

WALTER and DORIS WOLF HOUSE (Site)
Porter / Severn / Story House
WORKSHEET
General Information

Name of Structure: Doris Wolf House
Address: 1229 Birdsey Rd
Property ID: (452400) 12-1-12.112

Atlas: Dist 3, Lot 44
1852: "J Graves?"; 1859: "H Hutchins"; 1874: "E Story" ¹

When Built/Mason: 1830/1840's, unknown mason
Extant: Ruins still standing after fire
Disposition: Fire 1/10/2018

Original Use: Home
Subsequent Use: Home

Pictures: Yes. NRHP pictures (and writeup)

Description:

Structural: 2-story, 5 bay federal style farmhouse faces road; center entrance flanked by two windows on each side with windows centered above lower openings. Gable ends have two windows down with 2 centered above them; tucked in gable were two small single paned windows. All openings have limestone lintels and sills. A limestone water table on front and sides.

Masonry: "Variously colored field cobbles laid on a slight diagonal with simply tooled 'V' joints between stones. Smoothly hewn, untold limestone quoins ... and smooth stone lintels and sills articulate the door and window openings. Fenestration is symmetrical on the main block; all window openings are rectangular ... door is surrounded by ... half side-lights, simple wood panels, and square pilasters." Cobbles are also of various small sizes and shapes, are laid 4/Q on front and sides, with vertical joints pyramided.

¹ National Register of Historic Places —

1229 Birdsey Rd NRHP Paperwork: <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/75314640> "Little is known about the builder of this cobblestone house or the first/early occupants of the property ... Research reveals that a Josiah B. Porter acquired the property on March 7, 1828. In 1842, the property is believed to have been owned by a John Severn. The 1874 Atlas indicates the owner as an "M. Story," about whom nothing is known."

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Resources:

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form provides in-depth detail about this house. Uncharacteristically, it provides little historical information about the property: "Little is known about the builder of this cobblestone house or the first/early occupants of the property."

Historic Tales of Seneca County, New York, By Walter Gable, © 2017, pp 57; 60

https://books.google.com/books?id=-8kmDwAAQBAJ&pg=PA58&lpg=PA58&dq=1229+birdsey+road+cobblestone+house&source=bl&ots=Hui2ml3v_S&sig=ACfU3U03iYKtKQnrsRVAqAMJQJ8Wwe1Jrg&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjB9uv02bL4AhVVGvKFHRnDA3wQ6AF6BAgfEAM#v=onepage&q=1229%20birdsey%20road%20cobblestone%20house&f=false

"A two-story, five-bay cobblestone house (1229 Birdsey Road, town of Junius) was built in the 1830s or 1840s in the Federal style. Built by three different workmen, it perfectly illustrates typical construction methods of the time. The back was done by an apprentice, with large stones set in line that were far from straight. A journeyman then built the sides with smaller stones and straighter courses. The master mason built the front of the house using the smallest stones and presenting the home's most pleasing face to the road. ... The house has walls 24" thick."

In the news media at the time

https://www.fltimes.com/news/firefighters-battle-junius-blaze/article_a630ea79-6b81-55c5-904b-fa0d7ec47589.html

Firefighters battle Junius blaze, Finger Lakes Times, Jan 10, 2018

JUNIUS -- Firefighters from several area departments were called to battle a fully involved fire at 1229 Birdsey Road Wednesday afternoon. The fire reportedly broke out around 3 p.m. at the home of Doris and Walter Wolf. Junius, Magee, Waterloo, Seneca Falls, Border City, Oaks Corners, Canoga, Fayette, Varick, Romulus and Clyde fire departments responded while several others were on standby.

<https://archive.org/details/junius-house-fire-2018-01-10>

Crews from Seneca, Wayne, and Ontario counties descended on a fully-involved structure fire on Birdsey Road in Junius. The fire was reported in a two-story structure at 1229 Birdsey Road that is owned by Walter and Doris Wolf. Doris Wolf serves on over a dozen local non-profit boards and volunteers for a variety of local programs, causes and activities in Waterloo and the

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surrounding area. Junius, Magee, Waterloo, Seneca Falls, Border City, Oaks Corners, Canoga, Fayette and Clyde fire departments were called to the scene. Phelps, Lyons and Geneva fire departments were standing by for those at the scene in Waterloo. As of 5:01 pm on Wednesday evening the area remains blocked off and firefighters continue to work at the scene.

https://www.fltimes.com/news/wolfs-plan-open-house-to-thank-community-after-fire/article_fc444a70-db9c-5fad-b763-8a76b088fe80.html

JUNIUS, 6/16/2022 — When a fire destroyed Doris and Walter Wolf's beloved cobblestone house a little over a year ago, they were overwhelmed by the love and support they received from the community ... the historic Birdsey Road house that was gutted by fire on Jan. 10, 2018. The outer cobblestone walls have been preserved for a future user to build an interior inside ... The Wolfs had lived in the cobblestone house since 1977, raising a family and a host of animals, including sheep ... Doris said she left the house about 2:30 p.m. Wednesday the day of the fire. A neighbor called in the fire at 2:42 p.m. and firefighters from 15 companies battled the raging blaze until 8 p.m. before finally bringing it under control.

The roof and upper two floors had collapsed into the basement. "We lost everything. There was 800 pounds of wool in the attic from when I raised sheep that was smoldering for a long time," Wolf said. The Wolfs were classic keepers of documents, books and other printed materials accumulated over the years. That likely also provided fuel for the fire and were all destroyed. She said there was no way they could salvage their old home ...

As of this writing, the charred walls are still standing.