

2013

# TOWN OF EPHRATAH DRAFT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



ADOPTED:

RESOLUTION:

## **INTRODUCTION**

In 2012, the Town of Ephratah Town Board created a Comprehensive Plan Committee to prepare a Comprehensive Plan for the Town. The following persons were appointed by the Town Board to serve on this Special Committee:

Todd Bradt  
Nancy Christman  
Ivan Duesler  
Bruce Frasier  
William J. Simpson  
Judy Townsend  
Rosalyn S. Wood

The Town of Ephratah requested the services of the Fulton County Planning Department to assist the Comprehensive Plan Committee in the development of the Comprehensive Plan. The Committee began work on the Comprehensive Plan in October, 2012 and completed its work in 2013.

The Town desires to have a plan for its future. This Comprehensive Plan represents that plan or vision. In addition, this Comprehensive Plan recommends a series of initiatives for which the Town may want to seek State or Federal funding to help pay for the cost of implementing these initiatives. Today, many State and Federal funding programs require communities to have Comprehensive Plans that include the initiative for which funding is being requested. The adopting of this Comprehensive Plan would allow the Town to seek desired State and Federal funding for specific projects and initiatives identified herein.

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## **VISION STATEMENT**

We, the residents of Ephratah, envision that, in 2033, the Town of Ephratah will be a small, vibrant rural residential-based community. The Town will feature a Town Center located at the intersection of New York State Route 29 and NYS Route 10 heading south. Town Center will be the focal point of activity in the Town and will feature a mixture and variety of uses for residents and visitors alike including:

1. Gas Station
2. Convenience Store
3. Sandwich/Coffee Shop
4. Farmers Market
5. Boutique shops
6. Town Hall
7. Post Office
8. Senior Housing
9. Townhouses
10. Walking Trail
11. Other

Town Center will be a small, concentrated area of development that features buildings designed to provide Town Center with a unique and distinctive character and theme. The commercial development in Town Center has expanded the Town's tax base and increased sales tax revenues which stabilized tax rates for property owners.

A new Town Hall will be located in Town Center and provide space for:

1. Town Offices
2. Meeting Room
3. Community Room
4. Records Storage
5. Senior Center
6. Town Museum
7. Primary Care Facility
8. Book Exchange

The Town will feature a diversity of housing types that has both attracted young adults into the Town and helped retain senior citizens. The variety of housing types has strengthened the Town's reputation as a desirable place to live and raise a family. The Town's high quality of life has produced an influx of young residents that has increased enrollment at and strengthened the St. Johnsville-Oppenheim Ephratah School District. The Town's annual marketing and promotional program has been successful in "getting the word out" that the Town of Ephratah is a great place to live and do business.

Even though the Town's population will have grown and gotten younger from an influx of younger families, the Town will have been very successful in retaining its senior citizens through the development of senior housing. The Ephratah Senior Complex will be very popular and have a strong waiting list of people wanting to move in. The development of this facility will help senior citizens to remain and call Ephratah home.

The expansion of the Ephratah Recreational Complex will include walking trails, additional recreational facilities for children and on site restrooms to make this facility a popular venue with Town residents. An adventure-based, education/recreational facility will be providing team building workshops and activities to various groups in the Region.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### **I. SUMMARY OF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:**

#### **1. Economy:**

##### **a. Town Center:**

A key component of the Town of Ephratah's Comprehensive Plan is the development of a Town Center at the intersection of NYS Route 29 and NYS Route 10 heading south. Town Center would be a small area of concentrated developments that would serve as a focal point for the Town. Town Center would be where Town residents access items needed for daily life without having to travel long distances. Some of the different types of development that would be in Town Center include:

1. Gas Station
2. Convenience Store
3. Sandwich/Coffee Shop
4. Farmers Market
5. Boutique shops
6. Town Hall
7. Post Office
8. Senior Housing
9. Townhouses
10. Walking Trail
11. Other

Residents, visitors and tourists would be able to shop, eat, conduct Town business and perform other functions in Town Center. The vision of the Comprehensive Plan also calls for both senior housing and townhouses being developed in Town Center. Locating the Ephratah Senior Housing Complex near basic services would be critical to attracting seniors to live there.

##### **b. Gas Station/Convenience Store:**

A key component of the Comprehensive Plan would be locating a gas station/convenience store in the Town of Ephratah. At present, residents and businesses in the Town have to travel long distances to obtain fuel and basic food items. Locating a gas station/convenience store in the Town would make it easier on residents and businesses and make the Town of Ephratah a more desirable place to live and do business.

It is the vision of this Comprehensive Plan that a gas station/convenience store be located in one of the following areas:

1. Town Center
2. One of the three (3) Hamlet areas in the Town (Ephratah, Rockwood, and Lasselsville)

### 3. East side of NYS Route 10 north of NYS Route 29

The Town of Ephratah should work with realtors and developers to find and market potential sites in the Town for the development of a new gas station/convenience store. Representatives from regional and national convenience store chains should be contacted and encouraged to consider locating one of their convenience stores/gas stations in the Town of Ephratah. This aggressive marketing campaign is necessary to ensure that this vision of the Comprehensive Plan is achieved.

#### c. Agriculture:

Agriculture is an important component of the Town's local economy. Several large farms are located along the southern border of the Town. In 2012, there were 49 parcels of land comprising 1,843 acres of land situated in Fulton County Agricultural District No. 1. At present, there is no local market for local farmers to sell their crops. It is the vision of this Comprehensive Plan to create a Farmer's Market to provide opportunities for local farmers to sell their crops.

#### d. Business Development:

It is the vision of this Comprehensive Plan that additional businesses be located in the Town. The Town of Ephratah should provide incentives to attract businesses to the Town. One potential incentive the Town should consider Real Property Tax Exemptions for commercial businesses or industrial real property as authorized by Section 485-b of the Real Property Tax Law.

The Comprehensive Plan also encourages the development of home-based businesses as a way to create more businesses in the Town.

### 2. Housing:

The Town of Ephratah is primarily a rural residential Town. A majority of the Town's existing housing stock is single-family dwelling units. The Comprehensive Plan recommends that the Town apply for State and federal financial funds to address substandard housing conditions in the Town's housing stock. Given the Town's growing aging population, there is a need for senior housing. It is the vision of this Comprehensive Plan to have an Ephratah Senior Housing Complex developed in Town Center. In addition, there is also a need in the Town for low-maintenance forms of housing such as apartments or townhouses.

### 3. Recreation:

In order to maintain the Town's attractiveness as a place to live, the Town must have available a variety of year round recreational assets available to residents. It is the vision of this Comprehensive Plan that the Town develop additional recreational activities at the Ephratah Recreational Complex, seek to have an adventure-based team building facility re-established in the Town and to improve public access to the Rockwood Reservoir.



#### **4. Transportation:**

There are 68.7 miles of road in the Town. Forty-six (46) miles or 67% are roads owned and maintained by the Town. There are approximately 15 miles of State and 8 miles of County roads in the Town.

The Comprehensive Plan acknowledges the poor condition of State roads in the Town.

The Comprehensive Plan also identified several intersections that have safety concerns that should be addressed.

#### **5. Community Facilities:**

Community Facilities are an integral component of community's character and quality of life. One of the key Community Facilities recognized in the Comprehensive Plan is Town Hall. Town Hall is currently located on the west side of NYS Route 10. The building was built in the 1960's, is old, has limited spaces and lacks spaces for a meeting room, community room, records storage and other important uses. It is the vision of this Comprehensive Plan that a new Town Hall eventually be developed in Town Center and for the existing Town Hall to be used by the Town Highway Department.

## **II. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS:**

### **1. Economy:**

- a. The Town of Ephratah should pursue the development of a Town Center at the intersection of NYS Route 29 and NYS Route 10 heading south. However, if this location cannot be pursued, Town Center should be located at another site on NYS Route 29 between the two (2) NYS Route 10 intersections along Route 29. The Town should initially pursue acquiring a road ROW and pursue the development of a new Town road through the Town Center site.
- b. The Town of Ephratah should locate a new gas station/convenience store at either:
  - Town Center
  - Rockwood Hamlet Area
  - Ephratah Hamlet Area
  - Lasselsville Hamlet Area
- c. The Town of Ephratah should work with realtors and developers to identify and market potential sites for a gas station/convenience store. Representatives of regional and national convenience store chains should be contacted and made aware of the Town's desire and need for a convenience store.
- d. The Town of Ephratah should encourage the creation of jobs in the Town by promoting the creation of new, small businesses in Town Center.

- e. The Town Board should consider adopting a Local Law to authorize providing a 485-b Real Property Tax Exemption to eligible commercial, business and industrial properties as a financial incentive to attract new businesses into the Town.
- f. The Town of Ephratah should annually invest funds into promoting and marketing the Town, the creation of new, small businesses in Town Center and the utilization of existing businesses in the Town.
- g. The Town of Ephratah should develop design standards for Town Center dealing with building setbacks, landscaping, site lighting, off-street parking, signage and building materials used. These standards would be critical to achieving the desired vision for Town Center.
- h. The Town of Ephratah should pursue the development of a Farmer's Market at Town Center or another appropriate location in the Town.
- i. The Town of Ephratah should encourage the diversification of the local agricultural economy in order to grow the local economy and to preserve the rural character of the Town that these farming operations perpetuate.
- j. The Town of Ephratah should encourage the development of home-based businesses to grow the local economy.
- k. The Town of Ephratah should encourage and attract a large animal veterinarian into the Town and locate this veterinarian in or near Town Center.

**2. Housing:**

- a. The Town of Ephratah should pursue the development of an Ephratah Senior Housing Complex in Town Center or at another appropriate site in the Town. The Town should actively pursue grants to fund the development of senior citizen housing.
- b. The Town of Ephratah should encourage the development of low-maintenance types of housing including senior housing, apartments, condominiums, assisted living centers and others to keep current residents and to attract others to locate within the Town.
- c. The Town of Ephratah should encourage both large lot and clustered residential development patterns.
- d. The Town of Ephratah should market its strengths to housing developers including its natural environment, abundant recreational resources and its quality of life.
- e. The Town should apply for State and Federal financial assistance to address substandard housing and blight influencing conditions in the Town's existing housing stock.

### **3. Recreational Resources:**

- a. The Town of Ephratah should utilize its website ([www.Ephratah-town.org](http://www.Ephratah-town.org)) to:
  - 1) Promote the availability of a walking track at the Town Recreation Complex.
  - 2) Develop and maintain a list of Special Events that identifies the number and type of known special events that will be held in the Town during the year.
  - 3) Develop and maintain a "Recreational Calendar" to provide residents with information about recreational opportunities and events.
  - 4) Post minutes to the Recreation Commission meetings.
- b. The Town of Ephratah should develop Additional Recreational Opportunities at the Town's Recreational Complex including:
  - 1) Public restroom facilities.
  - 2) More extensive playground for young children.
  - 3) Designated snowmobile trailer parking area to access the Royal Mountain Moonlighter Snowmobile Club's C8E snowmobile trail located 1.2 miles east along NYS Route 29.
  - 4) Book Exchange.
  - 5) Lease out the recreational fields to private users to raise funds for the Town.
- c. The Town of Ephratah should develop a Recreational Plan for Town's Recreational Complex that includes:
  - 1) Establishing uses for vacant land.
  - 2) A Nature Trail.
  - 3) Cross country/snowshoe trails.
- d. The Town of Ephratah should improve Public Access to Rockwood Reservoir by:
  - 1) Reacquiring public access rights to the Reservoir from Erie Boulevard Hydropower.
  - 2) Work with Erie Boulevard Hydropower to:
    - 1. Develop a dedicated paved off-street parking area.
    - 2. Develop a handicap-accessible walking path from the parking area to the shore of the Reservoir.
    - 3. Install signage along NYS Route 10.
- e. The Town of Ephratah should encourage and promote the reestablishment of an adventure-based education/recreational facility at the former Adirondack Center, Town's Recreational Complex or at another facility in the Town.

### **4. Transportation:**

- a. The Town of Ephratah should develop Town Center at the southeast corner of the intersection of NYS Route 29 and NYS Route 10 heading south.
- b. The Town of Ephratah should encourage NYSDOT to repave all State roads in the Town.

- c. The Town of Ephratah should work with NYSDOT to make certain improvements, such as adding a passing lane on the northbound lane of NYS Route 10 coming out of the hamlet of Ephratah to NYS Route 29 to accommodate the truck traffic that will be accessing the new water bottling plant in the Town of Johnstown.
- d. The Town of Ephratah should work with NYSDOT to make improvements to NYS Route 29 at its intersection with both Fical and Old State Roads.
- e. The Town of Ephratah should look at improving the lines of sight at the intersection of Tillboro and Wohlgemuth Roads.
- f. The Town of Ephratah should ensure that all new requests for road cuts should be carefully reviewed by the Town Code Enforcement Officer and the Town Planning Board to ensure that maximum spacing is provided between road cuts and minimum site distances are met to protect and preserve proper safety and flow.
- g. The Town of Ephratah should adopt land use regulations that help to manage growth along the State corridors and encourage corridor management principles such as larger lot sizes and frontage requirements, adequate driveway spacing, shared driveway access, larger setbacks, etc.

**5. Community Facilities:**

- a. The Town of Ephratah should pursue the development of a new Town Hall in Town Center to meet the current and future needs of the Town. The existing Town Hall should be turned over to the Town's Highway Department. The Town of Ephratah should seek grant funding to help pay for the cost of a new Town Hall. The new Town Hall should, at a minimum, have spaces for:
  - Town Offices
  - Meeting Room
  - Community Room
  - Records Storage
  - Senior Center
  - Town Museum
  - Primary Care Facility
  - Book Exchange
- b. The Town of Ephratah should encourage cellular service providers to expand cellular service in the Town by finding suitable locations for additional cell towers.
- c. The Town of Ephratah should work with Frontier, Time Warner and other internet service providers to make internet access available throughout the Town.
- d. The Town of Ephratah should work with Nathan Littauer, St. Mary's and Little Falls Hospitals to discuss ways to improve the access of health care within the Town.
- e. The Town of Ephratah should work within the neighboring Towns of Stratford, Caroga and Oppenheim to help promote better access to health care.
- f. The Town of Ephratah should work with the Ephratah Historical Society to create a Town Museum to be located in the new Town Hall.

- g. The Town of Ephratah should work with federal legislators and the US Postal Service to obtain a Post Office in the Town of Ephratah that would be located in Town Center.

**6. Land Use Controls:**

- a. The Comprehensive Plan represents the vision for where the Town of Ephratah wants to be in the future. Zoning is a tool available to the Town to help implement the Comprehensive Plan. It is the recommendation of the Comprehensive Plan Committee that the Town Board give consideration to the development of a Town Zoning Ordinance to help implement the vision of this Comprehensive Plan.

# CHAPTER I

## ECONOMY

### I. INTRODUCTION:

The local economy contributes immeasurably to the livability of a community. As a rural, residential community, there are no major businesses located in the Town. The small businesses that do exist in the Town provide limited employment opportunities for Town residents. Agriculture is a component to the Town's local economy. Several larger farms exist along the Town's southern border. There are also smaller farmer operations growing various specialty crops.

It is the vision of this Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Ephratah to be a small, vibrant rural community with a strong tax base and stable tax rates. In order to have stable tax rates, either governmental expenditures must remain constant or the Town's tax base must grow. Unfortunately, the costs of operating local governments in New York State have risen significantly in recent years. Rising pension, health insurance and other costs have significantly impacted municipal budgets and tax rates all across New York State. The only way municipalities can absorb these rising costs and maintain stable tax rates is to grow its tax base. A municipality's tax base means the total assessed valuation of all its taxable properties.

In order to achieve the vision of this Comprehensive Plan of being a small, vibrant rural community with stable tax rates, there will need to be new development and the creation of new assessed valuation within the Town. It is the vision of this Comprehensive Plan that development should occur in a way to protect and preserve the Town's rural character as follows:

1. Create a Town Center:

Town Center would feature new developments that would grow the Town's tax base as well as create sales tax revenues for the Town. By concentrating these developments into a small area of the Town will help the Town retain its rural character.

2. Create Three (3) small Commercial Centers:

It is the vision of this Comprehensive Plan that the following three (3) small commercial centers be developed in the three (3) Hamlet areas in the Town:

- a. Rockwood : NYS Route 29 between Schoolhouse Road and the intersection of NYS Route 10 heading to Caroga.
- b. Lasselsville : NYS Route 29 and County Road 119 intersection.
- c. Ephratah : NYS Route 10 and NYS Route 67 intersection.

These three (3) Hamlet areas should be targeted for some commercial/retail development whereby Town residents could travel for desired services. By concentrating these developments into existing Hamlet areas, will help the Town retain its rural character.

3. Residential Development:

It is the vision of the Comprehensive Plan to have new residential development occurring throughout the Town. The creation of new housing would add to the Town's tax base.

## **II. TOWN CENTER:**

It is the vision of this Comprehensive Plan to strengthen the Town's local economy through the creation of a Town Center. Town Center would be located on a 10+/- acre site at the intersection of NYS Route 29 and NYS Route 10 heading south. Map No. 1 at the end of this Chapter provides an illustration of a potential layout for Town Center. This illustration is not intended to be the final layout or plan. Rather, it is a vision of how Town Center could lay out on a piece of property with the respective Town Center buildings.

This central site would serve as a convenient location where residents and visitors could stop to shop, eat and look for information about recreational sites and tourist attractions in the Town Center. Town Center would, at a minimum, include:

1. Gas Station
2. Convenience Store
3. Sandwich/Coffee Shop
4. Farmers Market
5. Boutique Shops
6. Farmers Market
7. Town Hall
8. Post Office
9. Senior Housing
10. Townhouses
11. Walking Trail
12. Other

As shown on Map 1, Town Center would consist of a series of buildings developed along a new Town road that would be constructed off NYS Route 29. The Town Board should initiate the implementation of Town Center by acquiring the right-of-way needed to develop this new road and then proceed to build the road. The new Town Road would be approximately 1,200' in length.

