

**CANISTEO VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.  
NEWSLETTER  
ARKPORT, NY**

*Oct/Nov/Dec 2007 Vol. 1*

*Nancy A. Glover, Editor*

*Chartered in 1875*

*Welcome to the first volume newsletter of Arkport's revived Canisteeo Valley Historical Society, Inc.*

**HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

My interest in old pictures of the area led to my forming a group of people, loosely called "the Old Picture Group" to help identify the dates and the people in these old pictures. We ended up with a group of people meeting about once a month for the past three years looking over any old pictures that we had and telling stories of the people and businesses that used to exist in this area. That led to being asked to help revive the Historical Society. We still met under our old group for the past year but at our September 2007 meeting we formally elected officers; Nancy Glover, President; Ernest Dungan, Vice President, Madge Lang, Secretary and Larry Jones, Treasurer.

I will attempt to give you a little background history of the Society. I was surprised to read from the past Constitution of the Canisteeo Valley Historical Society that it was originally chartered in 1875 and last revised on June 13, 1977. According to the book of minutes, the last meeting was held on September 8, 2003. Jim & Edith Piatt were members of the Society and said there was a charter of the Society but it could not be found. I wrote to the State of New York in Albany requesting the charter. After corresponding by telephone and email with several offices in Albany, the charter was located and a copy mailed to me on February 1, 2007 for a fee of \$10. It turned out that the "charter" is a legal document drawn up by Attorney Louis Zanneri (now deceased) in Hornell to incorporate the Society "as a Corporation as defined in Subparagraph (a) (5) Section 102 of the Not-For-Profit Corporation Law." Now that we have both the Constitution and the Charter of the Canisteeo Valley Historical Society, Inc., we have discussed the idea of updating the constitution and changing the name of the Society to the Arkport Historical Society to avoid confusion with the Kanisteeo Historical Society. I checked again with Albany and for a fee of \$60, an application for any changes (including a name change) will be brought before a Board of Directors in Albany and if they approve, revisions will be formally made.

**MISSION STATEMENT**

Under the original Constitution it states that "The purpose of this Society shall be the collection and preservation of Historical Knowledge to the territory known as the Canisteeo Valley in the County of Steuben, in the State of New York, and in doing so promote the better understanding and appreciation of our American heritage."

# **MEMORIES OF ARKPORT**

## **Arkport High School's First Basketball Team 1921-1923**

*Pricilla Hurlbut Jones, Great-great granddaughter of Christopher Hurlbut, wrote "Memories of my School Days", which included this paragraph about the basketball team and games (unedited):*

In 1920 there was a little excitement in town. Two new boys moved into town. One came in March whose dad, Ray Jones, bought 3 farms south of the village on the corner, which was at a 90 degree angle. That was Joe Jones. Later Leo Kruze and his parents came and rented one of Ray Jones' houses. Leo had played basketball in his former school and he was very interested in organizing a basketball team in Arkport School so he talked basketball to Joe when he came after milk. Leo got Joe to enroll in high school even though he had attended rural school up to that time but they needed him for their team and Joe was real interested in basketball. I don't remember if he went to school one or two winters but probably two. Of course that would not be allowed now but then we could be more independent since we didn't depend so much on the state. Also it was after World War I when the kids could get credit for working on the farm.

*Priscilla Hurlbut Jones wrote to members of the team, and in 1982, the only surviving member of the first basketball team responded with the following memories (unedited):*

## **Basketball Arkport Union School 1920-1921-1922-1923**

The following is all from memory as I do not have any pictures and if I overlook some names, 1920 from 1982 is a few days.

I attended the old brick school house for a few weeks and then moved into the new school. Unlike modern times no facilities were made for such a sport as basketball. In fact I did not know a basketball from a pumpkin. In about 1920, Leo Kruze came to our school. He had lived in Dansville and they had a basketball team. He somehow got the sport started and a basketball court was set up in the upstairs of the old school house, which was being used as a Town Hall.

I did not play with the first team and two players I bring to mind were Leo and Herbert Barnes. There were more of course.

I don't remember just how I got interested but one of my difficulties was I could not buy basketball sneakers. I was about sixteen and about six foot tall and wore at least a 13 size shoe. This nice man named Morris Hurlbut went to New York on his run as a mail clerk and he knew of a place where he could purchase large sizes and he got me a pair.

I did not go with the first team when they went to Castile and during that game Leo fell and injured his knees badly and I presume Morris was able to buy padded knee pads for the team. I think a collection was taken up among the spectators to get the money. I did go another time to Castile and also to Silver Springs to play. We went on the 4:30pm Erie passenger train and stayed with the players at their homes. When the return games were played, the players stayed overnight with the school players.

