

# Kanestio Historical Society Times

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

Summer 2018 [kanestiohs@gmail.com](mailto:kanestiohs@gmail.com) Gail Davis, Editor

## Exploring the Past



On Monday, May 14, a group of 4 Canisteo Cub Scouts / Wolf Den, Pack # 83 along with several parents visited the KHS for a tour of our displays and to learn a bit about how Canisteans lived many years ago. Of course the boys were very interested in the Native American items, especially the arrowhead displays. They took note of the old toy display (Tinker Toys, marbles, etc.), and upstairs the row of shoes along with cobbler's tools, also the table of farming & carpentry tools. And then they wanted to play the piano/organ, which we carefully steered them away from.

We found them to be good readers for when we tried to stump them with "What do you think this is?" they would quickly find the card identifying it and come up with the answer. Of particular fascination was the electric hair curling device for ladies' permanents. They shuddered at the thought of the wires and heat. The display of Cub and Boy Scout items caught their eyes, and they noted how

their badges now are quite different from years ago.

Several pictures on the walls intrigued them and their parents: the trolley rounding the corner of Depot St., the firemen's parade, and finally with great laughter finding their parents' pictures in the old yearbooks. It was a joy to show off our collections, hear their interesting questions and see their enthusiasm.

## Steuben County History Awareness Week

By Steve Cotton



Last fall a group of volunteers met to explore the idea of a county wide HISTORY AWARENESS WEEK in Steuben County. There was great energy among the group and they decided to move forward with the idea.

The meetings are chaired by our county's historian, Emily Simms, with involvement from historians of the various municipality and historical societies. Canisteo is being represented by its own historian, George Dickey. Steve Cotton has been enthusiastic in being involved and keeping our society informed.

The weeklong event will be held from October 1<sup>st</sup> to the 7<sup>th</sup>. The theme selected is a reflection of the two World Wars - this being the centennial of the end of the first World War. While not many WW II survivors are left;

incorporating the two wars together will give everyone a chance to honor them.

The event will take place at the Bath VFW on route 54, the Bath – Hammondsport Road. Evening speeches, sing-a-long and closing ceremony will be held at the Bath Haverling School Auditorium.

There will be exhibits focused on both wars with the emphasis on how they effected everyday life here in Steuben County. Steve has been involved with displays that will represent Canisteo and the various towns from the southeast portion of Steuben County.

The schools are being asked to involve class appropriate field trips to experience the history. The event will also be open to the public. So, mark your calendar and plan on a trip yourself to Bath this fall for an unforgettable look into history. More details will be available as the date gets closer.

## Scarcity of Help in Canisteo Factories

from 1902 Canisteo Times

### Local Industries Rushed With Orders And Lack of Sufficient Hands

Conditions in Canisteo are certainly encouraging at present. There is work for every able bodied man and the supply is considerably insufficient to meet the demand. A number of additional employees were put on in the American Cabinet company's factory Monday and more are wanted. The management is advertising for more help.

The same condition exists in the basket factory of the Canisteo Wooden Ware Company. This concern is now over twenty cars of baskets behind in its orders and is greatly in need of more hands. Unless local help is available it will be necessary to import Italians to relieve the pressure.

The J.S. Tucker button manufacturing company is making plans to largely increase its capacity by the addition of about forty cutting machines, for each of which a man will be required. The present output of the factory is limited by the difficulty to obtain sufficient blanks and Mr. Tucker informs us that to insure an adequate supply he proposes to put in a complete cutting department.

The Canisteo Table factory is running to its full capacity as is also the W.E. Mitchell button factory. All local industries are very busy. The plant of the American Basket & Manufacturing company is running full blast. The present difficulty in all Canisteo factories is the lack of hands.

## Harriet's Ginger Cookies

Harriet Greenfield was well know in Canisteo for her cooking skills, especially her delicious cookies. I found this recipe in a cookbook produced by the Historical Society in 1988. What caught my eye was the "bacon grease" in the ingredient list. I remember the jar of bacon grease on my mother's kitchen stove which was used constantly to either grease a pan or add a bit of flavor to whatever she was cooking. Although frowned upon today for the high content of saturated fat my Mom lived to be 97 and Harriet to 88. Could it really be all that bad?

### Ginger Cookies

2 eggs  
1 cup bacon grease  
1/2 cup oleo softened  
2 cups sugar  
1 tsp. vanilla  
2 tsp. soda  
2 tsp. ginger  
2 tsp. cinnamon  
1 tsp. cloves  
1/2 cup molasses  
4 cups flour

Combine all ingredients and mix well. Form into small balls, roll in sugar and bake at 350 degrees. Don't over-bake.

March 30, 1910 - Lewis Covell, machinist at the Up-To-Date Adv. Co., has invented a yardstick press, made of iron, it weighs nearly a ton and will print soft wood yardsticks and rulers faster than any machine has ever done so far.

The Historical Society has a large collection of these rulers on display.

