



TOWN OF ONTARIO
Historical & Landmark
Preservation Society

NEWSLETTER

www.heritagesquaremuseum.org

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1910 photo of Mrs. And Mrs. Avra Turner and daughter Ruth in front of their general store (present -day Sullivan's

History of Transportation in Ontario

By Liz Albright, Ontario Town Historian

In the Ontario of today, with four-lane Route 104 bisecting the town from east to west and cars and trucks traveling through at 55 mph (at least!!), it is hard to imagine the earlier days in Ontario's history when the only way to get around was by foot, on horseback or by boat along the lakeshore.

When Ontario was first settled in 1806, Ridge Road was already a footpath through this area. By 1813 – during the “War of 1812” – this path was improved with bridges and was used as a military road. By 1816, it had become a passable wagon road.

Water travel, however, was used whenever possible in these early days.

Many of Ontario's earliest settlers,

including our first pioneers Freeman and Martha Hopkins, made their home along the shore of Lake Ontario to take advantage of the many benefits of living near a natural waterway. It was much easier and faster to travel by boat than to follow the few trails through the woods on foot.

When the Erie Canal opened in 1825, farmers and merchants were able to transport goods by wagon south to the canal and from there to and from the many cities and towns along its route. This influenced the beginnings of the early stores in Ontario where merchandise that could not be made locally could be shipped in and sold or traded to the early pioneer families.

Travel by stagecoach was another

early form of transportation between cities in the early days. Stagecoach routes were well established by 1825; however, this was neither an economical nor speedy form of travel. An advertisement in the July 1861 edition of "The Ontario News" mentions that the stagecoach trip from the Ontario Hotel to Palmyra by way of Walworth took four hours. And the fare for a trip from Rochester to Ontario was \$1.20 per person, baggage extra.

The coming of the railroad through Ontario in the 1870s opened up a new world to the people of this area. Goods that had previously needed to be first transported by horse and wagon south to the Erie Canal could now be shipped directly to and from Ontario. The railroad was a great benefit to the fruit growing industry as well as the produce industry in Ontario. Apples could now be shipped directly from Ontario, Ontario Center, Fruitland and Union Hill by rail in refrigerated cars. Local muck farmers now had an easy way to get their produce to market as well. At one time the railroad shipped from the Ontario Station the third highest number of railroad cars of celery of any railroad in the United States.

Two passenger trains ran daily in the 1800s and early 1900s enabling people to travel farther and faster than ever before. With the coming of the railroad, came a huge growth in the iron ore industry in Ontario. A large blast furnace was erected in Furnaceville for the manufacture of pig iron. Several spurs off the railroad tapped the mines, and the ore loaded on cars was easily transported to the furnace.

While the train brought much needed business and long-distance transportation to Ontario, the main form of everyday travel throughout the 1800s

and early 1900s was the horse and carriage. Families used the horse and carriage for periodic trips to town for supplies and to visit neighbors. Most churches had carriage houses at the rear of the church for the convenience of their members. And if they could spare the time – and the horse – from farm chores, some parents would take their children by horse and carriage to the Ontario High School on Ridge Road (present day Ontario Elementary School) which was the only one of the fourteen district schools to teach past the eighth grade. For many students living away from town, it would be too far to walk to the high school; and it wasn't until the 1930s that bus transportation was available. Another form of transportation that we don't often think of was the bicycle. While we usually think of a bicycle as a form of transportation and/or fun for a youngster or perhaps as a form of entertainment or exercise for an adult, during the turn of the century the bicycle was an important mode of transportation for adults. It enabled them to take trips to town or to work without hitching up the horse and buggy.

The next major innovation in transportation in the Ontario area was the coming of the trolley. The Rochester to Sodus Bay Electric Railway was officially opened on August 22, 1900. The trolley was greeted with great delight as a convenient means of transportation for business and social activities. The fare was two cents a mile and several cars ran each day. The trolley started at the East Main Street Station taking a scenic and curvy path along a portion of Irondequoit Bay, across the Float Bridge and up what is now Empire Boulevard through Dayton's Corners and on down Ridge Road going right down the center of Main Street in West Webster, Webster, Union Hill, Fruitland, Ontario Cen-

to Ontario. Williams, Scott and Williams are Ontario's History 1807-1993. Gordon is the Royal Blue Line by William V. Pastorian.

