

Bethinking of Old Orleans

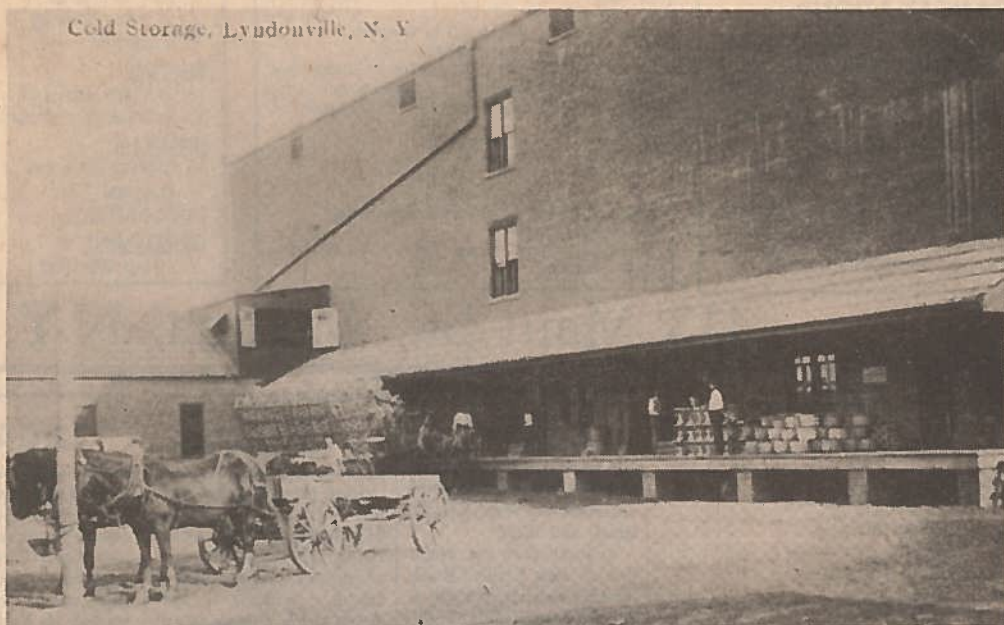
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HAPPY BIRTHDAY LYNDONVILLE



Cold Storage, Lyndonville, N. Y.

Located in the northwest part of the county, this quiet village of approximately 1000 citizens, and one square mile in size, will be celebrating its 90th birthday on June 5, 1993.

On March 3rd, 1903, twenty-five petitioners appeared before George A. Waterbury, a notary public suggesting incorporation. The population was 457.

With the petition granted, the first meeting of the newly incorporated Village of Lyndonville was held in Dr. Charles E. Fairman's office. That building is now a video shop. The first president, (it wasn't called mayor then) was Dr. Fairman. The trustees were Dr. David Fraser and William Anderson. The first village clerk was Frank Plummer.

The horse and wagon days of the early settlers were giving away to the "tin lizzie". Blacksmiths, wagon makers, tinsmiths and brick makers were soon to be replaced by the gasoline station, coal dealers and insurance people, to name a few. The feed and flour mills remained active for many years.

Electricity came to the village from the Swett Electric Light and Power Company of Medina on November 13th, 1909. The water and sewer systems came in 1924.

Main Street was first paved with macadam in 1916, and Maple Avenue was paved in 1919. Thomas Nie laid much of the concrete streets as well as many of the sidewalks. The present concrete bridge was built in 1920, at a cost of \$19,500.

In the early 1900's a volunteer fire department was formed and today we have one of the best equipped around. John D. Warren, an agent with the R.W. and O Railroad (the Hojack) sent a tire from a locomotive to be used as a method of alarm for calling out the firemen. This gong, affectionately called "Old Peter Quick" was hit with a sledge hammer, and residents said "it was enough to wake the dead". That gong is hanging on the south side of the bridge.

The railroad was the main source to area markets in 1903, as it was started in 1875 and was discontinued in 1976 due to the changing system of truck travel.

Housel Brothers opened a bank here on October 18, 1905. The bank has changed owners a few times and now is a branch of M & T. The bank was robbed by three armed men in 1924 who got \$17,000 for their efforts. All were subsequently caught and paid their debt to society.

The village had a weekly newspaper, the Lyndonville Enterprise, published from 1907 to 1964.

Rowley and Austin of Medina built a chemical cold storage in 1909. Since this is fruit country many barrels of fruit went in and out seasonally. During WW II business at the storage declined and space was rented out to the Federal government

to store surpluses. By 1961, the cold storage was sold and now contains controlled atmosphere and regular rooms for the storage of fresh fruit. A disastrous fire in 1980 forced the rebuilding of the facility. It is now owned by Howard Dobbins of Gasport and ships packaged fresh fruit to many areas of the country.

In 1907, a group of farmers and businessmen formed a canning company with a Mr. Bewley of Lockport, known as the Lyndonville Canning Company. At one time 41 different fruits and vegetables were canned. This company was first located on Housel Avenue and later moved across the R.R. tracks on West Avenue. In 1925 the canning company was bought by William Smith of Garland, N.Y. who brought with him the knowledge of making and canning applesauce. It was a family owned business until 1979, when it was sold. Although it has changed hands a few times and is now parented by Bowman Apple Products of Virginia, it still produces various kinds of applesauce and juice and operates nearly year round.

Among the businesses that we have had are a shoe factory, a shingle factory and a branch of Rugby knitting mills. These all moved on to larger markets. There was also a telephone company until it was taken over by "Ma Bell".

The village had at one time a movie theater and two jail cells, now also gone.

In addition to Bowman Apple Products, Lyndonville has Lyndonville Vinegar Inc., parented by a Japanese firm in California. They make vinegar and other products and ship all over the United States. Monroe Electronics makes components for the ever changing world of electronics and the aforementioned Dobbins Company that markets fresh fruit.

Many businesses have come and gone as time goes on and life-styles change. And we are still progressing.

Virginia Cooper
Lyndonville Historian

As County Historian I would first like to thank Lyndonville Historian, Virginia Cooper, for compiling such an up-to-date history of her community. Secondly, may I also add my best wishes to the people of Lyndonville on their 90th anniversary of incorporation. Mrs. Cooper makes mention of the Lyndonville Cold Storage which is pictured here from the archives of the Orleans County History Department. I would judge this picture to have been taken before 1915 and after 1909 when the storage was built. We notice a team and wagon tied to what might be a utility pole. Another wagon further back, pulled by a second team, appears to be loaded with some sort of carrying racks. Three or four workmen are standing on the south loading dock next to bushels, perhaps filled with apples.