Canisteo: Its Prosperity  
at the Turn of the Century  
by Diane Miller  
July 31, 1967

Part I

*Editors Note: The following article comes from a college term paper written by Diane Miller in July of 1967. She interviewed several local businessmen and their names and dates of the interviews were carefully noted in footnotes. Since 50 years have passed, and these individuals have passed, I've deleted the footnotes in the interest of saving space.*

It would be thrilling to go back some sixty years and catch a glimpse of Main Street, Canisteo: the village park with its oversized trees, hitching posts and watering trough; the dirt roads and wooden sidewalks; horses and buggies, and the women in their long gowns. The residents of the village were obviously proud of what they had achieved by the turn of the century. A 1901 edition of the Times Republican featured the following item:

"No village in New York State of its size can compete with Canisteo in large, fine, and up-to-date stores, as large stocks of goods, as low prices and obliging dealers as Canisteo. No village in the state has better advantages and improvements of any and all kinds than Canisteo."

Having visited with several older residents of the community, I have acquired a more vivid insight into life as it existed in 1900. The industries, the stores, the schools, and the recreational facilities: these elements influenced the daily life of each Canisteo and united to produce a thriving community.

At this time in Canisteo's history it seems that no citizen would have been forced to commute to Hornell or some other nearby village, as it is today, to find employment. From conversations with various early residents and research in early local newspapers, I have discovered that Canisteo hosted a number of prosperous industries. A business that we would seldom find today was the manufacture of wagons and sleighs. "Slauson's Wagon Works" and "Conklin's Sleighs and Wagons" were both flourishing enterprises in the early 1900s.

Conklin's featured the following ad in a 1901 newspaper.

"Handmade sleighs and wagons sold at factory prices. Long sleighs, painted and striped for \$15; farmer's sleighs guaranteed to hold up and carry 3 ton for \$22. All sleighs are made of the very best of second growth white oak or black birch. Coming soon—a new automatic brake device. A full description will be given as soon as patent is secured."

At the end of the ad it was stated that second-hand wagons or cord wood would be taken in exchange for new work. Mr. Charles Smith can remember stopping off after school to watch them fit the metal rim onto the wooden wheel. The rim was heated until it expanded enough to fit around the outside of the wheel. Then the wheel and rim were dunked into a huge trough of cold water which would cause the metal to shrink and the rim would then fit tightly around the wheel.

Most villages at the turn of the century would also have had at least one tannery. People were continually slaughtering animals for a fresh supply of meat and would want the hides properly preserved. In Canisteo there was a tannery at the end of South Elm Street, and another one on East Main Street which was run by the Flor brothers. Mr. Fred Crane had several recollections of the the Flor business, chiefly that he "never liked to hang around there much because of the terrible smell." He told of the huge bark (hemlock) piles that were located on the present Scott's Dairy site and that a horse drawn dump truck carried the bark over to the tannery. Mr. Smith enjoyed watching a machine similar to a sausage grinder that broke the bark into small pieces. During the late 1800s the plant employed 25 men and had the capacity to process 1200 hides a week.

The Canisteo Basket Factory employed a number of people at this time. According to Mr. Crane the wood for these baskets was shipped from the vicinity of Andrews Settlement in Pennsylvania via the New York and Pennsylvania Railroad. The completed veneered baskets were used for fruit, especially peaches. Mr. Smith recalled that some of these baskets were used by the navy for carrying coal on board ships. A 1901 Times Republican article stated that the Canisteo Basket Factory would soon consolidate with Basket Factories of the Eastern States. J. W. Powell would be vice-president of the enlarged company and H. C. Swartout would be the manager of the local factory. The capacity of the Canisteo factory would be doubled immediately, with

the number of employees increased from 50 to 100. This business was obviously growing with the times. The Imperial Button Factory made pearl buttons from oyster shells. It was located on the corner of Depot and Second Streets and was run by the Tucker family. Several others that I talked with said that the leftover pieces of shell were used around town for fill.

Carter's Foundry was located on the site of the present Ed Laine Garage on Depot Street. It produced steam engines, reversible plows, horse shoes, cultivators, potato diggers, large kettles, hay racks, sash weights, and posts for doorways. According to Mr. Crane, the foundry workers spent the majority of their time making molds and then about once a week they melted the iron and filled the molds. Even today the inscription of "Carter" can be found in the doorway posts of the Savings and Loan Company and Holland's Hardware.

Mr. Crane said that his father was in charge of the sash department of the Drake Sash, Door, and Blind Factory. This business was located on the corner of Depot and Walnut Streets. Blinds were used on practically all houses in these days

According to the January 3, 1901 issue of the Times Republican, a stock option company had been formed for the manufacture of wooden dining room tables and chairs. The article goes on to say, "Canisteo is rapidly becoming one of the foremost manufacturing towns in the state, and is bound to grow rapidly and enjoy great prosperity from now on."

Mr. Smith informed me that this factory was on the corner of Depot and Second Streets where the present farm implement store is situated.

Raising baby chicks must have been a thriving business for Canisteans since during this period there were three hatcheries in the village. The Black and White was located behind Thompson's Grocery on 10th Street; the Hough Hatchery, the former Bowles business on Greenwood Street; and the Ridell Hatchery on West Academy Street. Most of the chicks were shipped from here when they were a day old. The reason was that they didn't need to be fed the first day. Among the three businesses about a million chicks were hatched each year.