The year 1921 and 1922 school year seems to stand out more than the other times. I do not remember all the players but names like Arthur Wilkins, Otto Fernald and Leo Kruze and during the year we were joined by Joe Jones who loved to play basketball and was very good at it. We went to places like Canisteo, Hornell at the Y.M.C.A., Wayland, Andover, Canaseraga and presume Dansville. The one time at Andover stands out because our former principal, Levi Tubbs, had moved to Andover and he welcomed us all by name. We played a few times at Almond in what used to be the Methodist Church and the court was real short.

We did not have busses or airplanes to transport us. So this nice man, Mr. Sim Cridler, who had a trucking business, took us around in his big white truck with a big body on the back all enclosed. He would put in potato crates and planks on them along the sides and behind the cab. He had blankets or robes to cover our legs and straw on the bottom or floor. The girls and other students would go along and a Teacher or two always.

Sometimes on the way home if we passed through Hornell we would stop at the Texas Hot Dog Restaurant and get a lunch. We had great times singing songs and a good time was had by everyone. I remember a controversy the girls got into with the Canisteo girls as they claimed I was a married old man, which did not go down very well with our group.

I cannot stop unless I mention the nice people who always came and watched our games. They had to sit along the sidelines just outside of the goal line and many times had a basketball bounced off their laps. Also we had to dodge around the stove and stove pipe.

The games were rather rough house type. I do not remember who were the captains or managers who did the arrangement. I remember this nice man, Delbert Olds, who spent his time with us for a while and coached us and went on some of the trips.

I am very sorry I cannot do a better history of all the players and do not have any intention of leaving anyone out. But as I wrote in the beginning, 1922 from 1982 is a few days ago. *Signed: Merrill C. Gates*

***P.S. to Merrill's letter by Priscilla H. Jones***

In those days small communities did not have gymnasiums or any really suitable place for playing the game. Can you imagine playing around a stove and stove pipe? Their games were very rough or physical as they say now. The baskets were fastened to the walls and Leo Kruze would practically climb the wall to get the ball in the basket. Consequently each school used any hall available. Some were very small and none were standard size. The game our boys played at Silver Springs nearly ended in tragedy. The floor was cement and our boys had no knee protectors. Leo injured his knees so seriously that he had to be hospitalized with blood poisoning. This was before penicillin so he almost died. We girls were sure in a tizzy about that. So was the whole town for that matter. By some miracle he recovered and the boys got knee protectors. As Merrill said, there was no place for spectators as a rule. In our hall, they were crowded along the sides. If you didn't get a ball in your lap you were just as apt to have one bounce off your head.

Since some of the teams had to come in on the train and stay overnight, such as teams from Castile and Silver Springs, the girls made a little social time afterwards. We went downstairs in the Grange Hall and served cocoa and marshmallows. Some of the girls even had dates with the boys afterwards but they couldn't stay out too late as they had to train back. Arkport boys sort of objected as they said they didn't get treated so well when they went out of town.



In 1921-22, the team consisted of 6 players and a manager. Otto Fernald was the manager. The team members were Merrill Gates, center (our only tall boy), Joe Jones, Leo Kruze, Herb Barnes, Harold Willey and Arthur Wilkins (Preach).

***Thanks to Dorothy Jones Dunham for sharing her mother's memories of Arkport's first team.***

*L to R: Merrill Gates, Herb Barnes, Joe Jones (age 19), Otto Fernald (manager), Harold Willey, Arthur Wilkins ("Preach") and Leo Kruze*

## McCarthy's Store, Main St. Arkport

*The following story was written by Ellen Glover Cappadonia and published in the "The Evening Tribune" in Hornell under the column "Historically Speaking" by Robert F. Oakes on October 28, 1979.*

Robert Oakes writes: "The 55th wedding anniversary of Mr. & Mrs. LaGrande McCarthy of Arkport brought back many memories of her earlier life in Arkport to Ellen Glover Cappadonia of Fremont Mich. Mrs. Cappadonia, who was sent a clipping of a Spectator picture and write-up of the McCarthy's wedding anniversary, quickly penned her congratulations of the honored couple who for many years operated a grocery store in Arkport. In addition, McCarthy was an active sportsman associated for many years with the Arkport Rod and Gun Club as an officer and member. He also drove Arkport school buses for many years. The former Arkport resident's letter to the McCarthy's said in part:"

My sister-in-law, Nancy Glover, (Larry's wife), recently sent me the newspaper clipping about your 55th wedding anniversary. I was really happy to receive it and to see how great you both looked on that happy occasion. Congratulations to you both!

