

History of Bowne Township

In April of 1849 the first officials were elected and Bowne Township was born.

The first elected officers were: Supervisor-Roswell C. Tyler; Clerk-Daniel McVean; Treasurer-Justus G. Beach; Justices of the Peace-Jared Miller, Norman Foster; Assessors-Abijah Poole, John a Campbell; Commissioners of Highways-Loren B. Tyler, James A Truax, Asa R. Tyler; School Inspectors-Jared Miller, William Gibson; Overseers of the Poor-Roswell F. Tyler, John Underwood; Constables-Salmon E. Platt, Henry C. Foster.

Over the last 155 years, the Township evolved from an area of woodlands and plowed fields with a population of approximately 27 to our present times with farms, businesses, and housing developments. With a population of 2,743 (according to the last census) we still remain primarily a farming community. Every home has at least one car and access to highways and freeways which can take you (in minutes or hours) to near and far places that these original 27 could not and most likely did not dream of.

Over these 155 years, the evolution of the township was recorded on paper, in photographs and memories. Today most of these things have disappeared. Papers and photos packed away or lost forever. Memories of events and times have been passed on from father to son and mother to daughter and most have been added to or changed in the passage. Still there are some that have been recorded in diaries and letters and picture albums, newspaper articles are pasted in scrap books. Who dreamed that one day these would be valuable links to our heritage.

In the mid 1980's, the Township moved and restored the Historic Township Hall at Bowne Center. Old records were found deteriorating in the old building; old voting booths were falling down and the building itself was in disrepair.

After moving the building to its present location, an interest in preserving other buildings and historical artifacts began to surface. As a result the Bowne Township Historical Society was formed. In the years since we became an organization we have obtained, moved and restored the former Ladies Aid Hall at Bowne Center. It is now our museum. We have also secured the Bowne Center one-room school at 84th and Alden Nash. This building has also been restored and now house the artifacts and memorabilia from the 8 one-room schools that were located in sections 4,7,12,20,22,24,28,and 29 of Bowne Township.

As the township works to keep our rural look with its pristine farmlands the Historical Society keeps gathering history to preserve our past for the future generations.

The museums are open to the public on the 1st Sunday of each month June through September from 2-4PM and by appointment at other times