Once this road was in place, the site could be marketed to prospective businesses including a convenience store/gas station that has been identified by Town residents as needed in the Town. At some point in time, the Town could then pursue construction a new Town Hall in Town Center. Construction a new Town Hall in this location would certainly serve a catalyst for the development of Town Center.

Town Center would be an ideal location for the development of an Ephratah Senior Housing Complex and other forms of low-maintenance housing. The proximity to services, Town Government, a recreational trail and the Garoga Reservoir would make Town Center an attractive place to live.

NYSDOT should also be encouraged to install interpretative signage on NYS Route 29 advising motorists of where Town Center is located.

Design standards should be developed to address issues such as building setbacks, landscaping, site lighting, off-street parking, signage and building materials used for building in Town Center. These standards would be critical to achieving the desired vision for what Town Center should look like.

Once developed, its design, location and diversity of activities would make Town Center the primary attraction point for the Town of Ephratah. It would be the central point for residents and visitors to meet, socialize, shop, eat and recreate in the Town. Town Center would significantly impact the quality of life in the Town of Ephratah.

### **III. GAS STATION/CONVENIENCE STORE:**

A key component of the Comprehensive Plan would be locating a gas station/convenience store in the Town of Ephratah. At present, residents and businesses in the Town have to travel long distances to obtain fuel and basic food items. Locating a gas station/convenience store in the Town would make it easier on residents and businesses and make the Town of Ephratah a more desirable place to live and do business. It is the vision of this Comprehensive Plan that a gas station/convenience store be located in one of the following areas:

1. Town Center
2. One of the three (3) Hamlet areas in the Town (Rockwood, Ephratah, and Lasselsville)
3. East side of NYS Route 10 north of NYS Route 29

The Town of Ephratah should work with realtors and developers to market potential sites in the Town for the development of a new gas station/convenience store. Representatives from regional and national convenience store chains should be contacted and encouraged to consider locating one of their convenience stores/gas stations in the Town of Ephratah. This aggressive marketing campaign is necessary to ensure that this vision of the Comprehensive Plan is achieved.

### **IV. EXISTING BUSINESSES IN THE TOWN OF EPHRATAH:**

In 2013, the following twenty-one (21) businesses operated in the Town:

#### **A. Automobile Repair (4)**

1. Christman's Auto Center  
588 New Turnpike Road  
Ft. Plain, NY 13339
2. C & C Autoworks  
4901 State Hwy 29  
Johnstown, NY 12095
3. Ephratah Service Center  
4321 State Hwy 10  
St. Johnsville, NY 13452
4. Kretser's Auto Repair  
261 Saltsman Road  
St. Johnsville, NY 13452

#### **B. Restaurants (5)**

1. Saltsman's  
104 County Hwy 140  
Fort Plain, NY 13339



2. Brittany's Diner  
105 State Hwy 67  
Fort Plain, NY 13339
3. Brookside Tavern  
4389 State Hwy 10
4. Grannys  
4946 State Hwy 29
5. Royal Mountain Inn  
4993 State Hwy 29

C. Agricultural Products (5)

1. ALP Farms  
383 Murray Hill Road  
St. Johnsville, NY 13452
2. Fraser's Sugar Shack  
144 Church Street  
St. Johnsville, NY 13452
3. Mud Road Sugar House  
Mud Road
4. Kathy O's  
Tillboro Road  
St. Johnsville, NY
5. Mark Christman Farm  
563 New Turnpike Road

D. Retail (1)

1. Rockwood General Store  
4688 State Hwy 29

E. Beauty Salons (1)

1. Peg's Beauty Shop  
4334 State Hwy 10  
St. Johnsville, NY 13452

F. Cemetery Care and Monuments (1)

1. Heavenly Care  
211 School Street  
Fort Plain, NY 13339

G. Recreation (2)

1. Caroga Creek Racetrack  
Tillboro Road
2. Royal Mountain Campsites  
4946 State Hwy 29

H. Water Treatment (1)

1. Mike Heroth Water Treatment  
407 Murray Hill Road  
St. Johnsville, NY 13452

I. Construction (1)

1. B & B Foundations  
Saltsman Road

None of the existing businesses in the Town are large employers. In addition, there are no industrial or manufacturing operations located in the Town. This can be attributed to the lack of municipal water and sewer services available to support industrial and manufacturing operations.

It is the vision of this Comprehensive Plan that additional businesses be located in the Town. The Town of Ephratah should provide incentives to attract businesses to the Town. One potential incentive the Town should consider offering are Real Property Tax Exemptions for commercial businesses or industrial real property as authorized by Section 485-b of the Real Property Tax Law. The 485-b Exemption authorizes a partial exemption from real property taxes for commercial, business or industrial property constructed, altered, installed or improved as specified in a local law. The cost of such construction must exceed \$10,000 or a higher minimum not to exceed \$50,000 as may be specified in a local law. The Town Board of the Town of Ephratah should consider adopting a Local Law authorizing providing this 485-b Real Property Tax Exemption as an incentive to attract new businesses into the Town of Ephratah.

One type of business that is not easy to inventory for a community is home based businesses. These types of businesses, which can include a vast array of services are almost impossible to keep track of from a land use standpoint. Many home based businesses aren't readily noticeable when you drive by the residence because most of the time there is no signage involved in the business and there is no visible product or materials kept on the property. In this age of rapidly advancing technological innovation, an increasing number of small businesses are starting up in homes across the country. From a land use standpoint, these types of businesses have very little or no impact at all on local land use patterns in the community because they typically occur in existing residences and only rarely

require the construction of an addition on a residence. The Town should encourage the development of home-based businesses as a way to grow the local economy.

## **V. AGRICULTURE:**

The Town of Ephratah has an active agricultural community. Several large farms are situated along the southern border of the Town. In 2012, there were 49 parcels of land comprising 1,842.6 acres in the Town located in Fulton County Agricultural District No. 1. (See Map 2.) Agriculture plays an important role in the local economy and enhances the rural atmosphere of the Town.

Fulton County's Agricultural Development and Farmland Protection Plan outlines several goals and objectives for the County's agricultural economy. One of the goals identified in this Plan is to encourage farmers to diversify their farm products and establish new markets for those farm products. Today, throughout New York State, agricultural operations are becoming more specialized. Specialty crops, vineyards and a variety of unique agricultural ventures are the types of diversification efforts that are occurring in the agricultural industry.

At present, there is no local market whereby local farmers could have a central location to sell their crops. It is the vision of this Comprehensive Plan that the Town develop a Farmers Market whereby local farmers could sell their crops and products.

There are a number of farms in the Town raising dairy and beef cattle as well as individuals raising horses. At present, there is no large animal veterinarian located in the Town of Ephratah to care for these animals. Large animal vets specialize in health management of livestock species such as cattle, horses, sheep, goats and pigs. They conduct health exams, give vaccinations, draw blood, prescribe medications and perform surgeries. There is a need for a large animal veterinarian in the Town of Ephratah.

## **VI. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE TOWN OF EPHRATAH:**

Economic development refers to the sustained actions of policy makers or a community to promote the standard of living and economic health of an area.

Economic development activities in Fulton County are currently handled by the Fulton County Center for Regional Growth. This private, not for profit corporation provides economic development services throughout Fulton County. Municipalities can contract directly with the Center for Regional Growth to provide certain economic development services in their municipalities. The Town of Ephratah does not currently contract with the Center for Regional Growth for economic development services.

It is the vision of this Comprehensive plan for the Town to annually invest funds into promoting Town Center as well as economic development and tourism activities.

It is also the vision of this Comprehensive Plan have more jobs available in the Town for local residents. This would be accomplished through the creation of small businesses to be located within Town Center.

## **VII. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 1. The Town of Ephratah should pursue the development of a Town Center at the intersection of NYS Route 29 and NYS Route 10 heading south. However, if this location cannot be pursued, Town Center should be located at another site on NYS Route 29 between the two (2) NYS Route 10 intersections along Route 29. The Town should initially pursue acquiring a road ROW and pursue the development of a new Town road into the Town Center site.**
- 2. The Town of Ephratah should locate a new gas station/convenience store at either:**
  - Town Center**
  - Rockwood Hamlet Area**
  - Ephratah Hamlet Area**
  - Lasselsville Hamlet Area**
- 3. The Town of Ephratah should work with realtors and developers to identify and market potential sites for a gas station/convenience store. Representatives of regional and national convenience store chains should be contacted and made aware of the Town's desire and need for a convenience store.**
- 4. The Town of Ephratah should encourage the creation of jobs in the Town by promoting the creation of new, small businesses in Town Center.**
- 5. The Town Board should consider adopting a Local Law to authorize providing a 485-b Real Property Tax Exemption to eligible commercial, business and industrial properties as a financial incentive to attract new businesses into the Town.**
- 6. The Town of Ephratah should annually invest funds into promoting and marketing the Town, the creation of new, small businesses in Town Center and the utilization of existing businesses in the Town.**
- 7. The Town of Ephratah should develop design standards for Town Center dealing with building setbacks, landscaping, site lighting, off-street parking, signage and building materials used. These standards would be critical to achieving the desired vision for Town Center.**
- 8. The Town of Ephratah should pursue the development of a Farmer's Market at Town Center or another appropriate location in the Town.**
- 9. The Town of Ephratah should encourage the diversification of the local agricultural economy in order to grow the local economy and to preserve the rural character of the Town that these farming operations perpetuate.**
- 10. The Town of Ephratah should encourage the development of home-based businesses to grow the local economy.**
- 11. The Town of Ephratah should encourage and attract a large animal veterinarian into the Town and locate this veterinarian in or near Town Center.**



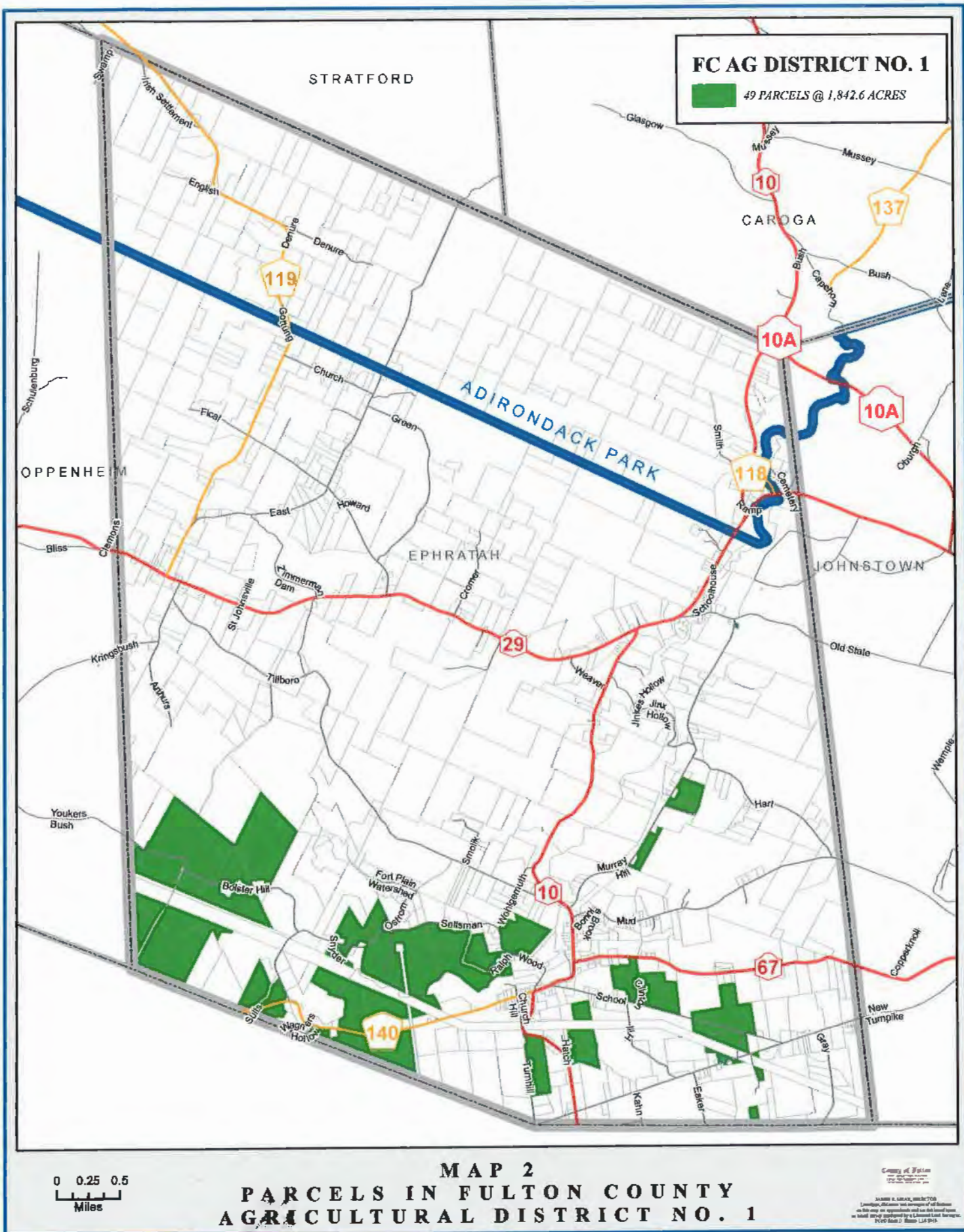


**MAP 1**  
**EPHRATAH TOWN CENTER ILLUSTRATION**  
**INTERSECTION OF NYS ROUTES 10 AND 29**

County of Sullivan

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED  
 Location, distance and names of all features  
 on this map are approximate and are not based upon  
 an actual survey conducted by a Licensed Land Surveyor.  
 PLOD State D. Issue 4.17.2013





## CHAPTER II HOUSING

### I. INTRODUCTION:

A community needs to have a diverse housing stock in order to meet the varying needs of its residents. At present, the Town's housing stock is primarily single-family dwellings. Low-maintenance types of housing are becoming increasingly popular and desired by both young families and senior citizens alike. If the Town desires to attract young families and retain its senior citizens, low-maintenance housing choices need to be made available in the Town.

### II. HOUSING TRENDS:

#### A. Total Housing Units:

According to the 2010 Census, the Town of Ephratah has 759 housing units. Of those 759 units, 655 units or 86.3% are occupied while 104 units or 13.7% are vacant. The United States Census Bureau includes seasonal homes under the vacant category and since the Town has 54 homes considered seasonal residences, there are actually only 50 homes that would be considered vacant.

#### HOUSING OCCUPANCY

2010

Total Housing Units	759	100%
Occupied Housing Units	655	86.3%
Vacant Housing Units	104	13.7%
Seasonal Units	54	7.1%
All Other Vacant	50	6.6%

Between 2000 and 2010, 39 new housing units were created, an increase of 5.4%. The Town has seen a steady increase in housing units since 1970, which for the most part, is a trend that has occurred throughout all townships in Fulton County.

#### TOTAL HOUSING UNITS IN FULTON COUNTY MUNICIPALITIES

1970-2010

Municipality	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	Change 1970-2010	% Change
City of Gloversville	7,514	7,795	7,596	7,540	7,477	-37	-4.9%
City of Johnstown	3,693	3,912	3,971	3,979	4,047	354	9.59%
<b>Total Cities</b>	<b>11,207</b>	<b>11,707</b>	<b>11,567</b>	<b>11,519</b>	<b>11,524</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>2.83%</b>
Town of Blecker	267	344	380	429	487	220	82.40%
Town of Broadalbin	1,657	2,028	2,287	2,625	2,736	1,079	65.12%
Town of Caroga	1,538	1,713	1,797	1,794	1,708	170	11.05%
<b>Town of Ephratah</b>	<b>425</b>	<b>603</b>	<b>601</b>	<b>720</b>	<b>759</b>	<b>334</b>	<b>78.59%</b>
Town of Johnstown	1,937	2,412	2,459	2,728	2,914	977	50.44%
Town of Mayfield	1,961	2,650	2,777	3,211	3,436	1,475	75.22%
Town of Northampton	1,268	1,685	1,843	1,962	2,026	758	59.78%
Town of Oppenheim	544	691	791	858	897	353	64.89%
Town of Perth	751	1,143	1,277	1,416	1,529	778	103.60%
Town of Stratford	422	531	481	525	546	124	29.38%
<b>Total Towns</b>	<b>10,770</b>	<b>13,800</b>	<b>14,693</b>	<b>16,268</b>	<b>17,038</b>	<b>6,268</b>	<b>58.20%</b>
<b>Fulton County</b>	<b>21,977</b>	<b>25,507</b>	<b>26,260</b>	<b>27,787</b>	<b>28,562</b>	<b>6,585</b>	<b>29.96%</b>

## **B. Occupancy:**

While an 86.7% owner occupancy rate in the Town might be considered a strength of the community, it also shows that there are very few rental options available. Data from the 2010 Census on housing types is not yet available, but according to the 2000 Census, there were no multi-family units in the Town and only six (6) housing units that were part of a 2-unit structure. Again, without the 2010 Census Data, it is difficult to determine if this housing trend has continued. But given the community's small increase in population, it is unlikely that these numbers have changed much.

