone else can enjoy their shared memories too.

What was so memorable? Picking cherries.

"As a 12 year-old, picking cherries was my first work experience," says Linda. "I made \$25 for the season. I remember being scared to be on the tall ladder high in the tree but determined not to give up. We had to fill 8 quart baskets and had a punch card when we turned in a basket to the women who checked them to see if they were sufficiently filled and made to go back if it was unacceptable."

Linda and Louise casually told acquaintance Ron Moore about our first work experience with laughs. But Ron, a history and geography buff who has worked to install two other historic markers in the area (Little America in Stebbins Corners, and Jellyman on Eiden Road in Mayville), took the story seriously as a local piece of history worth commemorating.

"I've always had an interest in local and U.S. history and feel that it is important to learn

and understand what happened before us," said Moore, whose interests also included supporting local farms with a career in the farm credit systems.

Thanks to Moore's financial backing, private donations and support from Sherman Mayor Colleen Meeder and Harmony Historian Pam Brown the marker now resides on Park Street near a Civil War statue at the Yorker Museum.

Linda says she and the other 'kids' found the summer work after reaching out to the mother of a farmer who worked at the local drug store. A truck from northeastern Pennsylvania would pick up the young pickers who worked every day for about three weeks.

"Having a summer job at 12 years of age was a big deal," recounts Louise. "Although all of us complained about the heat and the truck ride, we learned a lot about appreciation and responsibility. The experience of earning my own money that summer was important to me."

While the summer of 1957 was the first and only time spent in an orchard, the picking experience actually helped Linda land a new job the following summer.

"My dad was an insurance agent so I worked for him the next summer picking policies that were up for renewal from the file cabinet," she says.



Linda Page at dedication ceremony at Yorker Museum.



A historical marker is pictured at the Yorker Museum in Sherman.