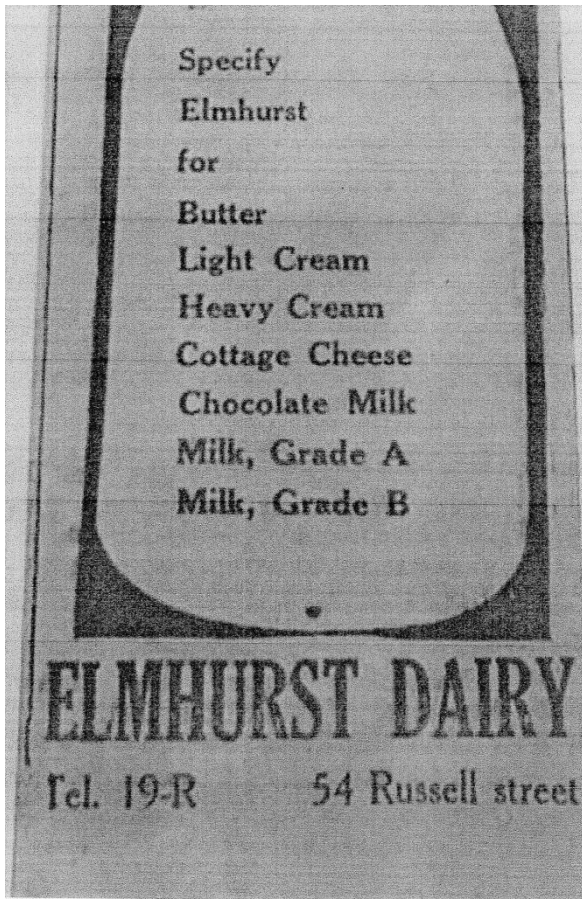


Kanestio Historical Society Times

23 Main St - P.O. Box 35 - Canistota, NY 14823
(607) 698-2086 Wed - Fri 1-3 PM Monthly Meetings - 3rd Tuesday 7:00 PM
www.kanestiohistoricalsociety.com

April 2018 kanestiohs@gmail.com Gail Davis, Editor

Did you know that there was an Elmhurst Dairy Bar at 54 Russell St. in Canistota from 1928 to 1942?



Joyce Venter, who recently sold the house, tells us that when she and husband Steve moved into the house in 1978 there was a room on the back off the kitchen that was all boarded up. It had 3 doors all on the side toward the driveway. The one closest to the barn was much smaller than a normal door. The doors were all frozen shut. Once they gained entrance to the room they discovered the walls and ceiling were lined with 6 inches of cork. This was

the cooler for dairy products. There was a drive-thru window, in what is now the dining room facing the driveway, which ran almost the full length of the room with a pass-through in the middle. The family thought the large front room, 20x24 ft., was where people could sit.

Marilyn Scranton Fish tells us that there was a huge walk-in cooler between the house and barn. The milk was delivered by a horse-drawn vehicle. The horse was named Jack. "We were related to the milkman and once he took me with him on his route, which started very early."

Marilyn's daughter Barb recalls her Mom telling her that before the Elmhurst came to town, she and Aunt Jean (Young) took turns walking from 56 Russell Street all the way up to their old house on the Purdy Creek Road (the Greenfield house just over the bridge) in the mornings before school to get milk. The horse was kept in the barn behind the house but Barb "doesn't know where the cows were."

Notice the telephone number on the ad to the left. Does anyone remember this numbering system? This could be a story for future newsletters.

Thoughts from the Editor

Finding articles for the newsletter is always a challenge. I'm fairly new at the Historical Society. I joined to help with the cleaning and organizing of items after the fire. Although I love antiques and, having grown up on a farm, appreciate the old way of doing things, I never really had much interest in history. One of our major hurdles is finding ways for people to get involved. I have discovered since volunteering that if you just come in, pull a

notebook off a shelf or open an old scrapbook and start reading you'll find something that poses a question and you'll start researching that. Another question will come up and before you know it you're addicted. The content of this newsletter is a perfect example. Joyce Venter mentioned that her house had once been an Elmhurst Dairy Bar. I'd never heard that so started researching. As we dug into the story and discovered there was a cork room to store ice I started to wonder when electricity came to Canisteo. An obituary in The Evening Tribune mention Jerry Freeland had been born in a Birthing Hospital in Canisteo. I'd never heard of birthing hospitals so research began for another story. The telephone number on the Elmhurst ad makes me wonder about telephones in Canisteo and when and why phone numbers changed. Once you start reading and asking questions the possibilities are endless. I encourage everyone to visit the Historical Society and spend some time exploring. If you're just curious about items in our history and are not able to visit us, send me an e-mail or letter and the answer might end up as an article in future newsletters.