### **OWNER OCCUPIED VS RENTAL UNITS IN FULTON COUNTY MUNICIPALITIES**

2010					
Municipality	Total Occupied Housing Units	Total Owner-Occupied Housing Units	% of Total	Total Renter-Occupied Housing Units	% of Total
City of Gloversville	6,486	3,356	51.74%	3,130	48.26%
City of Johnstown	3,686	2,162	58.65%	1,524	41.35%
<b>Total Cities</b>	<b>10,172</b>	<b>5,518</b>	<b>54.25%</b>	<b>4,654</b>	<b>45.75%</b>
Town of Bleecker	240	231	96.25%	9	3.75%
Town of Broadalbin	2,110	1,748	82.84%	362	17.16%
Town of Caroga	526	471	89.54%	55	10.46%
<b>Town of Ephratah</b>	<b>655</b>	<b>568</b>	<b>86.72%</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>13.28%</b>
Town of Johnstown	2,596	2,313	89.10%	278	10.71%
Town of Mayfield	2,669	2,162	81.00%	507	19.00%
Town of Northampton	1,151	871	75.67%	280	24.33%
Town of Oppenheim	730	625	85.62%	105	14.38%
Town of Perth	1,461	1,270	86.93%	191	13.07%
Town of Stratford	244	210	86.07%	25	10.25%
<b>Total Towns</b>	<b>12,382</b>	<b>10,469</b>	<b>84.55%</b>	<b>1,899</b>	<b>15.34%</b>
<b>Fulton County</b>	<b>23,554</b>	<b>15,987</b>	<b>67.87%</b>	<b>6,553</b>	<b>27.82%</b>

## **C. Mobile Homes:**

In 2000, there were 198 mobile homes in the Town which represented 27.5% of the 720 total housing units in the Town. That information is not yet available from the 2010 Census, so it is difficult to determine whether there has been a decline or growth in the number of mobile homes in the Town. Nevertheless, while mobile homes offer a low to moderate income housing option, this type of housing typically does not increase in value over the long term. As such, mobile homes typically do not contribute to growing a municipality's tax base.

## **III. POPULATION TRENDS THAT AFFECT HOUSING DEMAND:**

Up until 2010, the Town's population has trended slightly upward. However, between 2000-2010, the Town's population actually decreased by 11. The Town's median age, as of 2010, jumped dramatically to 44.2 years. Although there was a slight decline in the overall population in the Town between 2000 and 2010, there was a noticeable jump in the 65+ population, which now makes up approximately 14.5% of the population. In fact, the Town has seen a 67% increase in its 65+ population since 1990. This growth in the Town's 65+ population indicates a need to have senior housing and other forms of low-maintenance housing available in the Town if the Town desires to retain this segment of the Town's population.

At the other end of the age spectrum, the Town has seen a steady decline in the school age population (5-19). Between 2000 and 2010, there were 110 fewer school-age children in the community, which represented a decline of almost 29%.



The decline in school-aged children could mean families with school-aged children are either moving out of the Town or not moving to the Town. If this is the case, a reason could be the lack of low-maintenance housing options.

#### **IV. CONDITON OF EXISTING HOUSING STOCK:**

A significant portion of the Town's existing housing stock is old. Some of this older and aging existing housing stock is in substandard condition and in need of improvement. In some instances, code violations need to be addressed.

There exists State and Federal housing rehabilitation programs that provide financial assistance to property owners to address substandard housing conditions as well as to remove blighting influences.

It is the vision of this Comprehensive Plan that the Town seek out and apply for State and Federal financial assistance for housing rehabilitation. This financial assistance would be used to address the substandard conditions of the Town's older and aging existing housing stock. It is believed that the improved maintenance of the Town's existing housing stock would help to prevent blight, improve the Town's physical appearance and stabilize the Town's tax base. All of these benefits would be consistent with the vision of the Town's Comprehensive Plan.

#### **V. HOUSING NEEDS:**

Based on the population and housing trends in the Town and the Town's vision of where it would like to see the community be in 20 years, several housing needs have been identified:

1. There is a need for senior housing in the Town of Ephratah. Today, there is a national trend for the 65+ population, the baby-boomer generation and "empty nesters" to look for low-maintenance housing options. In the Town of Ephratah, there are very few low-maintenance housing options available. As the Town's population continues to age, there is a risk that the 65+ population could move elsewhere if it does not have available to it low maintenance housing options. There is also the risk that some 65+ residents may not have the option of moving away and without the ability or the means to maintain their properties there could be a noticeable decline in the upkeep of certain residential properties in the Town.
2. There is a need for apartments/condominiums or similar low-maintenance housing types in the Town of Ephratah. Given the ongoing decline in the school-age population, there may eventually become less of a need for traditional single-family homes in the community. As the population ages, and there are fewer school-aged children living in the community, housing options such as apartment complexes and condominium complexes may become more desirable to residents in the Town and may be a way to prevent population decline.
3. There is a need to consider some cluster housing development in the Town of Ephratah. It is recognized that some residents moved to the Town to acquire a large tract of land to locate a single-family house on. There remains a plentiful supply of vacant land in the Town to continue to support the creation of large lots for housing. While it is desirable to continue to encourage large lot development, there is also a need to consider cluster housing development. A cluster development would limit land disturbance, reduce site layout and development costs and preserve the Town's natural environment. By having available both large lots and cluster housing options available, the Town would be more attractive to a more diverse population.

4. There is a need to address the substandard conditions of a portion of the Town's aging existing housing stock. Financial assistance is needed for homeowners to address code violations, substandard housing conditions and blight. The Town should consider working with the Fulton County Community Heritage Corporation or another organization in applying for State and Federal financial assistance to help homeowners deal with existing substandard housing conditions.

## **VI. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. The Town of Ephratah should pursue the development of an Ephratah Senior Housing Complex in Town Center or at another appropriate site in the Town. The Town should actively pursue grants to fund the development of senior citizen housing.
2. The Town of Ephratah should encourage the development of low-maintenance types of housing including senior housing, apartments, condominiums, assisted living centers and others to keep current residents and to attract others to locate within the Town.
3. The Town of Ephratah should encourage both large lot and clustered residential development patterns.
4. The Town of Ephratah should market its strengths to housing developers including its natural environment, abundant recreational resources and its quality of life.
5. The Town should apply for State and Federal financial assistance to address substandard housing and blight influencing conditions in the Town's existing housing stock.

## **CHAPTER III RECREATIONAL RESOURCES**

### **I. BACKGROUND:**

The availability of diverse, year round recreational resources is an integral component to a vibrant community. Diverse, year around recreational resources are major assets and attractions that are sought after by residents, vacationers and tourists. Today, many people desire to live in a community that provides various types and forms of both indoor and outdoor year round recreational activities.

There are limited recreational opportunities currently in the Town of Ephratah. Some of these recreational opportunities can be considered as year-round. Most are outdoor activities. There are, at present, a few indoor recreational opportunities in the Town.

The maintenance of existing and provision of new year round recreational opportunities to include indoor recreation will have a positive effect on the Town's quality of life.

### **II. INVENTORY OF EXISTING RECREATIONAL RESOURCES:**

The Town of Ephratah has the following existing recreational resources:

- A. Reservoirs & Ponds
- B. Creeks
- C. NYS DEC Trails
- D. Snowmobile Trails
- E. NYS Wild Forest Lands
- F. NYS Reforestation Lands
- G. Ephratah Recreational Complex
- H. Ephratah Rod & Gun Club
- I. Ephratah Recreation Commission
- J. Former Adirondack Center
- K. Nearby Recreational Resources

All of these recreational resources are shown on the attached Recreational Resources Map.



ROCKWOOD RESERVOIR PUBLIC FISHING ACCESS

#### **Reservoirs & Ponds:**

There are no lakes in the Town of Ephratah. There are several unnamed ponds located on private property.

There are three (3) reservoirs: Rockwood, Garoga and St. Johnsville.

#### **Rockwood Reservoir:**

Rockwood Reservoir is located on property owned by Erie Boulevard Hydropower, LP. Rockwood Reservoir is utilized for fishing, canoeing and kayaking. Gasoline powered motors are restricted however electric motors may be used. During

the winter months, Rockwood Reservoir is a popular ice fishing water body. There exists one (1) public access point along NYS Highway 10. This public access point has a barricaded parking area that may accommodate up to twelve (12) vehicles. Unimproved narrow footpaths lead to the water's edge.

The Town of Ephratah used to have public access rights to the Reservoir but returned those rights to National Grid some 20 years ago. It is the vision of this Comprehensive Plan that the Town reacquire public access rights from National Grid and to pursue having certain, limited improvements made including improved off-street parking, signage and improved access to the water. The site should only be used for fishing, canoeing and kayaking. No swimming should be allowed.



ROCKWOOD RESERVOIR

### Garoga Reservoir:

Garoga Reservoir is also located on property owned by Erie Boulevard Hydropower, LP and other private property. There is a 760 foot long, 65 foot high hydro-electric generation dam located at its South basin that was erected in 1980. Garoga Reservoir is utilized by the local community year round, particularly during the winter for ice fishing. There is a public access area along Old State Road.



**GAROGA RESERVOIR**



### St. Johnsville Reservoir:

St. Johnsville Reservoir is located on a 356+/- acre parcel owned by the Village of St. Johnsville. The Village uses this Reservoir as their municipal water source. The property is designated as watershed property. There is a 740 foot long, 20 foot high earthen dam located along Zimmerman Creek at the South West basin of the Reservoir. There are no permitted access points for recreational activities.



ST. JOHNSTVILLE RESERVOIR

### INVENTORY OF RESERVOIRS

NAME	SURFACE AREA (Acres)	LENGTH OF SHORELINE (Miles)	DEPTH		RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES AVAILABLE				FISH SPECIES
			Deepest (Feet)	Mean (Feet)	Motorized Boat/Speed Limit (mph)	Non-Motorized Boat	Public Parking	Fishing	
Rockwood Lake (Reservoir)	68.6	3.5	40	25		X	X	X	BB, YP, RT, SB, P
Garoga Lake (Reservoir)	36.0	1.7	50	20		X	X	X	YP, CP, BC, BT, CP, P
St. Johnsville Reservoir**	78.5	3.0							UNK

BB – Brown Bullhead, RT – Rainbow Trout, BT – Brown Trout, SB – Smallmouth Bass, YP – Yellow Perch, BC – Black Crappie, P – Pumpkinseed

\*\*Public water supply reservoir. Public/Private Access

### B. Creeks:

There are approximately 68 miles of creeks located in the Town of Ephratah. The following table provides a summary of key information about the major creeks in the Town:

#### INVENTORY OF PRIMARY CREEKS

NAME	CLASSIFICATION	LENGTH IN TOWN (mi)
North Creek	A	7.8
Zimmerman Creek	A(T)	13.8
Caroga Creek	C(T)	22.9
Middle Sprite Creek	C(TS)	2.7
Sprite Creek	C	14.0

Timmerman (Klock) Creek	C(T)	6.7
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>67.9</b>

\* Source: NYSDEC website [www.dec.ny.gov](http://www.dec.ny.gov)

A = Suitable as a source of drinking water.

C = Suitable for supporting fisheries and suitable for non-contact activities.

T = Suitable for supporting trout populations

The NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) annually stocks a large number of various trout species in creeks within Fulton County. The chart below shows the number of trout stocked at points both within the Town of Ephratah and creeks that flow through Ephratah but were not technically stocked within the Town:

#### CREEKS THAT RECEIVE FISH STOCKING (2011-SPRING 2012)

NAME	NUMBER	SPECIES	SIZE (IN.)	STOCKING LOCATION
Caroga Creek	1,910	Brown Trout	8-9"	Caroga/Johnstown
Middle Sprite Creek	610	Brown Trout	8-9"	Oppenheim/Stratford
Timmerman (Klock) Creek	520	Brown Trout	8-9"	Oppenheim
Zimmerman Creek	860	Brown Trout	8-9"	Ephratah/Oppenheim

### C. NYS DEC Trails:

There exists three (3) partial sections of hiking trails within the Town all of which are utilized for year-round recreational activities.

#### INVENTORY OF NYS DEC TRAILS

FACILITY NAME	Type	Conditions	Length In Ephratah	Overall Length	Activity
ROCKWOOD STATE REFORESTATION AREA	Marked Trail	Unpaved Road	2.2 miles	9.8 miles	Hike/Horseback/bike/XC Ski
LASSELSVILLE STATE REFORESTATION AREA	Marked Trail	Unpaved Road	1.0 miles	8.4 miles	Hike/Horseback/bike/XC Ski
FERRIS LAKE WILD FOREST DINGMAN HILL TRAIL	Snowmobile Trail	Unpaved Trail	0.8 miles	2.7 miles	Hike/Snowmobile/XC Ski



NYS DEC INFORMATION KIOSK



ROCKWOOD STATE FOREST PARKING AREA



As shown below, there are approximately 14 miles of snowmobile trails located in the Town of Ephratah:

**INVENTORY OF SNOWMOBILE TRAILS**

CLUB	TYPE	DESIGNATION	CLASS	MILES	TRAILHEAD PARKING		FUEL (W/IN 1 MI)	CONNECTION
					Yes	No		
Royal Mountain Moonlighters	Corridor	C8E	A	8.96		X	NO	Ful-Mont Snow Travelers C8E Trail and Oppenheim Trailblazers C8A Trail
Royal Mountain Moonlighters	Secondary	S85	B	2.02		X	NO	Royal Mountain Moonlighters C8E Trail and Nick Stoner Trailers S83 Trail
Ful-Mont Snow Travelers	Corridor	C8E	A	1.79		X	NO	Ful-Mont Snow Travelers C7D Trail and Royal Mountain Moonlighters C8E Trail
Ful-Mont Snow Travelers	Corridor	C7D	A	1.52		X	NO	Ful-Mont Snow Travelers C7D Trail and Ful-Mont Snow Travelers C8E Trail
<b>Total</b>				<b>14.29</b>				

#### **E. NYS Wild Forest Lands:**

There are approximately 1,172 acres of NYS Forest Preserve lands in the Town of Ephratah classified as Wild Forest. These Wild Forest lands are open to the public and provide excellent year-round recreational opportunities for back country primitive camping, hunting, hiking and wildlife viewing. The NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and 7NYS Adirondack Park Agency (APA) manages the Forest Preserve lands through a land classification system and individual unit management plans. NYS DEC defines Wild Forest land as:

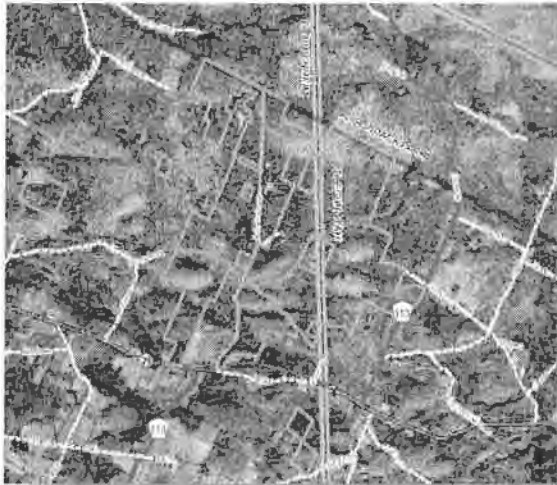
*"A wild forest area is an area where the resources permit a somewhat higher degree of human use than in wilderness, primitive or canoe areas, while retaining an essentially wild character. A wild forest area is further defined as an area that frequently lacks the sense of remoteness of wilderness, primitive or canoe areas and that permits a wide variety of outdoor recreation".*

#### **F. NYS Reforestation Land:**

The NYS Department of Environmental Conservation is also responsible for public land that are not Forest Preserve. These public lands are categorized into several State Forest land classifications. The Town of Ephratah has one (1) classification of State Forest land and it is described by NYS DEC as:

*The New York Conservation Law (ECL) states: "In order to provide for the acquisition of lands outside of the Adirondack park and the Catskill park... which are adapted for reforestation and the establishment and maintenance thereon of forests for watershed protection, the production of timber and other forest products, and for recreation and kindred purposes, the Department may acquire in the name of the state, by gift, purchase or appropriation, reforestation areas which shall consist respectively of not less than five hundred acres of contiguous lands, which shall be forever devoted to the planting, growth and harvesting of such trees as shall be reforested." Reforestation Area may be divided only by a highway, railroad, transmission line, telephone line, telegraph line, pipe line or other rights of way or only by canals or streams and are also devoted to watershed protection, the production of timber and other forest products, and for recreation and kindred purposes.*

There are two (2) NYS Reforestation areas located within the Town of Ephratah: Lasselsville and Rockwood. The Lasselsville Reforestation area is approximately 736 acres and can be accessed via County Route 119 or Fical Road. The Rockwood Reforestation area is approximately 164 acres and can be accessed via NYS Route 29. Both Reforestation areas offer year-round recreational activities as identified in the "Inventory of NYS DEC Trails" table above.



LASSELSVILLE REFORESTATION AREA



ROCKWOOD REFORESTATION AREA

#### **G. Ephratah Recreational Complex:**

The Town of Ephratah Recreational Complex is located on 110 acres of land at 3782 State Highway 29, directly behind the Ephratah Transfer Station that is owned by the County of Fulton. Of the 110 acres of land, 106 acres remains vacant or is being utilized for the extraction of sand and gravel. The remaining 4 acres serves as a recreational field containing two (2) baseball diamonds with home and visitor team



TOWN RECREATIONAL COMPLEX



TOWN PARK/RECREATIONAL FACILITY

dugouts, small sandy playground area with swings and slide, basketball court and a 1,600+/- foot paved walking path. There is an 1,100 SF recreational building used for the storage of equipment and various additional uses. The Recreational Complex is also used as parking for access to ATV trails located to the west.



**PLAYGROUND & BUILDING**



**BASEBALL DIAMOND**

#### **H. Ephratah Rod & Gun Club:**

The Ephratah Rod & Gun Club is located at 372 State Highway 67 and sits on 41 acres of land. The Club consists of a 3,500 SF facility building and outdoor pavilion. The Ephratah Rod & Gun Club offers skeet and trap shooting as well as having pistol and rifle shooting ranges. The Ephratah Rod & Gun Club facility frequently holds hunter education courses throughout the year.

#### **I. Ephratah Recreation Commission:**

The Ephratah Recreation Commission was established in 1991 and consists of a five (5) member volunteer Board of Directors that are approved by the Town Board. The Commission meets at the Ephratah Recreational Complex building on the first Tuesday of every month. The Town Board annually allocates \$4,500 per year to the Commission for Recreational activities. The Commission also holds several fundraising events such as spaghetti suppers and antique car shows to generate additional funding. The primary recreation activities organized by the Commission are youth softball and soccer programs.