By 1929 the trolley had been replaced by the automobile. While many thought that the "horseless carriage" would never last, it is obvious now that beginning with Henry Ford's Model T in 1908, the automobile would change the lives of all Americans forever.

The first car in Ontario was owned by David Craven. But by 1913 there were 65 passenger cars and two commercial vehicles registered in Ontario as well as three automobile dealers.

However, travel in these first cars was not much like the automobile trips of today. There was an active Ontario Automobile Club in the 1930s and one of their outings to Naples in 1935 is described in Ontario's History 1807-1993.

"Early in the morning the cavalcade [68 automobiles] gathered and checked their gear. Tire patching equipment and extra gas were important items. The band went too, and in every town they stopped to play and let the villages know they were being visited by the famous Ontario Automobile Club.

"After going to Rochester, the group headed south toward Naples. The hills were quite an obstacle to some cars. When their gas got low, some cars could make the hills only by turning around and backing up so their last precious gas would flow into

the engine. More flat tires than could be counted were patched. The roads were narrow and when they met a farmer and his team, the farmer had to unhitch and move his wagon off the road so they could pass.

"After a picnic lunch at the fair ground in Naples, the group started home, coming through Canandaigua and Walworth. 'By the time we reached Canandaigua' says one of those early motorists, 'we looked like we'd been picking beans all day. A more disheveled dirty bunch would be hard to find. But what fun we had!'"

Transportation has come a long way in the 200-year history of Ontario. Many residents drive to Rochester and surrounding towns sometimes several times in one day for work, shopping, entertainment and transporting the kids to their activities. Business men and women are able to fly out of Rochester in the morning, attend a meeting in New York City and arrive back in Ontario in time for dinner. School buses transport hundreds of children every day back and forth to school – even those living right next door to the school! Trucks travel back and forth on our Route 104 delivering goods across the country.

With new ideas and inventions appearing daily – such as cars that drive themselves! -- it will be interesting to see what the next 200 years will bring in the area of transportation.



Ridge Road looking east. Building on the left is Wooster Owen's tin shop (present-day town parking lot at the traffic light

President's Message from Vera Graves

2017!! Where did year 2016 go? The time just seems to fly by. The Board of Directors has been busy making plans for the 2017 season from the barn sale in May to closing weekend in October. You will find references to future plans in other parts of this newsletter as well as on Facebook and our web page (www.heritagesquaremuseum.org.)

GRANT - I'm happy to report that the Society was awarded a grant in the amount of \$2,000 from the Augustus and Jennie Hoffman Foundation to purchase and install a portable, hanging propane heater in the barn. The heater will be a tremendous help in making the barn more usable in April when Ann Welker and her helpers are preparing for the barn sale. Anyone who has assisted in the barn sale preparation knows how cold it can be when dishes are being washed and boxes unpacked in April. The heater will also come in handy in October for those school tours and events that are scheduled when the days are getting cooler.

MEMBERSHIP - Membership renewal letters will be mailed the first part of April. The focus of the drive this year will again be on the new roof for the Crombe Exhibit Barn. Our goal is to try and raise almost the entire amount (approx. \$12,000) before the new roof is installed. To date we have raised \$6,177.50 and with everyone's help we should be able to make our target. When you receive your letter and application, please return the application and your check promptly to alleviate the necessity and expense of follow-up letters.

Also, we have received four new members: Paul and Carolyn Pfrommer, and Dale and Kim Wilson, all of Ontario, NY. We hope to see them at our meetings and look forward to working with them on events.

ENDOWMENT FUND – Our endowment fund continues to grow with a grateful thank you to Beth Howard for her end of the year donation and George and Shirley Cataldo's donation in memory of Nolan Powell. The list of donors to the endowment fund for the year can be found posted in the Crombe Exhibit Barn.

GUIDE ORIENTATION – Orientation will be held on Saturday, April 29th at 1 pm at the North Ontario United Methodist Church (Brick Church), 7200 Ontario Center Rd. Please, everyone who is interested in guiding plan on attending as there are always new items you need to hear about. Also, signup sheets will be available for school tours, weekend guides, gift shop attendees, and barn sale workers so bring your calendar.

