

1999 REFLECTIONS OF PUBLIC HISTORIANS PART III

No.3

Our final installment of 1999 Reflections ends this week with Medina and Lyndonville. The photo which is seen here shows the Medina High School from around 1910. Note the long skirts the girls are wearing as these students are being dismissed.

This school, built in 1897 was located on South Academy.

From 1923 until 1955 it served as an elementary school and then was used for district offices. In February 1967 a fire caused extensive damage to the interior and the building was then razed.

Lyndonville by Elana Ames, Historian
In January, Gary Housel retired as manager of the bank after 38 years.

In June, Henry Pawlak was given the Distinguished Citizen Award from the Lewiston Trail Council of Boy Scouts. Also in June, Lyndonville won the best tasting water contest for Orleans County.

This past fall, the Yates Library celebrated its 50th anniversary.

Debra Partrick of Lyndonville had a children's book published entitled "Maddie's Gift." This was illustrated by Darlene Devine.

To celebrate New Year's, Lyndonville had a bail drop and fireworks at the L.A. Webber High School.

Medina by Edsel Grinnell, Historian

Someone has said that there will always be changes and 1999 is certainly proof of

this fact of life. Retirements by High School Principal, Fred Snyder, after 24 years, by Rev. John Francisco, who served the Presbyterian Church for 28 years, and by MHS Band Director, Joe McKain, following 32 years of leadership and numerous awards for his marching bands, will leave tremendous voids to be filled.

Sadly we lost Mayor Herb Brant at the close of '99 after a two and a half year struggle with cancer.

On a lighter note, 1999 saw the annual Canal Festival in July, which was dedicated to Oscar Pitts. This was followed by the Medina Summer Sampler, sponsored by the Medina Business Association and Fun Daze, for kids run by the Medina police/Community Task Force.

In April, and again in November, the Buffalo Philharmonic entertained at St. Mary's Church to packed houses.

The community was again able to bask in the accomplishments of the Mustang Band, not once but twice during the year. The first was in June at the Batavia Pageant of Bands and in September at the Fall Festival of Bands held at Vets Park. Here over 1,100 were in attendance. Top honors were earned at both scenes.

Business-wise, the Medina Chamber of Commerce merged with the Albion Chamber to become the Orleans County Chamber of



Commerce.

In May, the village purchased the former Medina Savings & Loan building on Park Avenue and have since converted it into the Village Clerk's and Mayor's office. Handicap access and drive up window have been added, which will be welcomed by citizens. The facility was dedicated in November.

The newest business in Medina, Ontario Foods was voted Industry of the Year in May. The removal of the company from Albion to the huge warehouse, formerly Fisher-Price/Mattel, is nearly completed. Due to the purchase of an Illinois concern, employment is not at 200, an increase of about 70 jobs this past year.

There always has to be a dark side. Muchow's Floral Shop was hit by a

devastating fire in late October. Owner Ernie Orgar has contracted a rebuilding project on the East Center site and is temporarily doing business in the former Enderby Electrical building on South Main Street.

The bleakest news was the announcement in October that American Sigma was closing by February 1 with the loss of 138 jobs.

BernzOmatic, maker of propane torches and other items, on the east side of town, announced earlier this year of a plan to relocate production and equipment from Illinois to Medina. This is expected to require the hiring of 30 additional employees and may necessitate the expansion of their present 180,000 square foot facility.

As in life, the good mixes with the unpleasant. Happy New Year.