#### **J. Former Adirondack Center:**

The former Adirondack Center is located at 212 Hart Road in the Town of Ephratah. The Adirondack Center was a 210-acre year round retreat that offered a 43-bed lodge, high and low rope courses, indoor rock wall, a 30' x 50' in-ground pool, hiking trails, volleyball, campfires, snowshoeing and other activities. The Center attracted groups, organizations, businesses, schools and others to work on team building activities. School and university groups, sports teams, at-risk youth, church groups, civic groups, corporate groups, and adults and children with disabilities used the Adirondack Center to participate in adventure-based team building workshops or just relax.

The facility has an 18,000 sf conference center, 3,500 sf of dining area, 10,800 sf of tent platforms and a 3,300 sf caretakers cottage.

The Adirondack Center was purchased in 1997 by Dr. Thomas Park who converted the facility into an adventure-based education facility. The Center was sold in 2010 to Guang Huan M. Zong, Inc. The new owners no longer utilize the Adirondack Center as an adventure-based education facility.

#### **K. Nearby Recreational Resources:**

The following recreational resources are located in nearby adjacent Townships.

##### **1. Town of Caroga:**

###### ***a. Royal Mountain Motocross & Ski Area***

The Royal Mountain Motocross & Ski Area is located at 3072 State Highway 10 in the Town of Caroga, or within one-half mile North of the Ephratah Town line. This popular year-round recreational facility offers alpine skiing during the winter months on nineteen (19) trails that includes man-made snowmaking, chairlifts, lodge and equipment rental. Ski lessons are provided. During the non-winter months, motocross and supercross track racing and hill-climb events are hosted on a regular basis.

###### ***b. Nick Stoner Golf Course***

Nick Stoner Golf Course is located at 1083 State Highway 10 in the Town of Caroga, or within seven (7) miles of the Ephratah Town line. The Nick Stoner Golf Course is an 18-hole championship Golf Course owned and operated by the Town of Caroga. Built in 1927, Nick Stoner Golf Course is open to the public and is the only golf course located in western Fulton County. The facility consists of a pro shop, small clubhouse and putting green.

##### **2. Town of Oppenheim:**

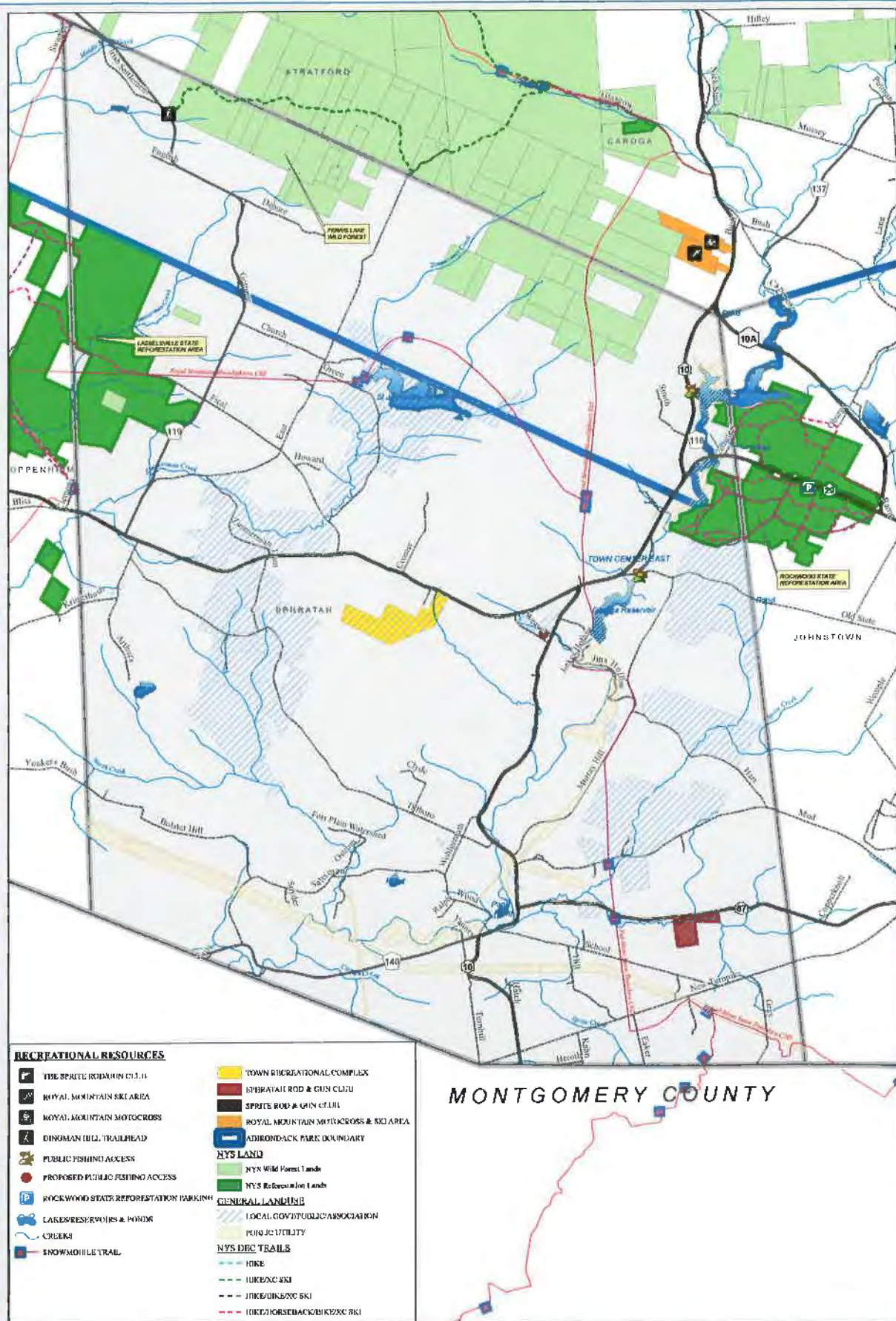
###### ***a. The Sprite Rod & Gun Club***

The Sprite Rod & Gun Club is located at 124 Sprite Club Road in the Town of Oppenheim, or roughly one (1) mile West of the Ephratah Town line. This 302 acre recreational facility consists of a lodge, pavilion and a seven (7) acre pond. Rifle, pistol, skeet and trap ranges have been developed or are being considered.

### **III. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 1. The Town of Ephratah should utilize its website ([www.Ephratah-town.org](http://www.Ephratah-town.org)) to:**
  - a. Promote the availability of a walking track at the Town Recreation Complex.**
  - b. Develop and maintain a list of Special Events that identifies the number and type of known special events that will be held in the Town during the year.**
  - c. Develop and maintain a "Recreational Calendar" to provide residents with information about recreational opportunities and events.**
  - d. Post minutes to the Recreation Commission meetings.**
- 2. The Town of Ephratah should develop Additional Recreational Opportunities at the Town's Recreational Complex including:**
  - a. Public restroom facilities.**
  - b. More extensive playground for young children.**
  - c. Designated snowmobile trailer parking area to access the Royal Mountain Moonlighter Snowmobile Club's C8E snowmobile trail located 1.2 miles east along NYS Route 29.**
  - d. Book Exchange.**
  - e. Lease out the recreational fields to private users to raise funds for the Town.**
- 3. The Town of Ephratah should develop a Recreational Plan for Town's Recreational Complex that includes:**
  - a. Establishing uses for vacant land.**
  - b. A Nature Trail.**
  - c. Cross country/snowshoe trails.**
- 4. The Town of Ephratah should improve Public Access to Rockwood Reservoir by:**
  - a. Reacquiring public access rights to the Reservoir from Erie Boulevard hydropower.**
  - b. Work with Erie Boulevard Hydropower to:**
    - 1. Develop a dedicated paved off-street parking area.**
    - 2. Develop a handicap-accessible walking path from the parking area to the shore of the Reservoir.**
    - 3. Install signage along NYS Route 10.**
- 5. The Town of Ephratah should encourage and promote the reestablishment of an adventure-based education/recreational facility at the former Adirondack Center, Town's Recreational Complex or at another facility in the Town.**





## CHAPTER IV TRANSPORTATION

### I. EXISTING ROAD NETWORK:

As shown in the Table below, the Town of Ephratah has approximately 68.7 miles of maintained roads. A majority of the roads are owned by the Town of Ephratah. There are 46 miles of Town Roads which represents 67% of the total in the Town. 14.9 miles or 22% of the total are State owned roads (NYS Routes 10, 29 & 67). There are 7.8 miles of County owned roads (CR 118, 119 & 140). (See attached map)

**INVENTORY OF ROADS**

MUNICIPALITY	STATE	COUNTY	TOWN	TOTAL
Town of Johnstown	39.9 miles	29.8 miles	87.3 miles	157 miles
Town of Mayfield	23.2 miles	13.5 miles	72.8 miles	109.5 miles
Town of Oppenheim	12.4 miles	12.7 miles	66 miles	91.1 miles
Town of Broadalbin	4.5 miles	20.7 miles	44.8 miles	70 miles
<b>Town of Ephratah</b>	<b>14.9 miles</b>	<b>7.8 miles</b>	<b>46 miles</b>	<b>68.7 miles</b>
Town of Stratford	7.3 miles	8.8 miles	51 miles	67.1 miles
Town of Caroga	19 miles	7.4 miles	38.2 miles	64.6 miles
Town of Perth	3.2 miles	14.4 miles	35.3 miles	52.9 miles
Town of Northampton	6.9 miles	9.6 miles	34.1 miles	50.6 miles
Town of Blecker	0.8 miles	15.3 miles	31.3 miles	47.4 miles
<b>Total</b>	<b>132.1miles</b>	<b>140 miles</b>	<b>506.8 miles</b>	<b>778.9 miles</b>
Road mileages based on NYS Accident Location Information System Data.				

New York State Routes 19, 29 and 67 serve as the primary traffic corridors in the Town. As the primary north/south route in the Town, New York State Route 10 passes through Fulton County from Hamilton County to the north entering the Town of Caroga and then the Town of Ephratah before leaving the Fulton County and passing into Montgomery County. New York State Route 29 is the primary east/west route carrying traffic through Fulton County from Saratoga County to Herkimer County, passing through the Town's of Broadalbin, Mayfield, Johnstown, Ephratah and Oppenheim in Fulton County. The other State route passing through the Town of Ephratah is New York State Route 67, which essentially is a second east/west route through Fulton County entering Fulton County in the Town of Johnstown and heading west until it turns south in the Town of Ephratah and crosses back into Montgomery County. The State road network in the Town of Ephratah is primarily designed to move traffic through the community, but because of the sparsely developed, rural nature of the Town, this State road network also provides direct access to properties abutting the road right-of-way.

County Roads 118, 119 and 140 serves the secondary purpose of providing access to property owners abutting the road right-of-way. County Road 118 is a small segment of road connecting NYS Route 10 and 29 in the northeast corner of the Town. County Road 119, in the northwest corner of the Town connects NYS Route 29 with County Road 104 in the Town of Stratford. County Road 140, near the Montgomery County line, connects NYS Routes 67 and 10 with County Road 53 in Montgomery County. The County road network is designed to handle smaller volumes of traffic than the State road network. However, it is still primarily designed to move vehicles from one community to the next.

Town roads primarily provide direct access to properties. There are also some private roads in the community which essentially serve individual property owners in the Town.

## II. ROAD MAINTENANCE:

The Town of Ephratah is responsible for the repair and maintenance of all 46 +/- miles of Town-owned roads in the community. The cost of maintaining this local road network takes up a large portion of the Town's annual budget.

The Town of Ephratah also performs snow removal and sanding/salting of all 7.8 +/- miles of County-owned roads in the Town. In 2012, Fulton County paid the Town of Ephratah \$5,000 per mile as part of a snow removal contract Fulton County executed with the Town. As a result, Fulton County paid the Town of Ephratah approximately \$39,000.00 to perform snow removal from County Roads 118, 119 and 140 in the Town of Ephratah.

All State-owned roads in the Town of Ephratah are repaired and maintained by the New York State Department of Transportation.

## III. TRAFFIC VOLUMES:

NYSDOT compiles traffic counts for state roads throughout New York State. Some of these counts are done on a continuous basis, while other counts are performed periodically to provide ongoing traffic data that can be used to identify traffic volume trends on individual segments of road. According to NYSDOT's Highway Data Services Bureau, there is only one (1) location in the Town of Ephratah where continuous current data is maintained. That location is along NYS Route 29 between the start of the NYS Route 10 overlap and the end of the NYS Route 10 overlap in Rockwood. This 1.26 mile segment of road has the highest traffic volumes in the Town. At times, NYSDOT provides traffic counts for a few local roads throughout the State. Unfortunately, the only traffic counts for local roads in the Town of Ephratah that are currently available from the NYSDOT Highway Data Services Bureau are for County Roads 119 and 140. In 2004 NYSDOT counted 252 vehicles on County Road 140 and in 2011, the Agency counted 414 vehicles on County Road 119.

Available NYSDOT traffic counts for State roads in the Town of Ephratah are included in the table below.

**NYSDOT TRAFFIC COUNTS**

SECTION	AVERAGE ANNUAL DAILY TRAFFIC																CHANGE	% CHANGE
	96	97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11		
<b>1. NYS Route 10:</b>																		
Montgomery County Line to End of NYS 67 Overlap				920	960			1450	1580						850		70	7.6
End of NYS 67 Overlap to start NYS 29 overlap	580				630			620					550			550	-30	-5.2
Start NYS 29 overlap to end NYS 29 overlap					2350		2700	2750	2550				2390	2450	2460	2380	30	1.2
End NYS 29 overlap to NYS 10A	500			640			640			530			570			520	20	4.0
<b>2. NYS Route 29:</b>																		
Start COHWY 331 to start NYS 10 overlap		1600			1960			1700						1650			50	3.1
Start NYS 10 overlap to End NYS 10 overlap					2350		2700	2750	2550				2390	2450	2460	2380	30	1.2
End NYS 10 overlap to NYS 10A	2100			2250			2300			2010	2080			2160			60	2.9
<b>3. NYS Route 67:</b>																		
Start NYS 10 overlap to end NYS 10 overlap				920	960			1450	1580						850		-70	-7.6
End NYS 10 overlap to New Turnpike Rd.	1350			1450			810			720			760			790	-560	-41.5



As the table above shows, the three (3) busiest segments of road in the Town of Ephratah are:

1. NYS Route 29 and 10 overlap segment,
2. NYS Route 29 segment between the end of the NYS Route 10 Overlap and NYS Route 10A
3. NYS Route 29 segment between County Road 331 in Oppenheim and the start of the NYS Route 10 overlap.

The highest volumes of traffic in the Town of Ephratah occur along the NYS Route 29 corridor. The most significant drop in traffic volume over the past ten (10) years in the Town occurred along the NYS Route 67 corridor, between the end of the NYS Route 10 overlap and New Turnpike Road. Traffic volume along this road segment declined by 41.3% between 1996 and 2011.

#### **IV. TRANSPORTATION ISSUES:**

##### **A. Road Safety Issues:**

The following roads/intersections have safety issues that need to be addressed:

1. Intersection of NYS Rt. 29 and Fical Road:

- The line of sight to the west from Fical Road is poor

2. Intersection of Tillboro and Wohlgemuth Roads:

- The line of sights at this intersection are poor

3. Intersection of NYS Rt. 29 and Old State Road

- This intersection should be reconstructed into a "T" intersection

Given the start-up, in 2013, of the CG Roxane Water Bottling Plant off Watershed Road in the Town of Johnstown, additional truck traffic is anticipated on NYS Rt. 10. While the capacity of NYS Rt. 10 is not an issue, the Comprehensive plan recommends that NYSDOT construct a passing lane going up the hill from the hamlet of Ephratah on NYS Rt. 10 to allow for faster moving vehicles to be able to pass tractor trailer trucks. This would be similar to what NYSDOT did to NYS Rt. 30A heading north out of the Village of Fonda.

##### **B. Pavement Conditions on State Road:**

The condition of asphalt on NY State Routes 10, 29 and 67 is very poor. In certain locations, the poor condition of the existing asphalt represents a potential safety concern for drivers. The Town should encourage NYSDOT to address the overall condition of NY State roads in the Town of Ephratah

#### **V. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

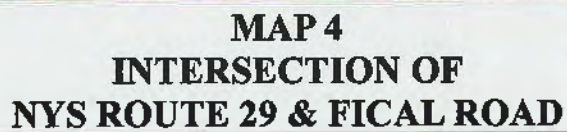
1. The Town of Ephratah should develop Town Center at the southeast corner of the intersection of NYS Route 29 and NYS Route 10 heading south.
2. The Town of Ephratah should encourage NYSDOT to repave all State roads in the Town.
3. The Town of Ephratah should work with NYSDOT to make certain improvements such as adding a passing lane on the northbound lane of NYS Route 10 coming out of the hamlet of Ephratah to NYS Route 29 to accommodate the truck traffic that will be accessing the new water bottling plant in the Town of Johnstown.
4. The Town of Ephratah should work with NYSDOT to make improvements to NYS Route 29 at its intersection with both Fical and Old State Roads.

5. The Town of Ephratah should look at improving the lines of sight at the intersection of Tillboro and Wohlgemuth Roads.
6. The Town of Ephratah should ensure that all new requests for road cuts should be carefully reviewed by the Town Code Enforcement Officer and the Town Planning Board to ensure that maximum spacing is provided between road cuts and minimum site distances are met to protect and preserve proper safety and flow.
7. The Town of Ephratah should adopt land use regulations that help to manage growth along the State corridors and encourage corridor management principles such as larger lot sizes and frontage requirements, adequate driveway spacing, shared driveway access, larger setbacks, etc.





