

Town of Canandaigua

5540 Routes 5 & 20 West
Canandaigua, N. Y. 14424
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Established 1789

December 30, 2011

Canandaigua Town Historian's Report - 2011

1. Continued interviewing long-time Town residents, writing oral histories and collecting other Town stories about life in the Town in the first half of the twentieth century in contemplation of producing a second book on the subject:

Interviews accomplished:

- o Sue Raymond – President, Canandaigua Yacht Club
Canandaigua Yacht Club/Major Chamberlain/Frank Beecher Estate. *History Co-written with Sue (Copy available upon request)*
- o Tom Sprentall – owner of the home at 4828 West Lake Rd, and Canandaigua native. Tom has also written his memoirs; titled “Marry Well and Stay Healthy”, *copy owned by the historian may be available for loan upon request.*

These oral histories bring to seven the number of potential chapters for a sequel to the first book, “Memories of the Heart”.

2. Participated as a speaker at the Memorial Day ceremony at the Cheshire Volunteer Fire Department in Cheshire.
3. Researched the history of the “Peanut Line” Railroad (the Batavia branch of the New York Central) and participated in the ceremony dedicating a section of the line donated by Mr. James Judkins to the Town of Canandaigua as a hiking trail on June 4, 2011. *Copies of the Historical Sketch and Remarks are available upon request.*

4. Responded to 25 research requests from Town residents and others interested in the history of the Town of Canandaigua and/or its early settlers. These were all email requests. In addition, many phone calls requesting information were handled on a weekly basis.
5. Continued maintaining a historical display case with cycling themes on lower level of Town Hall. 2011's consisted of "The history of the dairy industry in the Town of Canandaigua" and "The History of Camp Onanda/Onanda Park". I also provide historical data and artifacts for the main Lobby Display Case as requested.
6. Continued restoration efforts on the **Hunn/Woolhouse/VanNorman Cemetery**. This year 6 marble head stones were repaired. Work in 2012 will concentrate on the **Remington Cemetery** at Nott and Middle Cheshire Roads. This will be appropriate as there are six veterans of the War of 1812 buried in that cemetery.
7. Working with Derek Brocklebank (Town Attorney) to procure an easement for the Town to be able to perform maintenance at the **Red Dock/Benham Cemetery**, an abandoned, landlocked cemetery off West Lake Road, north of Wyffels Road. See photos in Appendix.
8. The Ontario County Historical Society's 2011 biennial Tour of Homes was designated for West Lake Road in the Town of Canandaigua. As a result, I performed a substantial number of functions in its planning and implementation. Among those functions were:
 - a. Site selection: included field evaluations, owner interviews, historical research, and OCHS Board of Trustee presentations for approval.
 - b. In depth research: after Board approval, old photographs, histories and newspaper articles were researched and a short history of each site written for the Tour Booklet.
 - c. Photographic excursions were made for booklet presentations
 - d. Media interviews: "Canandaigua Magazine" and WHAM Channel 13 TV conducted interviews to promote the event.
 - e. Visitations were carried out to plan most efficient and educational Tour Route throughout each site.
 - f. Field evaluations were made to determine parking and travel considerations.
 - g. Four training sessions for nearly 200 docents were conducted.
 - h. Made an introductory slide show at the Canandaigua Rotary Club.
 - i. Research and writing for the production of an accompanying video on the history of West Lake Road, entitled "West Lake Legacy, The Road to Onanda". Copies are available for sale at Wegman's Canandaigua, the Ontario County Historical Museum, and The Cheshire Union Antique and Gift Store for \$14.95.

The resulting report of the tour, held on September 24th, 2011, was that this tour was one of the most successful, both in attendance and net proceeds, in the nearly 30 years that the Historical Society has been conducting the event. One of the benefits for me was the tremendous amount of history of the homes, farms, cottages, and sites of the West Lake Road that was learned and recorded.
9. Served as a judge of computer presentations for National History Day at Finger Lakes Community College on February 13th. The presenters were made up of Junior and Senior High School students from several local schools.
10. Attended the three day Association of Public Historians of New York State (APHNYS) annual convention in Elmira, New York on April 4, 5, 6, which included seminars on New York State Civil War History (Units from New York and the role Elmira played), Geocaching with a history education emphasis, the Langdon Family /Mark Twain Home & Library, and Woodlawn National Cemetery.
11. Attended the one day Landmark Society of Western New York preservation conference in Dansville, New York on April 30th.