SPRUCE UP HERITAGE SQUARE – The clean-up of Heritage Square is planned for Saturday, May 13th starting at 9 am. Bring your gloves, rakes, dust cloths and join the fun. There are vacuums and glass cleaner in every building and there is a wheel barrow in the shed. (I'll try to have coffee and doughnuts to get you through the morning). If we all pitch in we can have the Square in good shape for opening weekend, June 3rd & 4th.

WANTED

In preparation for this year's 100th anniversary of the United States' entry into World War I, Liz Albright, Ontario Town Historian, is looking for any information on local involvement in the war – either on local soldiers or involvement on the homefront. If anyone has any photos, letters, memorabilia, ephemera, or any stories they would be willing to share with her, please contact Liz at historian@ontariotown.org or 315-524-9127.

Save the Date

Please mark your calendar for the following dates. More information will be forthcoming in future newsletters and on our web page (www.heritagesquaremuseum.org).

April 29th	Guide Orientation
May 13th	Cleanup at Heritage Square
May 17th	Annual Meeting
May 18th-20th	Barn Sale
June 4th	Musical & Ice Cream Social
July 9th	Summer Sunday – Farm Day
July 19th	General Meeting Picnic & Game night
July 22nd & 23r	Re-enactment-American Revolution, 64th Regiment of Foot, Ltd.
August 13th	Summer Sunday – Pioneer Day
August 26th	Trunk Sale/Chicken Barbeque
Sept. 20th	General Meeting
Sept. 23rd	Arts and Craft Sale

Don't Forget the May Barn Sale

Did you get some new dishes for Christmas? Or a great new set of pots and pans? Don't know what to do with the old ones? We'll take them for the Spring Barn Sale. Tired of the same old holiday decorations? Someone else will love them! Bring them to the barn. As long as the weather is decent and the driveway to the barn is plowed, donations can keep coming in. Scheduled drop off dates are Thursday, April 27th , Saturday April 29th, Thursday May 4th , and Saturday May 6th . Call Ann Welker, or email frwelker@aol.com to set up a convenient time to meet at the barn. The sale will be Thursday May 18th, Friday May 19th and Saturday May 20th. Mark your new 2017 calendars now!

Plans Underway for Summer Sundays 2017

The Summer Sunday Committee has set aside Sunday, July 9th and Sunday August 13th for the 2017 Summer Sundays during regular weekend hours 1:30 to 4:00 pm. The theme for July 9th will be Farm Day at the Square. In addition to demonstrations, exhibits, and craft activities, the day will include an old-fashioned Cake Walk where you will have a chance to win a delicious cake.

On August 13th we will have our Fifth Annual Pioneer Family Day and Ice Cream Social. This is a great event for the whole family with demonstrations and interactive activities plus

an opportunity to enjoy the beautiful grounds while eating delicious ice cream.

This year there will be no guided tours on Summer Sunday, but each building will have a host or hostess to welcome guests if there is not a specific activity going on in the building. The hosts or hostesses for these events will not be assigned by our coordinator of guides, but by the Summer Sunday Committee. If you would like to work either of these weekends contact Judy Lynd at jslynd@aol.com for more information.

Musical Trio “Special Blend” and an Ice Cream Social

Please join us on Sunday, June 4th, from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm and listen to a trio from Rochester, NY called “Special Blend”. This band, which includes guitar, bass and drums, has been playing and singing together since 1980. They appear regularly at Horizons at Woodcliff in Fairport, NY and Pomodoro’s in Rochester, NY. Their special style includes Pop, Rock and Roll, Blues, Jazz, R&B and a little Country. So there’s music for

everyone’s listening pleasure.

Ice cream sundaes will be available for purchase. Ice cream donated courtesy of Konstantinou’s Restaurant. Please bring a chair or blanket for your comfort and enjoy the music with your favorite ice cream sundae.

There will be guided tours offered throughout the afternoon from 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm of the nine buildings at the museum (fee will be charged).