29



**Company of Builders**  
1000 12th Avenue S.W.  
12th & 13th Sts. S.W.  
Tulsa, Oklahoma 74103  
Phone 333-1111









Old State

A horizontal scale bar with tick marks at 0, 50, and 100. The word "Feet" is centered below the bar.

**County of Nelson**  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF NELSON  
I, JAMES MCDONALD, Mayor of the  
County of Nelson, do hereby certify that

**SAMUEL H. MILES, DIRECTOR**  
 Licenses, documents and completion of all business on this map are appreciated and we are listed upon several surveys conducted by a Licensed Land Surveyor.  
 (CITY) Bureau of Taxes, Birmingham 345-6400



## **CHAPTER V COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

### **I. INTRODUCTION:**

Community Facilities are an integral component to a community's character and enable communities to function effectively. They include physical facilities, programs and services that collectively help to strengthen a community's overall quality of life. Community Facilities typically include police and fire protection, ambulance service, health care, school, libraries, Senior Citizen & Recreation Centers, mass transit, utility services (electric), communication services (phone, cellular, cable, internet), solid waste disposal, churches and related facilities and programs.

This Chapter summarizes the existing Community Services in the Town of Ephratah.

### **II. EXISTING COMMUNITY FACILITIES:**

#### **I. Town Hall:**

The Town of Ephratah Town Hall is located at 3782 State Highway 10 on approximately 28 acres of land. The 9,500 SF building accommodates all Town offices and the Highway Department.

Town Hall was built in the 1960's making it almost 45 years old. While it does provide space for Town offices, the spaces are not laid out efficiently. For example, the main meeting room is where the public enters and exits the building. If the Town or Planning Board is meeting, people can walk into the room to visit the Town Clerk while the meeting is ongoing. There is also little additional space available for community events. In addition, because its age, the building is need for upgrades to mechanical, electrical and roofing systems, as well as interior and exterior finishes.

#### **2. Fire Protection:**

Fire Protection in the Town of Ephratah is provided by the Ephratah (District 21) and RGL (District 22) Volunteer Fire Companies.

##### **a. RGL Volunteer Fire Department:**

The RGL Volunteer Fire Department has two (2) station locations within the Town of Ephratah. The first station is located near the intersection of NYS Route 29 and County Route 119 being in the western part of the Township. This station is comprised of a 7,000 SF facility that is located on a half acre parcel of land. The second station is located near the intersection of NYS Route 29 and NYS Route 10 being in the eastern part of the Town. This station consists of a 5,500 SF facility located on a two (2) acre parcel.



b. Ephratah Volunteer Fire Department:

The Ephratah Volunteer Fire Department has one (1) location within the Town at 4305 State Route 10. The station consists of a 4,500 SF building half of which there is a second story on nearly an acre of property. The Ephratah Volunteer Fire Department also owns a 2.5 acre property just north of the fire station whereby the Department has built a softball field.

Map No. 1 shows the areas of the Town of Ephratah serviced by each Fire District.

The Town of Ephratah set a fire tax for each District. As of the 2012 tax rolls, the following rates per \$1,000 of assessment applied:

District 21 - \$1.65

District 22 - \$1.95

3. Highway Services:

The Town of Ephratah Highway Department Facility is located at Ephratah's Municipal Office at 3782 State Highway 10. As of 2012, the Highway Department is staffed with five(5) full time employees to include one (1) supervisor. The Highway Department is responsible for the maintenance of nearly fifty-three (53) miles of Town roads. The Highway Department also contracts with the County of Fulton to plow the following County Roads in the Town:

CR#119 - 5.0 Miles

CR#140 - 2.5 Miles

CR#118 - .30 Miles

4. Ambulance Service:

The following ambulance companies serve the Town of Ephratah:

- A. Fulton County Ambulance
- B. Mid-County Ambulance
- C. Greater Amsterdam Area Volunteer Ambulance
- D. Johnstown Area Volunteer Ambulance Corp

In addition, the RGL and Ephratah Fire Districts provide First Responder Teams.

Fulton County Ambulance stations one of its ambulances at the RGL firehouse on Monday-Friday during the day.

5. Police Protection:

The Town of Ephratah currently has no police service of its own. Police services are provided by the Fulton County Sheriff's Department and the NYS Police. Troop G of the NYS Police has two (2) barracks that respond to incidents within the Town:

- a. Fultonville barracks located on NYS Route 5S in Montgomery County.

b. Mayfield barracks that is located on NYS Route 30 in the Village of Mayfield.

The combined services of the Sheriff's Department and the NYS Police provide sufficient police protection services for the Town of Ephratah.

## **6. Schools:**

The Town of Ephratah is serviced by four (4) different school districts including:

- 1) St. Johnsville-Oppenheim-Ephratah Central School District
- 2) Greater Johnstown School District
- 3) Dolgeville Central School District
- 4) Fort Plain Central School District

Map No. 2 shows where these four school districts are located within the Town.

The largest portion of the Town of Ephratah is serviced by the St. Johnsville- Oppenheim-Ephratah Central School District. This merged district was approved in December, 2012. The Oppenheim-Ephratah Central School is located in the Town of Oppenheim at 6486 State Highway 29. The St. Johnsville-Oppenheim Ephratah School District accommodates Kindergarten through twelfth grade.

A small portion encompassing the Northwest corner of the Town of Ephratah is serviced by the Dolgeville Central School District. The Dolgeville Central School District also accommodates Kindergarten through twelfth grades and is located at 38 Slawson Street in the Village of Dolgeville.

The Southeast corner of the Town of Ephratah is serviced by the Greater Johnstown School District. Residents in that district go to various school buildings depending on grade level. The Greater Johnstown School District includes three (3) elementary schools; Glebe Street, Pleasant Ave and Warren Street Elementary, one Knox Junior High school and one Johnstown High school.

There is a small area centrally located South of the Town of Ephratah that is in the Fort Plain School District. Residents in that small area would go to either the Harry Hoag Elementary or Fort Plain Junior/Senior High school located in Fort Plain.

## **7. Health Care:**

There are three (3) hospitals in the region that provide services to residents in the Town of Ephratah:

- a. Nathan Littauer Hospital located in the City of Gloversville.
- b. St. Mary's Healthcare located in the City of Amsterdam.
- c. Little Falls Hospital/Bassett Health located in Little Falls.

There are no Primary Care facilities in the Town of Ephratah.



## **8. Churches:**

The following churches currently operate in the Town of Ephratah:

- |                                     |   |                        |
|-------------------------------------|---|------------------------|
| 1) Ephratah Reformed Church         | : | 140 County Highway 140 |
| 2) United Methodist Church          | : | 5788 State Highway 29  |
| 3) Rockwood Pilgrim Holiness Church | : | 142 County Highway 118 |
| 4) Scotch Bush Free                 | : | 190 Church Street      |

## **9. Community Groups:**

The following community groups provide programs and services in the Town of Ephratah:

- 1) Ephratah Recreation Commission
- 2) Ephratah Historical Society
- 3) Ephratah Rod & Gun Club
- 4) Senior Citizens Group
- 5) Boy Scout Chapter
- 6) Girl Scout Chapter
- 7) Royal Mountain Moonlighters Snowmobile Club

## **10. Leona B. Trumbull Senior Center**

The Leona B. Trumbull Senior Center, also known as the Western Fulton County Senior Citizen Center, was established in the late 1980's and provides space for Senior and other community activities. The Leona B. Trumbull Senior Center is located at 5740 State Route 29. The facility consists of a 1,800 SF building to include handicap access ramp and a paved parking lot that accommodates nineteen (19) vehicles.



### **11. Ephratah Recreational Complex**

The Town of Ephratah Recreational Complex is located on roughly four (4) acres of land at 3782 State Highway 29, directly behind the Ephratah Transfer Station. The Complex consists of a recreational field containing two (2) baseball diamonds with home and visitor team dugouts, small sandy playground area with swings and slide, basketball court and a 1,600+/- foot paved walking path. There is an 1,100 SF recreational building used for the storage of equipment and various additional uses. There is no potable water or septic site being the Landfill. at the facility due to the former Ephratah Town



### **12. Solid Waste:**

The Town of Ephratah does not provide weekly garbage pickup throughout the Town as is done in other municipalities in Fulton County. Fulton County owns and operates a Transfer Station and Recycling Center that is located directly in front of the Town of Ephratah Recreation Complex at 5225 State Highway 29. The Transfer Station is open from 10:00am to 6:00pm on Monday and Thursdays, and again on Saturdays from 8:00am to 4:00pm. Town residents must bring their waste to the Transfer Station. A Permit must be purchased at the Town Clerk's Office. All solid waste generated in the Town of Ephratah is sent to the Fulton County Landfill on Mud Road in the Town of Johnstown.

The Town of Ephratah used to own and operate its own municipal landfill located on what is now the Ephratah Recreational Complex.

### **13. Utility Services:**

National Grid provides electrical services throughout the Town of Ephratah. There is no natural gas service in the Town

#### **14. Cellular Service:**

Frontier Communications provide land line phone service throughout the Town of Ephratah and provides access to the internet. There is no cable T.V. service in the Town. Cable T.V. is provided by satellite through either DIRECTV or DISH Companies.

Verizon Wireless and AT&T currently provide cell phone service in the Town. These two (2) providers have installed the following two (2) towers within the Town of Ephratah:

##### **a. Verizon Wireless**

Located at 159 Cromer Road on property owned by Mr. Michael Kelly.

Coverage Radius - 1 Mile

ESN# - 070

ID - 3189-2

##### **b. AT&T**

Located on Village of Canajoharie waterworks property on north side of Old State road approximately one (1) mile from its intersection with NYS Route 29.

Coverage Radius - Unknown

ESN# - Unknown

ID - Unknown

#### **15. Internet Service**

Frontier provides wired internet service in certain areas of the Town. Satellite internet services is available through HughesNet.com.

#### **16. Post Office**

There is no Post Office in the Town of Ephratah

### **III. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 1. The Town of Ephratah should pursue the development of a new Town Hall in Town Center to meet the current and future needs of the Town. The existing Town Hall should be turned over to the Town's Highway Department. The Town of Ephratah should seek grant funding to help pay for the cost of a new Town Hall. The new Town Hall should, at a minimum, have spaces for:**

- Town Offices
- Meeting Room
- Community Room
- Records Storage
- Senior Center
- Town Museum
- Primary Care Facility
- Book Exchange

- 2. The Town of Ephratah should encourage cellular service providers to expand cellular service in the Town by finding suitable locations for additional cell towers.**
- 3. The Town of Ephratah should work with Frontier, Time Warner and other internet service providers to make internet access available throughout the Town.**
- 4. The Town of Ephratah should work with Nathan Littauer, St. Mary's and Little Falls Hospitals to discuss ways to improve the access of health care within the Town.**
- 5. The Town of Ephratah should work within the neighboring Townships of Stratford, Caroga and Oppenheim to help promote better access to health care.**
- 6. The Town of Ephratah should work with the Ephratah Historical Society to create a Town Museum to be located in the new Town Hall.**
- 7. The Town of Ephratah should work with federal legislators and the US Postal Service to obtain a Post Office in the Town of Ephratah that would be located in Town Center.**

## **CHAPTER VI**

### **MUNICIPAL WATER SYSTEMS**

#### **I. INTRODUCTION:**

The Town of Ephratah has three (3) municipal water supply reservoirs located within its border. Each municipal water supply reservoir is bounded by a watershed that supplies the reservoir with both surface runoff and underground water. The three (3) municipal water supply reservoirs are as follows:

1. Canajoharie Reservoir
2. St. Johnsville Reservoir
3. Fort Plain Reservoir

The following is information for each municipal water supply reservoir and its corresponding watershed. \*For reference, see the Town of Ephratah Municipal Water Supply map located at the end of this Chapter.

#### **II. MUNICIPAL WATER SUPPLIES IN THE TOWN OF EPHRATAH:**

##### **A. Canajoharie Reservoir System:**

##### **1. Canajoharie Reservoirs**

The Village of Canajoharie actually owns and operates two (2) water supply reservoirs. The first reservoir, Spring Pond Reservoir, is located along Old State Road in the Town of Johnstown. This small reservoir is approximately .4 acres in size. Spring Pond Reservoir is controlled by a 80 foot long 15 foot high dam that was originally constructed in 1909 and reconfigured in 1941. The Spring Pond Reservoir is fed by a series of springs and provides most of the water used in the Village of Canajoharie.

The second reservoir, Donald G. Hill Reservoir, is located along Mud Road in the Town of Ephratah. The Donald G. Hill Reservoir is approximately 24 acres in size and is controlled by a 415 foot long 40 foot high earthen dam that was constructed in 1948. The Donald G. Hill Reservoir is a back up water supply reservoir to the Spring Pond Reservoir.

##### **2. Canajoharie Watershed**

The Canajoharie Watershed is located primarily in the Town of Ephratah but also extends into the Town of Johnstown. It is approximately bounded by Old State Road to the North, Wemple Road to the East, Murray Hill Road to the West and Mud Road to the South. The Canajoharie Watershed has a surface area of approximately 2 square miles.

## **B. St. Johnsville Reservoir System:**

### **1. St. Johnsville Reservoirs**

There are two (2) water supply reservoirs owned and operated by the Village of St. Johnsville located in the Town of Ephratah. The St. Johnsville Reservoir is located via Green Road and is approximately 78.5 acres in size. This reservoir is controlled by a forty (40) foot long dam constructed in 1919. The St. Johnsville is fed via Zimmerman Creek.

The second reservoir, Yauney Reservoir, is located off of Howard Road and is approximately 7.2 acres in size. This reservoir is controlled by a, 740 foot long, 20 foot high earthen dam that was constructed in 1964. The Yauney Reservoir is fed via Zimmerman Creek.

### **2. St. Johnsville Watershed**

The St. Johnsville Watershed is bounded by the Town of Caroga to the North, NY Route 29 to the South and East and by County Route 119 to the West. The St. Johnsville Watershed has a surface area of approximately 6.8 square miles.

## **C. Fort Plain Reservoir System:**

### **1. Fort Plain Reservoir**

The Fort Plain Reservoir is owned by the Village of Fort Plain and is located along Fort Plain Watershed Road and primarily fed by North Creek. The Fort Plain Reservoir is approximately 1 acre in size and is controlled by a 77 foot long 30 foot high concrete dam that was constructed in 1919.

### **2. Fort Plain Watershed**

A majority of the Fort Plain Watershed lies in the Town of Ephratah. The watershed also extends into the Town of Oppenheim. It is approximately bounded by NYS Route 29 to the North, NYS Route 10 to the East, Bolster Hill Road to the South and Kringsbush Road to the West. The Fort Plain Watershed has a surface area of approximately 6 square miles.







## CHAPTER VII TOWN PROFILE

### I. TRENDS IN FULTON COUNTY'S POPULATION:

Fulton County has experienced small, but steady population growth since 1900. Since 1900, Fulton County's population increased from 42,842 to 55,531, an increase of 12,689 or 29.6%. In comparison, New York State's population grew by approximately 12 million or 165% during the same time period. So while there has been steady population growth in Fulton County, the rate of growth has been significantly less than the State's overall population growth.

**POPULATION TRENDS IN FULTON COUNTY**

MUNICIPALITY	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
City of Gloversville	18,349	20,642	22,075	23,099	23,329	23,634	21,741	19,677	17,836	16,656	15,413	15,665
City of Johnstown	10,130	10,447	10,908	10,801	10,666	10,923	10,390	10,045	9,360	9,058	8,511	8,743
<b>Total Cities</b>	<b>28,479</b>	<b>31,089</b>	<b>32,983</b>	<b>33,900</b>	<b>33,995</b>	<b>34,557</b>	<b>32,131</b>	<b>29,722</b>	<b>27,196</b>	<b>25,714</b>	<b>23,924</b>	<b>24,408</b>
Bleecker	603	500	389	202	190	220	245	294	463	515	573	533
Broadalbin	1,946	1,845	1,949	2,226	2,300	2,543	2,945	3,542	4,074	4,397	5,066	5,260
Caroga	470	441	332	306	408	462	568	822	1,177	1,337	1,407	1,205
<b>Ephratah</b>	<b>1,566</b>	<b>1,312</b>	<b>1,038</b>	<b>949</b>	<b>1,045</b>	<b>1,063</b>	<b>1,237</b>	<b>1,297</b>	<b>1,564</b>	<b>1,556</b>	<b>1,693</b>	<b>1,682</b>
Johnstown	2,661	2,511	1,948	2,612	3,561	4,153	5,120	5,750	6,719	6,418	7,166	7,098
Mayfield	2,136	2,056	1,866	2,077	2,734	3,145	3,613	4,522	5,439	5,738	6,432	6,495
Northampton	2,226	2,228	2,191	1,919	1,761	1,925	2,033	2,379	2,289	2,705	2,760	2,670
Oppenheim	1,258	1,241	1,812	1,147	1,202	1,290	1,223	1,431	1,806	1,848	1,774	1,924
Perth	667	695	596	838	1,000	1,299	1,768	2,383	3,261	3,377	3,638	3,646
Stratford	830	607	453	384	401	464	421	495	625	586	640	610
<b>Total Towns</b>	<b>14,363</b>	<b>13,436</b>	<b>12,574</b>	<b>12,660</b>	<b>14,602</b>	<b>16,564</b>	<b>19,173</b>	<b>22,915</b>	<b>27,417</b>	<b>28,477</b>	<b>31,149</b>	<b>31,123</b>
<b>Total Fulton County</b>	<b>42,842</b>	<b>44,525</b>	<b>45,557</b>	<b>46,560</b>	<b>48,597</b>	<b>51,121</b>	<b>51,304</b>	<b>52,637</b>	<b>54,613</b>	<b>54,191</b>	<b>55,073</b>	<b>55,531</b>

The two (2) Cities experienced population growth between 1900-1950. However, from 1960 to 2000, the combined population of the two (2) Cities declined from 32,131 to 23,524, a decline of 8,607 persons or 27%. In comparison, during this 1960-2000 time period when the Cities were losing population, the ten (10) towns were experiencing population growth. During that time period, the population of the ten (10) towns grew from 19,173 to 31,149, an increase of 11,976 or 62%.