12. Have been receiving assistance from Jake Repard (surveys) and Lillian Ford (photographs) in our ongoing effort to identify, photograph and complete survey forms for all 100 year old Town of Canandaigua barns. When completed, a CD and a loose leaf notebook will be on file in the Historians' office, as well as at the Ontario County Historical Museum's Research Library. As of this date we are approximately 30 % complete.
13. On March 14th, I hosted a "Books Sandwiched In" at the Wood Library in Canandaigua, and on October 11th a Travel Club meeting at the Granger Homestead. In both cases the subject was a slide program and review of my recent book, "The Natural Science Camp at Tichenor Point, Canandaigua Lake".
14. In October, I began assisting Carol Truesdale in research and writing a new book on the history of Onanda Park, from the time it was known as "Shale Rock" and owned by the Foster Family, through the years beginning in 1911 when it was a YWCA Camp, and from 1989 to the present as a Town of Canandaigua park. Carol was on the Staff at the YWCA Camp in the mid 1960's.
15. On April 28th I convened a group of interested individuals to begin conversations on the potential for developing an "Agricultural Museum" in the Canandaigua area. The group included Jim Holden (a past Town of Canandaigua Supervisor), Ed Varno (Director of the Ontario County Historical Society & Museum), Jake Repard (retired Town Building Inspector and old barn enthusiast), Gary Jones (an agricultural history buff) and me. It was agreed that much investigative work needs to be done re: public interest, not-for-profit status, ideal location, overall museum format, etc. Future meetings will be scheduled.
16. Town of Canandaigua Comprehensive Plan Update: I served as an Ex-Officio member of the Citizens' Advisory Committee for the Town's Comprehensive Plan Update. As such I proposed the inclusion of identified historically significant sites within the Town and subsequently developed a list and map of such sites for inclusion in the Plan. In addition several goals were included in the plan relative to identifying and preserving historical assets of the Town. The Plan was adopted August 29, 2011.
17. At the Ontario County Historical Society's Annual Meeting on December 4, 2011, I was awarded the "Ellis Award", named for long time City of Canandaigua Historian Herbert Ellis and his wife, Helen, given for "Outstanding Contribution to the Study of the History of Ontario County". This award was last presented in 2004.

2012 Goals To Include:

A. Cemeteries:

Evaluate remaining 8 cemeteries (in addition to Hunn) for maintenance Issues.

Continue surveying all to develop digitized diagrams.

Evaluate Hunn Cemetery for recognition as a Historic Site and the subsequent availability of grant funds for preservation/fencing/etc.

Evaluate small cemeteries for installation of plaques identifying burials to supplement loss of stones and exact burial locations.

B. Cheshire:

Have walking tour of homes ready for limited publication.

C. Barns:

Complete survey of 100 year old barns in Town of Canandaigua and begin to prepare a booklet about them. This effort is in conjunction with a survey being done on a County level of which I am the manager.

Assist Ginny Schroeder, Town of East Bloomfield Historian in finishing their 100 year old barn survey in preparation for a "Tour of Barns" in 2012, which I plan on coordinating for OCHS in the Towns of East and West Bloomfield.

D. Website:

Continue expansion of data relating to the Historically Significant Sites in the Town. Consider developing a Driving Tour Booklet of these sites with GPS information.

E. Oral History:

Continue interviewing process/research to collect more histories for "Memories of the Heart" sequel.

Respectfully submitted,

Ray Henry, Town Historian

APPENDIX



Memorial Day
2011



Peanut Line
Dedication
June 4, 2011





Samples of cemetery stone repairs made prior to 2006.

Samples of stone repairs made by Ellison Conservation since 2006.



Condition of Benham/Red Dock Cemetery - abandoned with no accessibility by the Town.





Presenting a training class to volunteer docents for the 2011 OCHS Tour of Historic Homes



Preparing to make Tour of Homes presentation to the Canandaigua Rotary Club



Being presented the Ontario County Historical Society's "Ellis Award" at their Annual Dinner December 4th, 2011