Donors and membership: The January issue of the Newsletter was accompanied by a request from lifetime members (especially those who live out of the area and cannot attend our fund raising events) to consider a donation to the Society. The response went way beyond my expectations. On behalf of all the volunteers and members I want to extend a big thank you for your donations. Also a big thank you for all the members who paid their dues during January. We've had an excellent start to the new year.

Members input needed: Some of the other Historical Societies publish the names of members who renew their membership each year and/or make donations. I come from a background where customer privacy was a must and I have resisted doing this. We have had so many generous donations this year I'm starting to rethink that policy. I would ask input from our members on this subject. Would those of you who donate and rejoin annually like to be recognized or do you want to remain anonymous? I would really appreciate feedback on this subject.

Medical Facilities in Canisteo

Did you ever stop to think about where sick people went to be taken care of before our modern hospitals or where babies were born? I just assumed babies were born at home, sometimes with the help of a midwife, and sick people were taken care of at home with visits from doctors who made house calls with horse and buggies or their Model T Fords.

In researching this subject we have found several homes in Canisteo that served the medical needs of the community with a variety of descriptions - hospitals, birthing hospitals, sanatoriums and nursing homes.

The house that started our research on this story belonged to Minnie Whiting at 69 Maple Street in Canisteo (according to the 1925 census.) Most of the newspaper articles found show that Minnie ran a "nursing home" to "nurse" people after illness. She lists herself as a nurse in the census data but she only completed the 8th grade. At this time Bath had a nursing school. In some articles she is referred to as a hospital superintendent. Toni Stevens- Oliver, who did the research on Minnie, sums her up as follows" When you read through the social columns of the Canisteo Times you see this woman was amazing! She raised her kids, nursed the town, traveled back and forth to Jasper to help on the farm when her husband was fixing a house in Canisteo or away, taught Sunday School, did some sort of worship leading and seems to have been in a few other civic organizations. "

Probably the building my generation is most familiar with is The Stewart Hospital on the corner of Main and Elm Street. This was the home and offices of Dr. Leon Roe when I was a child. Most of the articles I've found on the hospital are from 1905-06 so I am assuming this picture was taken about that time. We have not been able to find a date when it stopped operating as a hospital but we know it has been the home of at least six doctors.

It's hard to imagine this beautiful old building when you look at it today.



Foote Nursing Home) and the Genung Friendly Home in Canisteo.

John LaGrande Cotton & wife Emma, a licensed midwife, had a birthing home in Adrian. When a woman was ready to deliver she would stay at the Cotton's home in the birthing room. Emma would go to the women's home to clean and cook for the family and then return to her own home to take care of the new mother and baby.

Electricity in Canisteo

(the following information was taken from the 1973 Canisteo Centennial Book)

I found a couple articles in the 1905 "Canisteo Times" relating serious injuries where the injured were brought to the Stewart Hospital and operated on by Drs. H. P. Jack and O.K Stewart. In one case a prominent farmer got his hand entangled in the cogs of a silage cutter and the doctors, after being summoned from the Hornellsville Hospital by special car, performed "the necessary amputation". The second article tells of a railroad worker who was attempting to jump off a moving passenger train near the table factory, struck against a telephone pole and was thrown back against the track where his arm was run over and cut off below the elbow by the train. The impact against the telephone pole was so forceful that his skull was fractured and his brain exposed. Dr. Jack and Dr. Stewart amputated the arm and removed the particles of bone from the fractured skull. The man lived so one must conclude the facilities and doctors were quite skilled. Dorothy Lee Roe, a descendent of the Stewarts, tells about seeing patients sitting on chairs on the porch recuperating.

There was a birthing hospital on the corner of West Academy and Russell Streets owned by Will June. We know Libby McPherson (1924) and Jean Young (1923) were born there.