I think often of you two and of "McCarthy's Store", which played such a big part in my growing up years. I certainly spent a lot of time in your store and the highlight of my day would be if someone would send me to the store and especially if they gave me a penny. That counter of penny candy was like a pot of gold and I debated and agonized over each and every penny I had to spend. I especially remember the Mary Jane's and like them to this day. Now and then, a neighbor would send me to the store and give me a whole nickel and then the trip would be even more exciting. Then I could select an ice cream cone and I remember them as being so big and delicious.

But I guess my favorite memory of all is of the cookie counter, How I loved those cookies and picking them out and bringing them up to be weighed. I also remember (with some guilt!), that I always had to sample one to see if it was okay before I bought them. One story that I always told my children as they were growing up was the one I refer to as the "Lorna Doone Story". My Mom would always send me to get a pound of Lorna Doone's, her favorite cookie. I would be fine until I stood in front of that cookie counter and looked in at those wonderful chocolate covered marshmallow cookies, and then the devil would take over and I would end up with a pound of those instead. I knew each time that when I returned home I would have to pay for my sin, but it must have been worth it to me because I continued to repeat my performance often. One year, when I was about 35 years old, I bought my Mom a package of Lorna Doone's for Christmas, and wrapped them and put them under her tree. She thought that it was a rather odd gift but I always felt better after that.

Another story I recall clearly was the day my Mom sent me to the store to purchase a 5-pound bag of sugar. She handed me her precious ration coupon and cautioned me not to lose it because it was her last one. She also gave me a penny for candy and I merrily ran off down the road between our house and Ma and Pa's [Howe grandparents] anticipating those good Mary Jane's, which were two for a penny, if I recall correctly. I had the coupon clutched in my grubby little hand and soon, to my dismay, I discovered that the coupon was missing. I quickly retraced my steps and searched long and hard but to no avail and so I had to return home to break the sad news to my mother. Before long the whole neighborhood was alerted and soon, Ruth Kame and her crew and Mary Lou [Howe, now McHale] and many other were crawling around in the grass and field, searching for that little piece of paper. Unfortunately, I do not recall whether or not we ever found it, but the trauma still sticks in my mind.

My first experience with graffiti was experienced right there in your store in the restroom, which Mary Lou and

I almost always had to visit on each trip there. I still remember exactly what was written there, but will not immortalize it here. Suffice to say that it always made our whole trip to the store worthwhile and we would go away feeling really worldly and grown-up.

My memories of each of you and of your store are very happy ones and I often think as I enter these huge supermarkets today that we are all missing a lot. I can only imagine the long and exhausting hours you must have put in, yet I never recall a cross or unkind word to any of us little folks on our shopping tours. My memories of your store are very special to me and I just wanted to share them with you. Bless you both! Signed: Ellie Glover Cappadonia

Bob Oakes writes: "There's something about one's hometown that brings back fond memories to practically all of us who venture away from home to better ourselves and our families. Most of us manage to go back home occasionally, and those who are not able to do so live on their memories they have of growing up in the home, on the streets and on the playing fields. There's something special about memories and we all refer to those memories in various ways."

If anyone has a memory of Arkport they would like to share in future issues, please send it to me; Nancy Glover, 8643 State Route 36, Arkport, NY 14807. It can be a long or short memory of the people, places and activities of growing up in Arkport or the surrounding area and/or attending Arkport Central School.

## ***BOOKS BY ARKPORT RESIDENTS***

*I found it absolutely amazing that there are six residents (that I've heard about) from the Arkport area who have written books, four of them published. If anyone knows of others, please let me know and I will include them next time. The following are available at the Arkport Library.*

### **"My Life's Work" – By Walter Raymond Emo** Written in 1998

A personal story of Walt's growing up on a farm during the depression and later his military life during WWII. After the war he tried different careers, including being a cook and owning his own restaurant before deciding he wanted to be a farmer. Walt tells of the trials of being a farmer but also the benefits he received over the years.

### **"Robert P. Elsenheimer's Story of Arkport"** Written in 2002

It begins with an Elsenheimer family history and relating stories of "old" Arkport and the businesses at the time with personal remembrances of the people and growing up in Arkport. It also tells about the beginning of the business of selling cars and forming of the partnership with his father and his brother, Don after Bob's military service during WWII.

### **"No Way But Up" - A Journey Into The Miraculous - By Donald Isaman** Published in 1989

This is a spiritual story of Don's life growing up in Fremont, NY; his years in the military, business career and family life.

