

Bethinking of Old Orleans

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Rt. 18 BRIDGE



The photo here by the late Fred Holt, shows a workman putting the finishing touches on the Rt. 18 Bridge across Oak Orchard River fifty-five years ago. Construction was completed by the William Gallagher Co. of Medina after several failed attempts by others. It seems that there were many problems setting the footers because of quicksand. Hence, the length of the bridge was extended.

At the time, this new bridge on Roosevelt Highway U.S. 18 was the largest single span in western New York, stretching 400 feet across Oak Orchard Creek. It even changed the name of the community. A century before, two wooden bridges sufficed the tonnage and traffic which gave Two Bridges its name. But by 1937 with the new construction of Rt. 18, a third more modern bridge was necessary. Hence, ever after, the community has simply been known as The Bridges.

It was a day of grand celebration for the official opening and dedication of the new bridge at The Bridges, which took place Wednesday, August 18,

1937. The official opening of the bridge started off with a parade marshalled by Edward Archbald which led to the ribbon-cutting by Marcia Forder and Ralph Brown. Supervisor Ray Mann of Carlton was Master of Ceremonies with such dignitaries present as General John S. Thompson of Medina and Colonel A.W. Brandt, Commissioner of Highways, Albany, N.Y. Following the dedication program other events of the day proceeded as follows: 3:00 p.m. a Hill Climb, Land and Water Sports, 6:00 p.m. a cafeteria supper by Ladies Aid Society of Carlton Baptist Church, 6:30 p.m. Concert by Sheret Post Band, 8:00 p.m. Entertainment, ending with dancing on the bridge from 9:00 to 12, with music from Eddie Malin's Band. Perhaps one of the most memorable circumstances of the day was when the horse Dr. Howes was riding, died in the parade.

Overseeing the numerous committees to bring about a successful day's program was the Executive Committee made up of Mrs. Angeline R. Brown, Mr. John Youngs, Mr. Bernard Lynch and Mr. Wallace Forder.