Yanni's, later know as Simmons Nursing Home was located at 14 Taylor Street. Yanni's is mentioned in the February 1947 issue of the Canisteo Times.

While researching Canisteo Nursing Homes I came across the Kanestio Valley Nursing Home on East Main St. in Canisteo (possibly went by the name of

Lighting in Canisteo has consisted of every conceivable form of illumination from the torches that lit the camps of the renegade Delaware Indians in the 1600's to the electrical lamps of today.

The regular meeting of the Village Board had to be adjourned on December 5, 1898, because of the lack of gas in the pipes of the meeting hall for light and heat.

The history of the gas and electric lighting of the village is a complicated and, at many times, a confused one.

It all began, or at least a part of it did, on May 12, 1890, when the board called a special meeting at which time a petition was presented by the Central Electric Construction Company requesting permission to erect and maintain a line of poles, over, through, in, or under the streets of the village for the purpose of general distribution of electricity for electric lighting, heat and power purposes in order to furnish service to the citizens and businessmen of the village. At that time, the mayor said he would discuss the matter with the village attorney.

According to the minutes of the June 13th meeting, the following month, the board announced that it was "resolved that we grant a franchise to the Western Electric Company to put in a system of electric lights in the village.

Though the board did not specify the type of lighting involved in this motion, long time

residents of Canisteo state that there were no electric lights in the village at that time. What the board was possibly referring to, and what was probably installed as the result were electrically powered gas lights.

It appears that for the next few months contracts from other companies were entertained, motions withdrawn from ballots, contracts awarded and withdrawn. A contract was ultimately made with Bailey and Davis Corporation for 16 or more arc lights in the amount of \$2000 as long as the lights were to operate 365 days a year. (It is assumed these were the electric powered gas street lights)

The first real electric lights came in 1904. The board gave a franchise to L. D. Whiting, granting him permission to lay, erect, construct and maintain suitable wires or other conductors with the necessary poles, pipes, and other fixtures in the village for the purpose of conducting and distributing electricity for light, heat and power. According to the resolution the work was to be completed by December 5, 1906.

On December 6, 1916 another franchise was granted, this time to Charles A. Larowe, to provide the village with electricity for the next 25 years.

Early Industries

It is believed that Canisteo, or Kanestio Castle as it was known then, was first settled in 1642 by the Seneca Indians. Early records are sketchy and in some dispute but we do believe the description of Kanestio as an "outlaw village, a city of refuge for the lawless of all races, with Indians from many tribes, renegade French, Dutchmen from, the Hudson Valley; Yankees from Connecticut, runaway slaves from Virginia and Maryland and outcasts from most of the coastal colonies" was a pretty accurate description of Kanestio. In 1764, Captain Andrew Montour was sent to destroy the settlement and end the lawlessness. This was reportedly done without resistance by the inhabitants and no more settlements were built until Christmas Day 1789 when Uriah Stephens, with other survivors of the Wyoming Massacre started arriving. In later years, a few Indians often

came to help harvest crops, camping out on settlers' farms, where once they had called the valley their own, they were now tolerated trespassers.

The main concern of the early settlers was building their homes and clearing land for crops. The by-product of clearing the land was the timber and lumbering became the major industry with lumber being floated down the Canisteo River by rafts.

Canisteo remained a small rural hamlet even after the Erie Railroad came through the valley in 1851. In 1868 we begin to see the transformation of Canisteo into a booming industrial region, when Lawrence Allison established the Allison Boot and Shoe Company. By 1884 this firm employed 120 and made about 500 pair of shoes a day. During the same year a planing mill, sash, door and blind factory was opened. By 1890 they employed about 100 men.

In 1873 a company began to manufacture agricultural instruments but soon converted to a machine shop and boiler works adding the manufacture of steam engines, making a specialty of engines, reversible plows, horseshoes, cultivators, potato diggers, land rollers, iron kettles, sleigh and wagon shoes, post mauls, hay racks, root cutters, stump machines, pulleys, hangers and shafting. Ten men were employed in 1890. There were two tanneries in Canisteo. One tannery employed 25 men tanning 50,000 hides a year in 1890.

The first grist mill at Canisteo Center was built by Colonel Bill Stephens on the river banks. We know it was sold in 1882, became Carson Roller Mill and burned in 1914.