**POPULATION TRENDS IN CITIES AND TOWNS**

Year	Total Population in Cities	% Total	Total Population in Towns	% Total	Total County Population
1950	34,557	67.6%	16,564	32.4%	51,121
1960	32,131	62.6%	19,173	37.4%	51,304
1970	29,722	56.5%	22,915	43.5%	52,637
1980	27,196	49.8%	27,417	50.2%	54,613
1990	25,714	47.5%	28,477	52.5%	54,191
2000	23,924	43.4%	31,149	56.6%	55,073
2010	24,408	44.0%	31,123	56.0%	55,531



Up until 1980, the combined populations of the Cities of Gloversville and Johnstown exceeded the combined population of the ten (10) towns in the County. In 1900, the population of the two (2) Cities was 28,479. This meant that 66% of the County's population resided in the two (2) Cities and only 34% in the Towns. By 1970, the percentage of the County's population living in the two (2) Cities declined to 56.5%. In 1980, for the first time in the County's history, the total population of the ten (10) towns exceeded the combined populations in both Cities. By 2000, the ten (10) towns contained 56.6% of the County's population. In 2010, the total dropped slightly to 56%.

The 2010 Census showed that the 50 year trend of population growth in the ten (10) towns and the decline in the two (2) Cities may have reversed. In 2010, the population in the ten (10) towns was 31,123, which was a decline of 26 from 2000. In comparison, the population in the two (2) Cities increased by 484 between 2000 and 2010. The 2020 Census will verify if there is indeed a new trend developing.

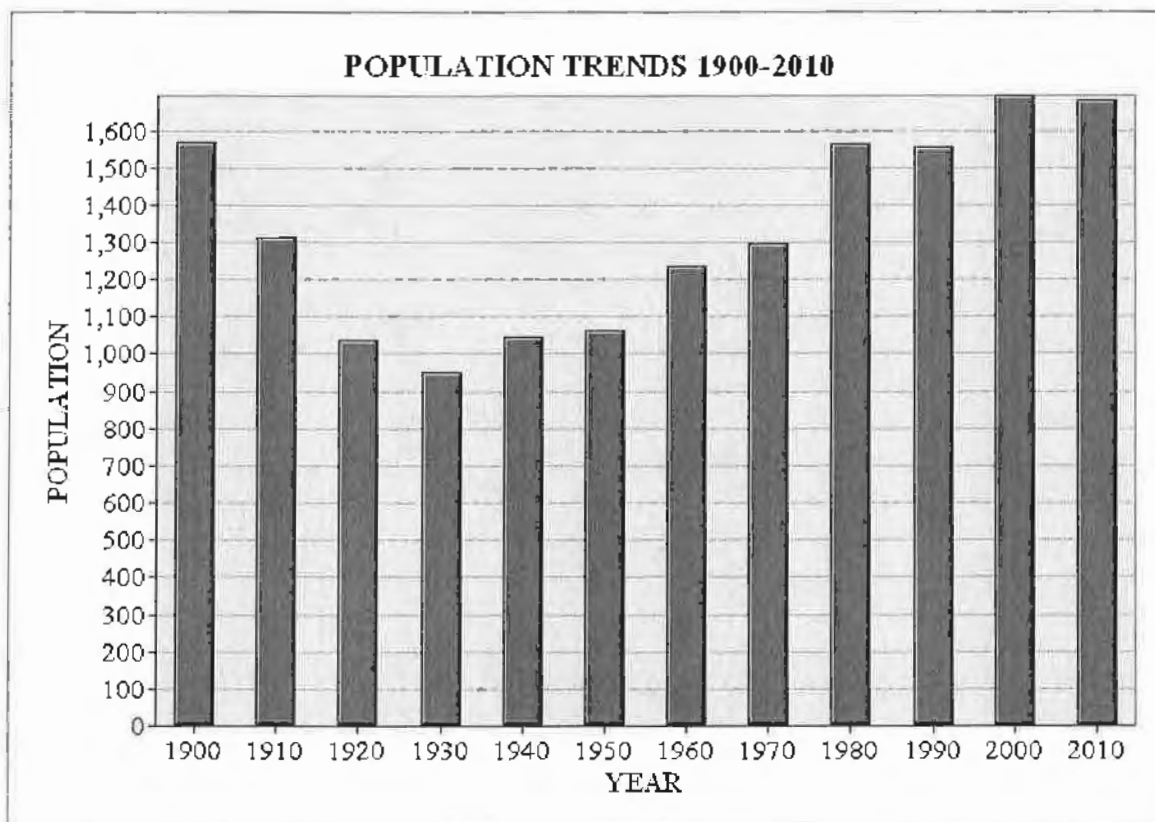
The following is a summary of key population trends in Fulton County based upon the results of the 2010 Census:

- 1) Between 2000 and 2010, Fulton County's overall population increased by 458 or 0.8%.
- 2) Between 2000 and 2010, the population of the Cities of Gloversville and Johnstown increased by 484 or 2.0%.
- 3) Between 2000 and 2010, the population in the towns decreased by 26 or 0.1%.
- 4) Between 2000 and 2010, the City of Gloversville had the highest absolute population increase with 252 followed by the City of Johnstown with 232.
- 5) Between 2000 and 2010, six (6) of the ten (10) towns in Fulton County experienced population decreases.
- 6) The increased populations in the two (2) Cities in 2010 reverses a 50-year trend of population decreases.
- 7) The decreased population of the ten (10) towns in 2010 reverses an 80-year trend of population increases.

## II. TRENDS IN TOWN OF EPHRATAH'S POPULATION:

### A. Total Population:

In 1900, the Town of Ephratah's population was 1,566. By 1930, the Town's population declined to 949. However, between 1940-1980, the Town's population continually increased. Between 1980-1990, the Town's population declined slightly. It then grew slightly between 1990-2000 but declined again between 2000-2010. The 2010 Census showed that there are 1,682 residents in the Town.



The Town's population decline from 1900-1930 was not unique to the Town of Ephratah. During that time, many towns in Fulton County experienced a population decline between 1900-1930. Similarly, since 1930, all towns have experienced a growth in their population.

**B. Age:**

The median age of all Town residents was 44.2 in 2010. The median age of the Town of Ephratah's population has been increasing at a rate greater than Fulton County as a whole. As shown in the table below, between 2000-2010, the median age of Town residents increased from 36.7 to 44.2, an increase of 7.5 years or 20.4%. In comparison, the County's overall average age increased by 3.2 years or 8.3% during that time period.

**MEDIAN AGE IN FULTON COUNTY MUNICIPALITIES  
1980-2010**

Municipality	1980	1990	2000	2010	Change 1980-2010	% Change 1980-2010	Change 2000-2010	% Change 2000-2010
City of Gloversville	34.1	34.9	37.3	37.1	3.0	8.8%	-0.2	-0.5%
City of Johnstown	33.4	35.9	39.0	40.4	7.0	21.0%	1.4	3.6%
Town of Bleecker	33.4	37.0	45.0	51.7	18.3	54.8%	6.7	14.9%
Town of Broadalbin	32.3	35.5	37.8	41.4	9.1	28.2%	3.6	9.5%
Town of Caroga	32.3	35.5	41.7	46.9	14.6	45.2%	5.2	12.5%
<b>Town of Ephratah</b>	<b>29.2</b>	<b>32.1</b>	<b>36.7</b>	<b>44.2</b>	<b>15.0</b>	<b>51.4%</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>20.4%</b>
Town of Johnstown	32.7	37.7	40.1	44.7	12.0	36.7%	4.6	11.5%
Town of Mayfield	31.3	34.8	38.9	45.4	14.1	45.0%	6.5	16.7%
Town of Northampton	32.5	37.3	42.0	46.0	13.5	41.5%	4.0	9.5%
Town of Oppenheim	29.2	31.7	38.2	41.5	12.3	42.1%	3.3	8.6%
Town of Perth	30.9	33.2	36.6	43.2	12.3	39.8%	6.6	18.0%
Town of Stratford	26.8	31.7	40.8	46.2	19.4	72.4%	5.4	13.2%
<b>Fulton County</b>	<b>32.8</b>	<b>35.2</b>	<b>38.6</b>	<b>41.8</b>	<b>9.0</b>	<b>27.4%</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>8.3%</b>

**TOWN OF EPHRATAH POPULATION TRENDS  
1980-2010**

	1980	1990	2000	2010
Total Population	1,564	1,556	1,693	1,682
Population Per Household	3.1	2.99	2.67	2.53
Median Age	29.2	32.1	36.7	44.2
Population 65+	142	146	199	244
% of Fulton County's 65+	1.7%	1.6%	2.2%	2.7%
Population 75+	48	70	70	84
Population 85+	—	13	15	15

As shown above, the average age of the Town's population in 2010 was 44.2. The 2010 Census showed that the Town of Ephratah has the seventh oldest average age of all Fulton County municipalities. The Town of Bleecker has the highest median age of 51.7. In comparison, the average age of the 2010 population of the entire State of New York is 38.0.

Not only has the average age of the Town's population grown, but so has its elderly population. As shown below, the Town of Ephratah's 65+ population grew significantly between 1980 and 2010. Next to the Towns of Perth, Bleecker and Mayfield the Town of Ephratah experienced the fourth largest percent increase in 65+ population from 1980-2010 of all municipalities in Fulton County.

**TRENDS IN 65+ POPULATION IN FULTON COUNTY MUNICIPALITIES**

**1980-2010**

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>% Change</b>
City of Gloversville	3,326	3,300	2,754	2,188	-1138	-34.2%
City of Johnstown	1,639	1,774	1,634	1,597	-42	-2.6%
<b>Total Cities</b>	<b>4,965</b>	<b>5,074</b>	<b>4,388</b>	<b>3,785</b>	<b>-1180</b>	<b>-36.7%</b>
Town of Bleecker	57	73	102	107	50	87.7%
Town of Broadalbin	484	617	685	713	229	47.3%
Town of Caroga	133	158	234	195	62	46.6%
<b>Town of Ephratah</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>71.8%</b>
Town of Johnstown	907	1,007	1,191	1,235	328	36.2%
Town of Mayfield	598	748	907	1,117	519	86.8%
Town of Northampton	390	417	490	547	157	40.3%
Town of Oppenheim	195	216	233	257	62	31.8%
Town of Perth	291	442	464	598	307	105.5%
Town of Stratford	76	69	87	103	27	35.5%
<b>Total Towns</b>	<b>3,273</b>	<b>3,893</b>	<b>4,592</b>	<b>5,116</b>	<b>1,843</b>	<b>56.3%</b>
<b>Fulton County</b>	<b>8,238</b>	<b>8,961</b>	<b>8,980</b>	<b>8,901</b>	<b>663</b>	<b>8.0%</b>

At the other end of the age spectrum, between 2000-2010, the number of school-age children (5-19) decreased by 119 or 7.1%. The declining number of school-age children will have an impact on school enrollments.

**TOWN OF EPHRATAH**

**POPULATION BY AGE**

**2000-2010**

	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2000-2010 Change</b>	<b>2000-2010 % Change</b>
Under 5	109	99	-10	-9.2%
5-9	122	87	-35	-25.2%
10-14	151	102	-49	-25.8%
15-19	139	104	-35	-32.5%
20-24	61	92	31	50.8%
25-34	332	215	-117	-35.2%
35-44	209	340	131	62.7%
45-54	94	112	18	19.1%
55-59	67	116	49	73.1%
60-64	129	160	31	24.0%
65-74	55	69	14	25.5%
75-84	15	15	0	0%
85+	1,693	1,682	-11	1.0%
<b>Total</b>				

### III. TOWN OF EPHRATAH'S HOUSING TRENDS:

#### A. Total Housing Units:

As shown below, in 2010, there were 759 total housing units in the Town. This is an increase of 39 or 5.4% from 2000. Between 1970-2010, the total number of housing units in the Town of Ephratah increased by 334. During that same time period, the Town's population grew by 415.

#### TOTAL HOUSING UNITS IN FULTON COUNTY MUNICIPALITIES

Municipality	1970-2010					Change 2000-2010	% Change
	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010		
City of Gloversville	7,514	7,795	7,596	7,540	7,477	-63	-0.8%
City of Johnstown	3,693	3,912	3,971	3,979	4,047	68	1.7%
<b>Total Cities</b>	<b>11,207</b>	<b>11,707</b>	<b>11,567</b>	<b>11,519</b>	<b>11,524</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0.0%</b>
Town of Bleeker	267	344	380	429	487	58	13.5%
Town of Broadalbin	1,657	2,028	2,287	2,625	2,736	111	4.2%
Town of Caroga	1,538	1,713	1,797	1,794	1,708	-86	-4.8%
<b>Town of Ephratah</b>	<b>425</b>	<b>603</b>	<b>601</b>	<b>720</b>	<b>759</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>5.4%</b>
Town of Johnstown	1,937	2,412	2,459	2,728	2,914	186	6.8%
Town of Mayfield	1,961	2,650	2,777	3,211	3,436	225	7.0%
Town of Northampton	1,268	1,685	1,843	1,962	2,026	64	3.3%
Town of Oppenheim	544	691	791	858	897	39	4.5%
Town of Perth	751	1,143	1,277	1,416	1,529	113	8.0%
Town of Stratford	422	531	481	525	546	21	4.0%
<b>Total Towns</b>	<b>10,770</b>	<b>13,800</b>	<b>14,693</b>	<b>16,268</b>	<b>17,038</b>	<b>770</b>	<b>4.7%</b>
<b>Fulton County</b>	<b>21,977</b>	<b>25,507</b>	<b>26,260</b>	<b>27,787</b>	<b>28,562</b>	<b>775</b>	<b>2.8%</b>

**B. Year Around Housing Units:**

As shown below, in 2010, of the 759 total housing units in the Town, 655 were year around housing units. Year round housing, in 2010, represented 86.3% of all housing units. In comparison, in 1970, there were 393 year around housing units, or 92.5% of the Town's total housing stock.

**TOTAL YEAR ROUND HOUSING UNITS IN  
FULTON COUNTY MUNICIPALITIES 1970-2010**

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>1970</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>% Change</b>
City of Gloversville	7,508	6,792	6,927	6,500	6,486	-1,022	-13.6%
City of Johnstown	3,691	3,908	3,732	3,579	3,686	-5	-.14%
<b>Total Cities</b>	<b>11,199</b>	<b>11,700</b>	<b>10,659</b>	<b>10,079</b>	<b>10,172</b>	<b>-1,027</b>	<b>-13.7%</b>
Town of Bleeker	108	206	198	232	240	132	122.0%
Town of Broadalbin	1,619	1,546	1,658	1,951	2,110	491	30.3%
Town of Caroga	287	461	489	588	526	239	83.3%
<b>Town of Ephratah</b>	<b>393</b>	<b>543</b>	<b>521</b>	<b>625</b>	<b>655</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>66.7%</b>
Town of Johnstown	1,824	2,280	2,239	2,471	2,596	772	42.3%
Town of Mayfield	1,510	1,983	2,139	2,535	2,669	1,159	76.8%
Town of Northampton	1,088	1,127	1,063	1,163	1,151	63	5.8%
Town of Oppenheim	481	643	650	785	730	249	51.8%
Town of Perth	744	1,140	1,182	1,318	1,461	717	96.4%
Town of Stratford	189	211	197	237	244	55	29.1%
<b>Total Towns</b>	<b>8,243</b>	<b>10,140</b>	<b>10,336</b>	<b>11,905</b>	<b>12,382</b>	<b>4,139</b>	<b>50.2%</b>
<b>Fulton County</b>	<b>19,442</b>	<b>21,840</b>	<b>20,995</b>	<b>21,984</b>	<b>23,554</b>	<b>4,112</b>	<b>21.2%</b>



C. Seasonal Housing Units:

As shown below, in 2010, of the 759 total housing units in the Town, 54 or 7% were seasonal. Between 2000-2010, there were 8 new seasonal units added to the Town. Ephratah has experienced a rise and fall of seasonal units within the Town. Between 1970-1980, there was an increase of 28 seasonal units, followed by a decrease of 21 units between 1980-1990. Ephratah has recently experienced another rise with 8 seasonal units between 2000-2010. However, compared to the number of seasonal units in other Fulton County townships, Ephratah has a very low inventory.

**TOTAL SEASONAL UNITS IN FULTON COUNTY MUNICIPALITIES**

Municipality	1970-2010						% Change
	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	Change 2000-2010	
City of Gloversville	6	3	16	31	48	17	55%
City of Johnstown	2	4	11	12	26	14	117%
<b>Total Cities</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>72%</b>
Town of Bleecker	159	138	156	170	232	62	36%
Town of Broadalbin	38	482	513	531	479	-52	-10%
Town of Caroga	1,251	1,252	1,279	1,130	1,114	-16	-1%
<b>Town of Ephratah</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>17%</b>
Town of Johnstown	113	132	116	158	190	32	20%
Town of Mayfield	451	667	563	478	614	136	28%
Town of Northampton	180	558	708	716	761	45	6%
Town of Oppenheim	63	48	86	91	100	9	10%
Town of Perth	7	3	17	19	9	-10	-53%
Town of Stratford	233	320	267	249	280	31	12%
<b>Total Towns</b>	<b>2,527</b>	<b>3,660</b>	<b>3,744</b>	<b>3,588</b>	<b>3,833</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>7%</b>
<b>Fulton County</b>	<b>2,535</b>	<b>3,667</b>	<b>3,771</b>	<b>3,631</b>	<b>3,907</b>	<b>276</b>	<b>8%</b>

## D. Housing Type:

### 1. Owner Occupied:

In 2010, there were 568 owner-occupied housing units in the Town, which represented 74.8% of all housing units. In comparison, for the County as a whole, 56% of all housing units in the County are owner occupied. In just the towns, 61% of the total housing units are owner occupied. In both comparisons, the Town has a higher percentage of its total housing units being owner occupied.

