

Bethinking of Old Orleans

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MULTICULTURALISM



*In all things that are purley social
We can be as seperate as the fingers,
Yet one as the hand in all things
Essential to mutual progress.*

Booker T. Washington

It's not perhaps, until more recent times, that we have as a society begun to appreciate and more readily recognize our cultural diversity. The term itself, multicultural, is one we did not seem to ever use years ago although we have always been multicultural in our ethnic and religious backgrounds. We now have a Multicultural Committee of Orleans County which has evolved out of Mental Health and the Human Services Council. This began a couple of years ago through a discussion group and has become more active within the last year. Its leader is Betty Garcia-Mathewson of Waterport who first worked for Rural Opportunities. Through this committee Betty now works with Human Service Agencies and schools, and says "unraveling our diversity is complex".

The Multicultural Committee states: "It is our belief that by getting to know people from different groups as individuals, people learn to value and respect their distinctive and shared traits." The Multicultural Committee has a logo which is a hand with flowers draped over it. They are now seeking a motto and are offering a \$20 gift certificate at Bells for the winner - deadline August 22. For more information about the Multicultural Committee, call Betty Garcia-Mathewson at 682-3258, Kathy Fernandez 589-5683 or Robin Freeh 589-5754. The committee meets once a month at the Special Friends Office in Albion and for a project, is expecting to have for example, youth groups create 4 x 8 murals representing and valuing various cultural and ethnic groups within Orleans County.

Our historic photo accompanying this story is certainly an example of multi-cultural diversity going back eighty-five years. This wonderful picture shows the 1910 Medina Baseball Club. It included two Native-Americans and two African-Americans along with players of Irish and English ancestry. Someone, a long time ago, wrote on

the photo who most of the players were, what the club was and the date. In checking the 1911 and 1915 Orleans County Directory, we can indeed find some of the people pictured.

Front row left to right: Con Bradley is listed in 1911 as Bradley, Cornelius P., cigarmaker, 113 Manilla Place. Next to him the photo states Indian Charles S.S. No other information is available. In the middle is Byron Post, Mgr. The 1911 Directory lists him as follows: Post, Byron A. (CLara V.) Cashier Union Bank 1006 W. Ave. Next in line is Bob Johnson, center field, listed in 1911 as Johnson, Robert (Mary) Laborer h Genesee between Orchard and South Ave. The man seated between the first and second rows is unidentified.

The back row from left to right, has Pete Slattery, catcher. The 1915 Directory has him listed as Slattery, Pete fireman, Medina fire dept. res. 111 Manilla Place. The second man is unidentified. The next one is listed as Indian pitcher Herman Doctor. No other information is available. The fourth man inline is Link Johnson, right field. The 1915 Directory does list a Johnson, Thomas L. coremaker res. 1322 Main. But this may well not be the person pictured. And finally, the last man is noted as Ed Collins, 2nd base. The 1911 Directory listed Collins, Edward, ball player res. 920 Orient. Isn't that interesting, that Collins is listed as a ball player

What this picture says to me is that a group of men from various ethnic and cultural backgrounds got together for sheer enjoyment as a base ball team. Perhaps the following statement by William M. Chase from the Language of Action is something this team comprehended so long ago. "Diversity, generally understood and embraced, is not casual liberal tolerance of anything and everything not yourself. It is not polite accomadation. Instead, diversity is, in action, the sometimes painful awareness that other people, other races, other voices, other habits of give as much integrity of being, as much claim on the world as you do....And I urge you, amid all the differences present to the eye and mind, to reach out to create the bond that.... will protect us all. We are meant to be here together."