### **"Rehearsals" – A Missionary Autobiography – By Lois B. Dungan** Published in 2000

Lois and her husband Bruce served as missionaries in Jamaica for seventeen years. Lois tells about the hardships working and living with deaf children under primitive conditions and the religious miracles of their experiences.

## **“Wounded Body – Healing Spirit”**

### **An Arkport Soldier’s Inspirational Journey as a Vietnam Combat Veteran.**

**By John T. Senka** Published in 2004

John tells stories of his family and the people of Arkport who influenced his life; of being wounded in Vietnam and his fight to heal from post-traumatic stress disorder and acute clinical depression with the help of his wife Sandy.

## **“Bertha’s Journey” – A Life Forever Challenging Yet Well Fulfilled**

**By H. Gray Multer** Published in 2006

Gray writes the biography of his mother, Bertha Multer, a beloved third grade teacher at Arkport Central School. He had access to his grandparents and mother’s diaries and letters for the history of the family. Gray writes about the joy Bertha brought to her own life and other people’s lives despite the hardships of being a young widow raising a son alone.

## ***NEWSLETTERS***

It is my goal to publish a quarterly newsletter for members of the Society. I have been using the Almond Historical newsletter as a guide. Theirs include a little history of the area, comments, emails and letters of memories written by members, planned fundraisers and requests for ideas of future newsletters. Please help me by sending in your ideas, suggestions, and memories of different events (long or short) that affected your life, people, stores, etc. – you get the idea – anything of interest. You may mail it to me to the address mentioned before or email it to [glover39@verizon.net](mailto:glover39@verizon.net). Please put Historical Society in the subject line or it will not be opened. If you would like to receive the newsletter by email, (which would save postage), please send me your email address.

## ***MEMBERSHIP***

If you would like to join the Canisteo Valley Historical Society, Inc. the dues are \$10 per year for individuals and \$15 for couples. Please make your check payable to the Canisteo Valley Historical Society, Inc. and mail to Larry Jones at P.O. Box 96, Arkport, NY 14807. All members will receive the quarterly newsletter. You do not have to be a resident of Arkport to join. We had some members of the Almond Historical Society speak to our group and learned that more than half of their members are previous residents who now live out of state plus others who live in this area that joined because they are interested in the local history.

## ***MEETINGS***

The Society normally meets the first Tuesday of each month at 1:00pm at the Arkport Village Community Room, located behind the fire hall. If we are unable to get the room, we meet the second Tuesday. Sometimes we will have a speaker and/or slide show and will hold those meetings in the evening. Sometimes we will have “field trips” to points of interest in the area. All meetings are advertised in the Evening Tribune under News Brief column or I can notify you by email or telephone.

## ***SCHOLARSHIP AND FUNDRAISERS***

The Canisteo Valley Historical Society has limited funds in its Treasury. The Society has for years given a scholarship at Arkport’s graduation to a senior with an interest in History who is continuing his education at college and we want that to continue. There is not enough for the printing and mailing of a newsletter. I felt a newsletter would promote interest in the Historical Society and subsequently increase our membership so I thought it was important to publish one. The Historical Society will be holding fundraisers in the future to help with the Society’s expenses. One that is planned is a 2009 calendar of Arkport pictures with the proceeds going to the Historical Society. If you have any pictures that you would be willing to loan me to scan, they will be returned. I would also appreciate a brief description of the picture. Another fundraiser suggestion was the

reprinting of the previous Arkport books, if there is enough interest in past publications. We are open to suggestions for other fundraisers.

## ***THANK YOU***

I knew with the Society's limited funds, we could not afford to take the newsletter to a printer to have it professionally printed. In order to get help with this first newsletter, I went to see Mr. Locke, Superintendent at Arkport Central School, about getting the newsletter printed at school if I paid for the cost of the paper and printing myself. Mr. Locke agreed and Mr. Ross Munson, teacher of the Publications class, offered his expertise with the newsletter layout and the help of his students in the printing if I would do the typing of the newsletter. This would give the students experience plus credit to complete their requirement for community service by helping with the setup and printing. So, a big thank you goes to Mr. Locke and Mr. Munson for their help. The cost of the paper and postage for this newsletter has been paid for by Dorothy Jones Dunham and me in memory of our mothers, Mrs. Priscilla Jones and Mrs. Ida Amidon, who both loved area history; they especially loved genealogy. If you are interested in helping to defray the cost of future newsletters, please send your donation check, made payable to the Canisteo Historical Society, Inc. to Larry Jones to the above address.

*Nancy A. Glover, Editor*