Trunk Sale Needs a Chairperson

The date set for the trunk sale is Saturday, August 26th, starting at 10 am. There will be a chicken barbeque, catered by Heintzelman’s Marinade Magic from 11 am to 2 pm and guided tours of the buildings from 1:30 pm to 4 pm. Now our big question is who is willing to step forward and chair this event? The person in charge will be responsible for sending out applica-

tions and collecting fees, assigning and marking slots and organizing the barbeque. There are plenty of people willing to assist in this endeavor but we need someone at the helm. Please volunteer and become that person. Call Vera Graves at 315-524-4731.

Proud Supporters of the Heritage Square Museum and the Town of Ontario Historical Society

We would like to publicly acknowledge and thank the following businesses who have joined in supporting the Society and Heritage Square Museum. Please patronize them whenever possible.

Alfred Pardi, Architect	465 Ontario Dr.	315-524-7651
Concord Insurance Agency	6270 Dean Parkway	585-265-6060
Crown Electric Supply Co.	75 Route 104	585-265-2480
Dennis Dey Plumbing & Heating	7204 North Slocum Rd.	315-524-3646
Dixon & Carr Realty	P. O. Box 7	315-524-5538
Don & Jon Lawn & Tree Service	P. O. Box 5	585-737-9891
Exelon Generation – GINNA	1503 Lake Rd.	585-771-5220
Gilson & Tobin DDS	6200 Slocum Rd.	315-524-7433
Integrity Tool, Inc.	6485 Furnace Rd.	315-524-4409
Joe's Meat Market	6845 North Slocum Rd.	315-524-8252
Konstantinou's Liquor LLC	2024 Route 104	315-524-3015
Konstantinou's Restaurant	2030 Route 104	315-524-8238
Kunzer Electric Inc.	1006 Willits Rd.	315-524-9814
Lakeside Restaurant	6270 Lakeside Rd.	315-524-3092
Lakeside Roofing & Siding Materials Inc.	6296 Lakeside Rd.	315-524-9420
Lyons National Bank	6280 Furnace Rd.	315-524-9661
Mama Lor's Union Hill Café	1891 Ridge Rd.	585-545-4895
Murphy's Funeral & Cremation Chapels, LLC	1961 Ridge Rd.	315-524-4621
Phil's Automotive.	1364 Route 104	315-524-8129
Richard A Leszyk, Attorney	322 Ridge Road	315-524-9113
Secor Hardware	6260 Furnace Rd.	315-524-4052
Sparky's Cans & Bottles	6341 Ontario Center Rd.	315-524-2267
Superior Collision & Powersports	6341 Ontario Center Rd.	315-791-0001
Weller Group, LLC	6206 Slocum Rd.	315-524-8000
Wilberts Lakeside	6333 Lakeside Rd.	315-524-8800
Yesterday's Architectural Salvage & Gift Shop	6372 Knickerbocker Rd.	585-441-1792

In Passing

Our condolences are extended to the family and friends of the following members:

Garry Swingly and his family on the death of his sister, Sally Swingly-Driscoll, on December 23rd.

Arlene Leenhouts and her family on the passing of her husband Norman on January 8th. Norman and Arlene have been members and good friends of the Society since 1980 and Norman before that time. We also wish to extend our condolences to his twin brother Nelson who also has been a life-long member and friend

Nominating Committee Readies for May Election

The Board of Directors this year voted to establish term limits for board members. Therefore, the nominating committee needs to be organized now so that they can recruit new members to the board. The by-laws read "The Nominating Committee shall be appointed by the Board of Directors and shall be comprised of three Society members (at least one of whom shall not be on the Board)". If you would like to serve on the nominating committee, please call Vera Graves at 315-524-4731. When and if, the Nominating Committee contacts you and asks if you would consider being on the Board of Directors, please say yes. We need more people to become involved and becoming a board member is an enjoyable way of doing so.

Board of Directors

President Vera Graves	315-524-4731	jimandverag@rochester.rr.com
Vice-President Ann Welker	315-524-9330	frwelker@aol.com
Secretary Marguerite Manning	585-265-1825	Toothorn39@gmail.com
Treasurer Ed Kushall	315-333-5228	edkushall@juno.com
Trustee Bill Slocum	315-524-4841	gslocum1963@gmail.com
Trustee Jim Coddling	315-524-7837	jcoddling@rochester.rr.com
Trustee Alayna DiSanto	315-589-9884	disantoaa@gmail.com
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