#### **TOTAL NUMBER OF OWNER-OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS IN FULTON COUNTY MUNICIPALITIES**

1970-2010							
Municipality	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2000-2010 Change	% Change
City of Gloversville	4,164	4,064	3,802	3,515	3,356	-159	-4.5%
City of Johnstown	2,247	2,293	2,273	2,136	2,162	26	1.2%
<b>Total Cities</b>	<b>6,411</b>	<b>6,357</b>	<b>6,075</b>	<b>5,651</b>	<b>5,518</b>	<b>-133</b>	<b>-2.4%</b>
Town of Blecker	91	156	174	221	231	10	4.5%
Town of Broadalbin	941	1,236	1,409	1,639	1,748	109	6.7%
Town of Caroga	245	356	434	533	471	-62	-11.6%
<b>Town of Ephratah</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>456</b>	<b>463</b>	<b>563</b>	<b>568</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0.9%</b>
Town of Johnstown	1,549	1,950	2,021	2,208	2,313	105	4.8%
Town of Mayfield	1,214	1,641	1,844	2,122	2,162	40	1.9%
Town of Northampton	601	776	803	879	871	-8	-0.9%
Town of Oppenheim	352	500	557	597	625	28	4.7%
Town of Perth	609	925	1,041	1,159	1,270	111	9.6%
Town of Stratford	131	173	178	204	210	6	2.9%
<b>Total Towns</b>	<b>6,065</b>	<b>8,169</b>	<b>8,924</b>	<b>10,125</b>	<b>10,469</b>	<b>344</b>	<b>3.4%</b>
<b>Fulton County</b>	<b>12,476</b>	<b>14,526</b>	<b>14,999</b>	<b>15,776</b>	<b>15,987</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>1.3%</b>

#### **TOWN OF EPHRATAH**

#### **HOUSING UNITS**

1990-2010

TYPE	1990	2000	2010
1 Unit, Detached	427	517	TBD
1 Unit, Attached	2	3	TBD
2 to 4 Units	9	6	TBD
5 to 9 Units	-	-	TBD
10 or more Units	-	-	TBD
Mobile Home, Trailer, Other	163	198	TBD

## 2. Renter Occupied:

As shown below, between 2000-2010 the number of Renter-occupied housing units in the Town increased from 62 to 87 or by 40.3%, which is the highest percent change of any other Fulton County municipality during that time period.

### TRENDS IN NUMBER OF RENTER-OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS IN FULTON COUNTY MUNICIPALITIES

Municipality	1970-2010						% Change 2000-2010
	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	Change 2000-2010	
City of Gloversville	2,958	3,112	3,125	2,985	3,130	145	4.9%
City of Johnstown	1,215	1,368	1,459	1,443	1,524	81	5.6%
<b>Total Cities</b>	<b>4,173</b>	<b>4,480</b>	<b>4,584</b>	<b>4,428</b>	<b>4,654</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>5.1%</b>
Town of Bleecker	7	9	20	11	9	-2	-18.2%
Town of Broadalbin	163	200	250	312	362	50	16.0%
Town of Caroga	19	46	59	55	55	0	0.0%
<b>Town of Ephratah</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>40.3%</b>
Town of Johnstown	183	195	218	263	278	15	5.7%
Town of Mayfield	204	239	304	413	507	94	22.8%
Town of Northampton	178	243	250	284	280	-4	-1.4%
Town of Oppenheim	80	106	93	88	105	17	19.3%
Town of Perth	75	146	141	159	191	32	20.1%
Town of Stratford	22	19	22	33	25	-8	-24.2%
<b>Total Towns</b>	<b>969</b>	<b>1,253</b>	<b>1,412</b>	<b>1,680</b>	<b>1,899</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>13.0%</b>
<b>Fulton County</b>	<b>5,142</b>	<b>5,733</b>	<b>5,996</b>	<b>6,108</b>	<b>6,553</b>	<b>445</b>	<b>7.3%</b>

## IV. TOWN OF EPHRATAH INCOME TRENDS:

As shown below, the Town of Ephratah's 2000 median household income was \$33,810. That total was higher than the overall County median household income of \$33,663. However, the Town of Ephratah's 2000 per capita income of \$14,656 was lower than the overall County's total of \$15,207.

### TOWN OF EPHRATAH INCOMES 1980-2000

	1980	1990	2000	Change 1990-2000	% Change 1990-2000
<b><u>Town of Ephratah</u></b>					
Per Capita	\$ 4,805	\$ 9,002	\$ 14,656	\$ 5,654	62.8%
Median Household	\$ 13,559	\$ 25,313	\$ 33,810	\$ 8,497	33.6%
<b><u>Fulton County:</u></b>					
Per Capita	\$ 5,973	\$ 11,330	\$ 15,207	\$ 9,234	81.5%
Median Household	\$ 13,898	\$ 23,862	\$ 33,663	\$ 9,801	41%

As shown below, the 2000 Census showed that 22.9% of the Town's 625 households earned an average income between \$35,000-\$49,999 dollars respectively. In addition, 162 of the 634 households in the Town, or 25.5 had a family income over \$50,000. Compared to the County as a whole, the Town of Ephratah's household incomes are slightly higher than the County.

**TOWN OF EPHRATAH  
FAMILY AND HOUSEHOLD INCOME RANGES  
2000**

Range	Households	%	Families	%
Less than \$10,000	68	10.7%	26	5.5%
\$10,000 - \$14,999	53	8.4%	22	4.7%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	75	11.8%	73	15.5%
\$25,000 - \$34,999	131	20.7%	106	22.5%
<b>\$35,000 - \$49,999</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>22.9%</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>24.4%</b>
\$50,000 - \$74,999	115	18.1%	92	19.5%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	28	4.4%	21	4.4%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	12	1.9%	10	2.1%
\$150,000 - \$199,999	5	.8%	5	1.1%
\$200,000	2	0.3%	2	.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>634</b>		<b>472</b>	

#### **V. COMMUTATION PATTERNS:**

Commutation patterns refer to where people travel to work. The 2010 Census has yet to publish commutation data for 2010. According to the 2000 Census, approximately 54% of the total Town of Ephratah's workforce was employed in Fulton County. This was slightly lower than the 57% average for all Towns in Fulton County. As shown in the table below, the % of the Town's workforce working in Fulton County decreased from 67% in 1980 to 54% in 2000.

**% OF TOWN OF EPHRATAH'S WORKFORCE  
WORKING IN FULTON COUNTY  
(1980 AND 2000)**

MUNICIPALITY	1980	2000
Johnstown	79%	79%
City of Gloversville	88%	78%
City of Johnstown	86%	74%
Caroga	93%	71%
Bleecker	81%	70%
Northampton	80%	67%
Mayfield	79%	66%
<b>Ephratah</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>54%</b>
Stratford	23%	39%
Oppenheim	22%	39%
Broadalbin	51%	37%
Perth	30%	29%

Since the Town of Ephratah is primarily a rural, residential community with no major employers located in the Town, it is not surprising that almost ½ of its work force works outside of Fulton County. Due to its close proximity to Montgomery County, many Town residents work in Montgomery County and other nearby Counties to the south and west.

COMMUTATION PATTERNS IN FULTON COUNTY MUNICIPALITIES

PLACE OF WORK: 2000							
Municipality	Total Workers	Work in Fulton County	%	Work Outside Fulton County	%	Work Outside New York State	%
City of Gloversville	6,292	4,929	78%	1,346	21%	17	0%
City of Johnstown	3,724	2,772	74%	947	25%	5	0%
<b>Total Cities:</b>	<b>10,016</b>	<b>7,701</b>	<b>77%</b>	<b>2,293</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>0%</b>
Town of Bleecker	262	183	70%	74	28%	5	2%
Town of Broadalbin	2,401	889	37%	1,497	62%	15	1%
Town of Caroga	628	446	71%	182	29%	0	0%
Town of Ephratah	727	392	54%	325	45%	10	1%
Town of Johnstown	2,898	2,280	79%	587	20%	31	1%
Town of Mayfield	3,060	2,020	66%	1,009	34%	31	1%
Town of Northampton	1,189	796	67%	381	32%	12	1%
Town of Oppenheim	792	306	39%	482	61%	4	1%
Town of Perth	1,552	445	29%	1,107	71%	0	0%
Town of Stratford	238	92	39%	139	58%	7	3%
<b>Total Towns:</b>	<b>13,747</b>	<b>7,849</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>5,783</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>Total County:</b>	<b>23,763</b>	<b>15,550</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>8,076</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>1%</b>

## VI. TOWN OF EPHRATAH'S POVERTY TRENDS:

As shown below, the 2000 Census reported that there were 257 individuals living in poverty in the Town of Ephratah. This was an increase of 19.5% from 1990.

**# OF INDIVIDUALS BELOW POVERTY LEVEL IN FULTON COUNTY MUNICIPALITIES  
1970-2000**

Municipality	1970	1980	1990	2000	Change (1990-2000)	% Change (1990-2000)
City of Gloversville	1,529	2,573	2,831	2,929	98	3.5%
City of Johnstown	648	1,050	1,186	1,094	-92	-7.8%
<b>Total Cities</b>	<b>2,177</b>	<b>3,623</b>	<b>4,017</b>	<b>4,023</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0.2%</b>
Town of Bleeker	12	40	51	25	-26	-51.0%
Town of Broadalbin	255	378	301	260	-41	-13.6%
Town of Caroga	12	179	144	124	-20	-13.9%
<b>Town of Ephratah</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>19.5%</b>
Town of Johnstown	537	341	470	576	106	22.6%
Town of Mayfield	323	558	591	548	-43	-7.3%
Town of Northampton	311	526	414	302	-112	-27.1%
Town of Oppenheim	323	262	332	222	-110	-33.1%
Town of Perth	121	173	237	199	-38	-16.0%
Town of Stratford	62	97	117	150	33	28.2%
<b>Total Towns</b>	<b>2067</b>	<b>2774</b>	<b>2635</b>	<b>2663</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>1.1%</b>
<b>Fulton County</b>	<b>4244</b>	<b>6397</b>	<b>6652</b>	<b>6686</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>0.5%</b>

As illustrated in the chart below, in 2000, the Town of Ephratah had the third highest percent of its population living in poverty of all Fulton County municipalities. The Town of Stratford had the greatest percent of any Fulton County municipality living in poverty while the Town of Bleeker has the least.

**% POPULATION IN FULTON COUNTY MUNICIPALITIES  
LIVING IN POVERTY**

Municipality	1970 (%)	1980 (%)	1990 (%)	2000 (%)	RANK 2000 Highest To Lowest %
Town of Stratford	12.5	15.5	20.0	23.4	1
City of Gloversville	7.8	14.4	17.0	19.0	2
<b>Town of Ephratah</b>	<b>8.6</b>	<b>14.1</b>	<b>13.8</b>	<b>15.2</b>	<b>3</b>
City of Johnstown	6.5	11.2	13.1	12.9	4
Town of Oppenheim	22.6	14.5	18.0	12.5	5
Town of Northampton	13.1	23.0	15.3	11.0	6
Town of Caroga	1.5	15.2	10.7	8.8	7
Town of Mayfield	7.1	10.3	10.3	8.5	8
Town of Johnstown	9.3	5.1	7.3	8.0	9
Town of Perth	5.1	5.3	7.0	5.5	10
Town of Broadalbin	7.2	9.3	6.8	5.1	11
Town of Bleeker	4.1	8.6	9.9	4.4	12



## **VII. EXISTING LAND USES:**

The Town Assessor identifies the existing land use of every parcel of land in the Town of Ephratah. The following table summarizes how the Town of Ephratah Assessor classified existing land uses of all tax parcels in the Town in the 2012 assessment roll:

**TOWN OF EPHRATAH EXISTING LAND USES 2012**

<b>Assessor's Land Use Classification</b>	<b># of Parcels</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>%</b>
Residential	664	51.5%	7,376	29.7%
Vacant	404	31.3%	7,652	30.8%
Government/Institutional/Utility	67	5.2%	3,496	14.1%
State Land	49	3.8%	2,045	8.2%
Agricultural	44	3.4%	2,023	8.1%
Seasonal Residential	40	3.1%	1,643	6.6%
Commercial	17	1.3%	78	.3%
Mining/Quarrying	4	.3%	538	2.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,289</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>24,851</b>	<b>100%</b>

As shown above, there are 1,289 tax parcels of land in the Town. Of that total, 51.5% are classified by the Town Assessor as being used for residential uses. 31.3% of all tax parcels in the Town are classified as being vacant.

**TOWN OF EPHRATAH EXISTING LAND USES  
WITHIN ADIRONDACK PARK 2012**

<b>Assessor's Land Use Classification</b>	<b># of Parcels</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>%</b>
Residential	73	33.6%	1,082.2	19.9%
Vacant	87	40.1%	2,285.5	42.1%
Local Government/Public	3	1.4%	42.9	.8%
State Land	27	12.4%	1,117.4	20.6%
Vacant with Improvements	8	3.7%	161.5	3.0%
Seasonal Residential	14	6.5%	395.6	7.3%
Commercial	2	.9%	4.02	.1%
Public Utility	1	.5%	65.5	1.2%
Mining/Quarrying	2	.9%	277.5	5.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>5,432.12</b>	<b>100%</b>

As shown above, 217 (17%) of the 1,289 parcels of land in the Town of Ephratah lie within the Adirondack State Park.

### **VIII. TOWN OF EPHRATAH'S ASSESSED VALUATIONS AND TAXES:**

The total assessed valuation of property in the Town is important with respect to calculating tax rates. A municipality's total assessed valuation of its properties typically needs to grow each year to maintain stable tax rates.

As shown below, the total assessed valuation of properties in the Town increased by 11.06% between 2000-2011. However, the total Town property tax levy has increased 122.34% in the same timeframe. This represents an average annual increase of approximately 1.0%.

**TRENDS IN TOWN OF EPHRATAH'S TOTAL ASSESSED VALUATION  
AND TOWN TAX LEVY**

YEAR	TOTAL ASSESSED VALUATION SUBJECT TO TAX LEVY	TOTAL TOWN TAX LEVY
2000	\$54,957,714	\$279,734.76
2001	\$54,196,596	\$300,249.14
2002	\$52,289,603	\$347,725.86
2003	\$53,019,122	\$380,147.10
2004	\$50,597,110	\$470,018.17
2005	\$51,597,706	\$508,237.40
2006	\$51,235,649	\$589,722.32
2007	\$50,599,706	\$612,762.44
2008	\$50,402,845	\$607,858.31
2009	\$51,513,864	\$621,772.34
2010	\$61,015,793	\$621,750.93
2011	\$61,036,122	\$621,958.08
Change 2000-2011	\$(+6,078,408.00	\$(+342,223.32
% Change	(+) 11.06 %	(+) 122.34 %

As shown below, the Town of Ephratah has the highest 2012 Town tax rate of all Towns in Fulton County:

#### **2012 Town Tax Rates in Fulton County**

Town of Ephratah	:	\$10.55
Town of Oppenheim	:	\$ 8.72
Town of Caroga	:	\$ 6.33
Town of Stratford	:	\$ 6.06
Town of Perth	:	\$ 3.41
Town of Bleecker	:	\$ 2.26
Town of Johnstown	:	\$ 1.13
Town of Northampton	:	\$ 0.92
Town of Broadalbin	:	\$ 0.89
Town of Mayfield	:	\$ 0.47

Each year, the Town is apportioned the amount of the County tax levy Town residents must pay. This occurs for all towns in the County. That total dollar amount is then divided by the Town's assessed valuation to determine what the County's tax rate will be in the Town of Ephratah. As shown below, the total apportionment decreased by 19.7% over the past ten (10) years. The County's tax rate in the Town of Ephratah was \$3.86/1,000 or 27.61% less in 2011 than it was in 2000.

**TOWN OF EPHRATAH'S APPORTIONMENT  
OF FULTON COUNTY'S TAX LEVY**

YEAR	TOWN'S APPORTIONMENT OF COUNTY TAX LEVY	COUNTY TAX RATE IN TOWN
2000	\$765,453.68	\$13.98
2001	\$762,853.11	\$14.12
2002	\$612,133.36	\$11.74
2003	\$671,382.40	\$12.70
2004	\$731,119.40	\$14.38
2005	\$763,034.60	\$14.84
2006	\$642,031.39	\$12.57
2007	\$582,836.47	\$11.56
2008	\$600,446.90	\$11.72
2009	\$600,670.65	\$11.72
2010	\$616,988.21	\$10.18
2011	\$614,680.92	\$10.12
2012	\$651,422.52	\$10.84
Change 2000- 2012	\$(-)114,031.16	\$(-)3.14
% Change	(-)14.90%	(-)22.46%

In addition to Town and County taxes, Town of Ephratah residents also pay taxes for fire protection services. The following table shows the tax levy for both Fire Districts since 2000. In 2012, the two (2) Fire Districts' combined tax levy was \$114,019.40. This compares to the overall Town tax levy of \$621,958.08.

