

History

A Brief History of the Town of Verona:

Early settlers in the town included Ichabod Hand in the hamlet of Verona, George A Smith in Verona Beach, Eber Durham in Durhamville and Ambrose Jones in New London. The Town of Verona was officially cut from the Town of Westmoreland on Feb 17, 1802, with 102 families.

Buildings were erected and business thrived; many mills and factories sprang up and the land was well suited for farming with bountiful yields of crops. Craftsmen prospered in work such as blacksmithing, harnessmaking, carpentry and masonry.

In 1825 the Old Erie Canal was completed, running through the town from New London, through Higginsville and south to Durhamville. Industry on and along the canal flourished with a variety of related jobs in transport of goods and people all the way to the Midwest. Well-known glass factories thrived in Dunbarton and Durhamville for over 40 years. The lavish Verona Springs Hotel with its "Water cure" was host to people from many countries.

According to the 1855 NY State census, the number of families in Verona had risen to 1,330. Served by 27 one-room schools and 11 churches. There were also 15 retail stores, 12 hotels, and 33 groceries. Factories of cheese, textiles, glass provided sustenance and employment for residents.

The 6 hamlets of Verona, known as Durhamville, Higginsville, New London, Sconondoa, Verona, and Verona Beach, were comprised of the smaller areas of Verona Springs, Verona Depot, State Bridge, Dunbarton, Stark's Landing, Rathbunville, Churchville, Stacy Basin, and Grove Springs.

The 1860s brought faster, cheaper transport by railway, diminishing the importance of the Canal. In the early 20th century the Erie was replaced by the Barge Canal, which bypassed the town of Verona. Changes in manufacturing moved factories to different geographic areas. In 1954 the NY State Thruway followed a similar path as the Erie Canal through New York, making the Barge Canal less traveled.

The 1950s brought consolidation of the Verona schools into a centralized district. Today, students of Verona are educated at the Vernon, Verona and Sherrill School system, or the Oneida City Schools. Churches still number 11 but by different names and there are 3 fire departments.

In 1993 the Oneida Indian Nation began ongoing business growth, starting with a bingo hall and casino. They continue to grow today and are the largest non-governmental employer in Oneida County.

We invite our neighbors and friends to come and visit our special town in the "Heart of Central New York".

Written by Sheila Hoffman, March 2014.

Collections are available to assist those who wish to conduct either scholarly or family research :

Master Index of 100,000 + records available, in addition to the following collections:

A-Z Family files	Maps
Cemetery Records	Military Records
Census – Federal and State	Obituaries
Church files	Oneida Indian Nation newspaper chronology
Erie Canal files	Organizations and Associations
Fires & Fire Departments	Photos over 4,500, Digital
Hamlet files	Post Offices
Industry	Schools
Highways & Railroads	Waterways
	Weddings and Anniversaries

Sheila Hoffman – Town Historian 315-225-3244

Office hours are Thursdays 9:00 am – 4:00 pm or by appointment.

Historical Building (Thursdays) 315-363-6799 Ext. 8

The purpose of the Town Historian is to collect, preserve and promote the history of Verona. Research projects are ongoing to add detail to our collections and to be shared. Periodic presentations are given at the Verona Historical Association meetings or upon request.

Mark Collins – Acting President of Verona Historical Association 315-697-2737

Verona Historical Museum Tours by appointment.