The Superior Cash Register Company located on Depot Street, was at one time a place of employment for Mr. Crane. He recalled that this type of register was used for filing charge slips. He pointed out that in these days practically everyone charged his groceries, clothes, etc.

and paid their bill once a month. Thus a convenient filing system was necessary.

Hall's Harness Shop was another Depot Street business located on the corner of Fourth Street. This could have been classified as a craft since all of his work was hand tooled. Mr. Hall would go to the Tannery down the street and buy a hide at a time.

Based on the previous listings, it's obvious that Canisteo in 1900 was a prosperous and business minded community. An article in a 1901 issue of the local paper verifies this:

"It is said that the pail factory in Belmont will be removed next summer to a place where more basswood can be found. Canisteo is an ideal town for a manufacturing plant of this kind. There are immense quantities of timber available and commercial advantages are unsurpassable."

Canisteo wasn't about to take a back seat as far as industries were concerned.

(This article will be continued in our next newsletter.)

## Do you remember 4th grade teacher Betty Caple?

Many of our readers remember Betty as their 4th grade teacher. To those of us at the Historical Society she and husband Tom were past presidents and very active members, especially during the fund raising and construction of our building. Betty lives with her daughter Carla and son-in-law Chuck who shared the following: Ninety-three year old Betty is the healthiest member of our family. We recently hosted a reunion of her three other daughters and their families. She spends her days reading extensively and watching birds and wildlife in our large backyard. She periodically spends time at her Hartsville home.

She was recently inducted into the Daughters of the American Revolution and the Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War.

She would welcome hearing from all her friends:  
Betty Caple, 54 N. Walnut St., Waterloo, NY 13165.

Chuck will have an article in our next newsletter on Howard Armstrong, a Canisteo who played for major league baseball in 1911.

## Canisteo's Lost Cemeteries

by George Dickey, Historian

In the eighteen hundreds there were many small cemeteries scattered about rural areas of Canisteo. Many were family cemeteries with only a few burials, others served neighborhoods. Over the years a number of these have been lost as grave stones deteriorated or new owners of the property cleared them to farm the land.

One of the largest of these was located in Adrian. The cemetery, according to Steve Cotton, was located along the boundary between Great Lots 11 and 12 and behind the Adrian Hotel. This was probably started as a cemetery for the Crosby family. In that case burials here would be of Richard Crosby and both of his wives, and perhaps his father Benjamin Crosby and brother Reuben. We do not know the location of any of their burials, so there is a good chance they were buried there. Steve states that the last burial there was that of Hardy Cole in 1914. At some point the boundary between the two lots was resurveyed and found to be in error. The new property line placed the cemetery on another owners property and he requested that the burials be removed and apparently some were and moved to Hillside. The rest were obliterated. State law now requires that burials not be disturbed but in those days there were no such protections.

The 1873 map of Canisteo shows a cemetery located in Belle Haven. The cemetery located on the south side of the road approximately 140 yards from the town line. The property would have been owned by the Mulhollen family at that time. Both of the William Mulhollen's are buried in the Old Settlers Cemetery at Willow Bend, but I can find no record of where Samuel is buried, and he and his family may have been buried there.

If anyone is aware of other lost cemeteries I would like to hear about them.

## Craze Days Fundraiser

The results of our first fundraiser for the year are in. Thanks to all who donated their gently used items and to the volunteers who manned the sale we raised \$360.

Special Presentation sponsored by the  
Kanestio Historical Society  
Sunday, September 23rd

## Author to tell of her torturous childhood in Hitler's Germany

The Kanestio Historical Society will present a very special program, free & open to the public, on Sunday, September 23, at 2 PM in the Canisteo American Legion. Marlies Adams DiFante will tell the poignant story of her family being trapped in Germany during WW II.

As a child of 5, she traveled with her parents & younger brother from Naples, NY, back to Germany to visit her mother's terminally ill father, when they found themselves trapped in Hitler's clutches (1939). In Marlies' nonfiction account, *Queen of the Bremen*, she writes, "Little did we know that what we intended to be a 3 month stay would turn into 7 years of living hell. With Poland coming under attack, WW II began & all ports & borders were closed. The atrocities & prejudices we endured are forever burned into my memory." For those who wish to greet Mrs. DiFante & her husband, they will be at the KHS building - 23 Main Street at 1 PM for a brief time of refreshments & visiting before heading down to the Legion for her presentation. Following will be a time of book signing as well as the opportunity to purchase the much improved 2nd edition of Marlies' book.

## Coming Events - Save the Dates

July 17 - Annual Picnic - 6:00 at Larry Stephens house - bring dish to pass & beverage.  
August 21 - Outing - tba  
Sept. 18 - Steve Appleby-WW II Museum  
Sept. 23 -Marlies Adams DiFante -A special program to be held at the Canisteo American Legion on Sunday at 2:00  
Oct. 16 - Virginia Putman - Early Medical Devices  
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.*

#### 2018 Officers

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

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Russell Pierce	2018
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