There was a chair factory and bent-wood works with sales amounting to one million dollars in 1878. Flohr's Custom and Merchant Mills, Main Street was run by both steam and water power with five runs of stone and a buckwheat machine in 1890. About 1882 Stephens Brothers built the Canisteo Spoke Works on Railroad Street near Sixth Street.

The Thomas Spring and Gear Company was started April 2, 1908 in the building formerly occupied by the Tucker Button Factory on lower

Depot Street which had been operating as early as 1897. The building was occupied by Oriental Furniture Factory in 1913 when it burned.

The Imperial Button Factory operated on Third Street until closed in March 1906.

In 1897, a table factory that had been abandoned on the old ball diamond on Depot Street, was being used for hay storage. In that same year, Mark Vandelinder operated a lumber wagon shop on Depot Street. Later Alfred and Thomas Slawson had wagon shops; Alfred where Home Builders was located and John and Thomas Slawson on Sixth Street.

In 1897 there was a planing mill on Depot St. 30,000 chifioniers per year were on order in 1902.

A large factory, the Canisteo Wooden Ware Co. burned like a tinderbox in January 1909. The brick walls fell in less than an hour after it was discovered.

The Superior Register Company was in operation in 1915. Two examples of their registers are on display at the Historical Society. The building burned and the land was sold to the Up-To-Date Advertising and Ruler Company in 1915.

There were several cigar factories in Canisteo. Tobacco was grown quite extensively in the township as early as the 1850's.

Other industries listed in the 1870-90 period include a Carriage Maker, Marble and Granite Works, Tinsmith,, Harness Maker, Shingle Mill, Brick Maker, American Beehives, Cheese Factories and a Cooper.

The Newark Milk and Cream Company operated in 1910 and continued in operation under several owners until January 1966. Dry milk, evaporated and condensed milk, cottage cheese, cheddar cheese and whole milk were shipped to the New York City and New Jersey area.

In 1898, Shell Wilkins built a shop in the rear of his home on South Elm Street where he did woodworking and planing mill work. Later he

built the mill on Academy Street and manufactured nursery chairs and car door plugs for the American Railway Express.

The site of our new Fire Station, (Home Builders to many of us) was a Box Factory and was said to have manufactured items used in the Civil War, Spanish American War and World War II. Motor boxes weighing one ton and boxes for guns were made.

My space for this article has come to an end but the list of industries and business in Canisteo goes on. Wouldn't you love to be able to travel back in time and walk through the streets of our Village during this period? Our May program will feature a power point presentation on Canisteo in the 1890's with pictures of many of these old buildings.

Pickles for Carnegie (from Canisteo Times - 1902)

Canisteo-made pickles are regularly found on Andrew Carnegie's tables. Mrs. A.R. Miner, who annually does an immense business in pickles and preserves, had already made two consignments of her goods to the noted millionaire. In this, as in most other things he does, the shrewd Scotchman shows extremely good taste as Mrs. Miner's pickles are among the very finest in the world.

Coming Events - Save the Dates

April 17 - Dick Welles - Ice House Fire

May 15- Canisteo in the 1890's

June 19- tba

July 17 - Annual Picnic - 6:00

July 21 - Garden Tour

August 21 - Outing

Sept. 18 - tba

Oct. 16 - tba

Nov. 6 - Election Day Pie & Treasure's Sale

Nov. 20 - Harvest Dinner & Election of Officers

Nov. 24 - Xmas in the Village

Dec. 15 - Cookie Sale

Dec. 17 -Christmas Program

Kanestio Historical Society
23 Main St., P.O. Box 35
Canistota, NY 14823

The Back Page

This newsletter is

written in tribute to Virginia Dickey whose dream was a Historical Society to preserve and display local history for future generations.

Application for Membership 2018

Do you know someone who would like to receive our newsletter - perhaps an old classmate or out of town relative? For the low cost of \$10 (annual dues) you receive 4 issues per year of our newsletter.

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Phone: _____

Dues: \$10.00 Individual ** \$15.00 Family**
\$150.00 Life

Make check payable to:
Kanestio Historical Society
P.O. Box 35
Canistota, NY 14823

Donations gratefully accepted toward operating expenses.

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Sue Babbitt	Co - President
Toni Stevens-Oliver	Secretary
Gail Davis	Treasurer
Phyllis Cassidy	- Corresponding Secretary

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