**TAX LEVIES FOR FIRE DISTRICTS**

YEAR	TAX LEVY FOR FIRE DISTRICT 1	TAX LEVY FOR FIRE DISTRICT 2	TOTAL TAX LEVY
2000	\$49,190.16	\$46,834.63	\$96,024.79
2001	\$49,640.14	\$52,188.03	\$ 101,828.17
2002	\$49,553.46	\$53,718.18	\$ 103,271.64
2003	\$49,292.17	\$54,784.36	\$ 104,076.53
2004	\$49,880.83	\$56,396.28	\$ 106,277.11
2005	\$50,052.03	\$59,741.32	\$ 109,793.35
2006	\$50,059.29	\$61,109.13	\$111,168.42
2007	\$49,942.76	\$56,719.15	\$106,661.91
2008	\$50,442.43	\$60,424.92	\$110,867.35
2009	\$51,000.77	\$61,064.91	\$112,065.68
2010	\$51,789.67	\$61,013.98	\$112,803.65
2011	\$51,580.59	\$61,605.68	\$113,186.27
2012	\$52,017.50	\$62,001.90	\$114,019.40
Change 2000-2012	\$(+ )2,827.34	\$(+ )15,167.27	\$ (+)17,994.61
% Change	(+)5.75%	(+)32.38%	(+)18.74%

Up until 2012, portions of the Town were located within five (5) School Districts. In 2012, votes in the St. Johnsville and Oppenheim-Ephratah School Districts agreed to merge. As a result, portions of the Town of Ephratah are now located in the following four (4) School Districts:

1. Greater Johnstown School District (GJSD).
2. St. Johnsville/Oppenheim-Ephratah School District
3. Dolgeville Central School District.
4. Fort Plain Central School District.

The following table compares the school tax rates Town of Ephratah residents paid through the 2011-12 school tax year depending upon what School District their property is located in:

SCHOOL TAX RATES					
Year	GJSD	O-E SD	St. Johnsville School District	Dolgeville Central School District	Fort Plain Central School District
1999-2000	\$ 21.224487	\$ 16.1353	\$ 22.90610	\$ 14.1309	\$ 24.1032
2000-2001	\$ 20.887865	\$ 17.2033	\$ 21.90695	\$ 15.3274	\$ 25.1914
2001-2002	\$ 17.522193	\$ 16.6689	\$ 18.011935	? (No tax rate on sheet for this school district in this year)	\$ 24.848474
2002-2003	\$ 18.784673	\$ 18.5835	\$ 18.902438	\$ 13.9212	\$ 27.959507
2003-2004	\$ 18.632363	\$ 21.4052	\$ 18.506827	\$ 14.1971	\$ 28.451377
2004-2005	\$ 19.424115	\$ 23.4985	\$ 22.261062	\$ 15.9119	\$ 34.303273
2005-2006	\$ 22.05741517	\$ 24.4794	\$ 25.5909	\$ 18.9737	\$ 40.503515
2006-2007	\$ 23.30684041	\$ 25.1236	\$ 27.558	\$ 21.1055	\$ 41.617051
2007-2008	\$ 24.182706	\$ 26.1948	\$ 28.84312	\$ 23.295	\$ 43.628336
2008-2009	\$ 23.17083	\$ 24.7920	\$ 27.3524	\$ 22.0613	\$ 41.33507
2009-2010	\$ 20.15288	\$ 22.1054	\$ 23.488219	\$ 17.8733	\$ 33.576105
2010-2011	\$ 18.08529	\$ 19.7706	\$ 20.74555	\$ 15.9836	\$ 29.736667
2011-2012	\$ 18.45537	\$ 20.3149	\$ 21.052651	\$ 16.1893	\$ 30.544795

## IX. SUMMARY:

Based upon a review of the previous information, the following observations can be made:

### ***Population***

- Between 1940 and 1970, the Town's population steadily increased. Since 1970, the Town's population has fluctuated slightly.
- The greatest population increase occurred between 1970-1980 with an increase of 267, or 21%.
- The median age of Town's population is growing faster than the County as a whole. Between 1980-2010, the Town of Ephratah ranked third behind the Town's of Stratford and Bleecker for overall increase in median age. Between 2000-2010, the Town of Ephratah has shown the greatest increase.
- The Town's 65+ population is growing quickly. Nearly 15% of the Town's 2010 population is within the 65+ age group.
- The Town's school-age population (5-19) decreased from 2000-2010 by 119.

### ***Housing***

- Between 2000-2010, there were 39 new housing units added in the Town. That is an average of nearly 4.0 units/year.

- The predominate housing type is year round housing. Only 7.0% of the housing stock is seasonal.
- The Town does not have an inventory of housing units containing more than four (4) individual units.
- Mobile homes constitute nearly 28% of the Town's housing stock.

#### ***Income***

- Since 1980, the Town's per capita income has been lower than the County's as a whole. Since 1990, the Town's Median Household income has been greater than the County's.
- The greatest percentage of both Household and Family income ranges is between \$35,000-\$49,999.
- The Town of Ephratah is ranked third for percent population in Fulton County municipalities living in poverty.

#### ***Existing Land Uses***

- There are 1,289 tax parcels of land in the Town.
- 54.6% of these 1,289 parcels are being utilized for residential purposes.
- 31.3% are vacant.
- The 404 vacant parcels of land total 7,652 acres of land and is the greatest percentage of land use.
- 14.1% of the total acreage within the Town is owned by either Government or a Utility.

#### ***Assessed Valuation and Taxes***

- The Town of Ephratah's 2012 Town tax rate is the highest Town tax rate in Fulton County.
- The total assessed valuation of lands in the Town grew by 11.06% between 2000-2011. The total Town tax levy grew by 122.34% during the same time-period.

## **CHAPTER VIII** **PUBLIC INPUT**

The Comprehensive Plan Committee attempted to obtain public input in the early stage of the Comprehensive Planning Process. The Committee prepared a Comprehensive Plan Survey for property owners to complete. The survey was made available on the Town's website and was available at Town Hall. The survey was available from December 28, 2012 to February 15, 2013. A total of 18 responses were received. The following is a summary of the responses received.

### **2013** **TOWN OF EPHRATAH** **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN SURVEY RESULTS**

#### **QUESTION 1. THINGS LIKED BEST ABOUT THE TOWN**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
Rural Setting/Privacy/Quiet/Small Town/Not Crowded/Uncomplicated/Peaceful	18	
Friendliness/Help Others/Residents	5	
Environment/Safe Place/Security/Low Crime	5	
Close Proximity to Major Towns and amenities	2	
Public Works	1	
Accessibility to Town Hall	1	
Few Restrictions	1	
Reasonable Taxes	1	
Small businesses	1	
Abundance of needed Open Space	1	

#### **QUESTION 2. THINGS TO CHANGE IN TOWN**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
Need Gas Station	3	
More businesses (Stewart's Yogurt/Plastic/Bottling)	3	
Recreation	3	
Politicians need to be in public's eye/Town Representation	2	
Nothing	2	
Get rid of junk/blight	3	
Less Codes to Fix Properties	1	
Less nosey neighbors	1	
Be able to vote on issues	1	
Affordable Housing	1	
Lower taxes	1	
Community Center	2	
Lower Taxes	1	
Need Tourism	2	
Eliminate Good Old Boy Network	1	
More progressive thinking	1	
More Jobs	1	
Lack of property maintenance	1	
Lack of Zoning	1	



**QUESTION 3. THINGS TO MAKE TOWN BETTER PLACE TO LIVE AND DO BUSINESS**

Response	Total	%
Lower taxes	5	
Need Gas Station	5	
More businesses (Stewart's, Yogurt/Plastic/Bottling)	5	
Get rid of junk/blight	2	
Government-friendly business.	1	
Youth Center	1	
Higher moral standard	1	
Affordable Housing	1	
Community Center	1	
Code Enforcement	2	
Advertisement of local businesses	1	
Recreation Activities	1	
Access	1	
Encourage development of vacant land	1	
Public Transit	1	
Public Library	1	
More information and use of available facilities	1	

**QUESTION 4. SHOULD THE TOWN OF EPHRATAH ANY OF THE FOLLOWING:**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
Improve public access to Rockwood Reservoir	8	5		2	1
Farmer's Market	7	8		1	
Develop all terrain vehicle (atv) trails	4	7	2	2	1
Community Center	4	5		5	2
Build New Town Hall	4	3	3	6	
Town Park	3	6		6	1
Athletic courts and fields	3	5	1	5	2
Multi-use walking and biking trails	3	6		4	3
Expand/promote snowmobile trails	2	10	1	1	2
Playgrounds	2	9		5	
Renovate existing Town Hall	2	6	3	3	2
Skateboard Park		4	2	5	5

Most Important from list above:

Farmer's Market	6
Community Center	6
Develop all terrain vehicle (atv) trails	5
Town Park	5
Build New Town Hall	4
Improve public access to Rockwood Reservoir	3
Expand/promote snowmobile trails	2
Skateboard Park	2
Playgrounds	1
Athletic courts and fields	
Multi-use walking and biking trails	1
Renovate existing Town Hall	1

Salt Shed (not on list)

**QUESTION 5. DO YOU BELIEVE THAT THERE IS SUFFICIENT DIVERSITY OF HOUSING TYPES IN THE TOWN OF EPHRATAH?**

Yes 11 No 5

Please identify, in order of priority, the five (5) types of new housing that should be developed in the Town. 1 is most important and 5 being the least important.

Housing Type	1	2	3	4	5
Apartments	1		2	2	3
Townhouses		1		1	
Condominiums		1	1		
Senior Housing	3	2	3	1	
Assisted living facilities for seniors		3	2		
Single-family homes	6	1	1		
Two-family homes	1	2		3	2
Mobile Homes	2	1			2

**QUESTION 6. SHOULD THE TOWN OF EPHRATAH PURSUE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES:**

Initiative	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
Develop and implement a marketing strategy to promote the Town of Ephratah to new businesses, housing developers and potential tourists.	4	3	1	6	1
Create new commercial areas within the Town	3	5	3	4	1
Create shovel-ready sites for new business to locate on	2	3	2	6	1
Identify a Town Center to serve as focal point of retail and commercial development	2	5	2	5	1
Pursue the development of Town of Ephratah owned and operated water and sewer systems	1	2	3	8	1

**QUESTION 7. IF A TOWN CENTER COULD BE ESTABLISHED, WHERE DO YOU BELIEVE IT SHOULD BE LOCATED:**

On NYS Route 29 west of its intersection with NYS Route 10 heading south	8
On NYS Route 10 or NYS Route 67 in Ephratah	7
On NYS Route 29 east of its intersection with NYS Route 10 heading north	0
On NYS Route 29 between where NYS Route 10 intersects heading south and where NYS Route 10 heads north	1
On NYS Route 10 south of NYS Route 29	0

**QUESTION 8. WHAT THREE (3) STEPS SHOULD BE TAKEN TO STRENGTHEN THE LOCAL ECONOMY?**

Response	Total	%
Businesses/Retail Establishments (bottler/plastic/yogurt/drive-in/grocery store)	4	
Encourage/support/promote local business	4	
Lower taxes	3	
Increase jobs/higher paying	2	
Encourage Businesses with Tax Incentives	2	
Advertise (economic opportunities/rural life/businesses)	3	
Promote Tourism	2	
Entertain inventive new business	2	
Affordable Housing/Housing Diversity	2	
Amish are putting contractors out of business	1	
Stop saying "the State mandates it"	1	
Gas Station	1	
Clean up junk/blight	1	
Stop abusing funds	1	
Keep building permits at low cost	1	
Farmer's Market	1	
Buying local when possible	1	

**QUESTION 9. PLEASE IDENTIFY THREE (3) WORDS/PHRASES THAT BEST DESCRIBE WHAT YOUR VISION IS FOR WHAT THE TOWN OF EPHRATAH SHOULD LOOK AND BE LIKE IN 20 YEARS:**

Response	Total	%
Country/Rural/small town	6	
Modern but unchanged/Trendy	2	
Convenient/Self sufficient	2	
Diversity/Bedroom Community	2	
Growth/Productive	2	
Safe and Quiet Place to Live/Peaceful	2	
Family Center Free to all Residents/Active Town Center	2	
Visually Attractive/Clean	2	
Healthy lifestyles and activities	1	
Recreational Opportunities	1	
Affordable	1	
Welcoming common areas	1	
Small Business Clusters	1	

**QUESTION 10. PLEASE IDENTIFY THREE (3) THINGS THAT SHOULD BE DONE TO MAKE THE TOWN A MORE ATTRACTIVE PLACE TO LIVE?**

Response	Total	%
Code Enforcement/Property Maintenance/Zoning	6	
No junk/blight	4	
Gas Station/convenience store	2	
Recreational Activities	2	
Develop Town Center and outdoor activity areas	1	
Develop an architectural style and mood for Town Center and business area at Center	1	
Nothing	1	
Build sense of community	1	
Community Center/Town Hall	1	
More tax on people not maintaining property	1	
Doctor	1	
Preschool	1	
More than 1 baseball field	1	
Affordable Housing	1	
More Business	1	
Don't allow building development or trailer parks	1	
Keep Small Town Charm	1	
Emphasize Natural Attractions	1	
Library	1	

**QUESTION 11. PLEASE IDENTIFY THREE (3) THINGS THE TOWN COULD DO TO ATTRACT SMALL BUSINESSES INTO THE TOWN:**

Response	Total	%
Financial Incentives/Tax Breaks/Reasonable Taxes	6	
Advertise/Town Directory/Promote local contractors	5	
If build better mousetrap, we will buy it	1	
Gas station	1	
Affordable housing	1	
Production Factory	1	
Merged school positive quality	1	
Diversity	1	
Accessibility	1	
Permit process	1	
Cleanup	1	
Present Town Center Plan and support promotion	1	
Develop potential customer areas or have local team available for site prep	1	

**QUESTION 12. TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF**

**A. How old are you?**

18 or under	19-35	36-64	65+
	4	8	3

**B. What is your sex?**

Male	Female
8	7

**C. Where do you live?**

Town	Non-Resident property owner
13	1

**D. How many years have you lived in Ephratah?**

0-10	10-20	20+
6	2	8

**E. How do you use your property in Ephratah?**

Main Residence	Farm	Business	Second Home	Investment Property	Vacant Land
15			1		



## **CHAPTER IX** **HISTORY**

Acknowledgement: All information in this Chapter was taken directly from the Report titled **Our Todays and Yesterdays in the Town of Ephratah** prepared by the Bicentennial Historical Committee of Leland Rickard, Edythe Christman and Ivan Duesler.

During the early part of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, Europe was subjected to a series of religious wars. The Lower Palatine in Germany was especially affected and rather than be persecuted, many fled to England. Queen Anne thought it an opportune time to send them to colonize America and offered inducements of land and a chance to start a new life.

Migration took place in 1707 when settlement was made in the Hudson Valley. Becoming dissatisfied, some moved to Pennsylvania while others went to Schoharie and thence to Stone Arabia which later became the Palatine District. It included Towns of Stratford, Oppenheim, Ephratah and part of Garoga.

As of 1720, Frederick Getman, Johannes Bierman, Frederick Empie, John Shoemaker, Johannes Schell and Honnas Reed established their homes in the southern section of the Town of Ephratah. They were followed by Jacob Frey, Ludwig Herring, Nicholas Rechter, John Herdick, Philip Kreitser, Henry Hart, William Cool, Nicholas and Henry Smith, William Duesler, Richard Coppernoll, John Sponable and Richard Young.

Frederick Empie located on lots 86 and 88 of the Stone Arabia Patent in 1743 and in the same year, Frederick Getman (Kitman) and Johannes Bierman purchased land. Nicholas Rechter settled near Garoga, erecting a house instead of a log cabin. Sanford Snell later lived here. Henry Herring bought a lot later owned by Benjamin Snell. William Cool and Philip Kreitser located west of Tillaboro Road and Henry Hart settled on what is now Hart Road. After the Revolution, Nicholas Smith settled on what later became the Wallace Mc Laughlin farm located on a spur of Tillaboro Road and Henry, his brother, on the farm now owned by Clinton Mc Laughlin.

<sup>1</sup>Legend claims that in 1732 the Village of Ephratah was named by Anthony Beck after a place in the Bible meaning fruitful abundance. It is said that Mr. Beck had the power of foreseeing the future and one day while standing on Spook Hill, east of Ephratah, he envisioned a thriving city with railroad and smoking engines, even though they had not yet been invented.

By 1770, Sir William Johnson had built a stone grist mill near the confluence of Sprite and Garoga Creeks. During the Revolution, the mill was attacked and burned. William Cool was killed and Osiers Krep, the miller, captured and taken to Canada. Upon returning after the war, he and George Getman went to the mill where Mr. Krep recovered money he had secreted prior to his capture. The building was rebuilt and operated as a grist mill many years. Later it was converted into a dwelling. One summer it was used as a day camp by the Johnstown "Y".<sup>2</sup> It is now owned and occupied by Mrs. Muriel Anderson and her son, James.

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. Beck was referring, no doubt, to the Euphrates river mentioned in the Bible as the "mightly Euphrates". Where the Tigris meets the Euphrates is a well known fertile valley. Also, in Chapter 5, Verse 2 in the Book of Micah, one reads, "—O Bethleemeh Ephratah".

<sup>2</sup> When Mike Voight and his cousin, Leona Sheick, natives of Germany, occupied the stone house, he attempted to build a machine having perpetual motion. This room was kept locked earning him the name of "the mystery man of Ephratah".

Johannes Winkle settled on what is now the Ralph Gray farm. He erected a grist mill on Garoga Creek and operated a store in Ephratah, an inventory of which bore the date of 1789. The grist mill was burned during the war but later rebuilt by Mr. Shull who sold it to Henry Yanney.

In 1803, Henry Yanney purchased 100 acres of land next to his mill and laid out lots for the foundation of the village. He erected a saw mill on Garoga Creek in 1808 and in 1832 tore it down and built a woolen mill on the site.

James Yauney came to Ephratah in 1829 and was affiliated with the woolen mill. He had two sons Levi and Daniel. In 1865, a four-story stone mill was erected replacing that built by Henry Yanney. The fourth floor was used for spinning, the third for carding, the second for warping and weaving and the first for finishing. It was powered by water from a dam built in Garoga Creek and heated by steam. Peter Fancher was a foreman, James Jukes a carder, and John Standring had charge of the spinning department. There was an enclosed yard where wool was laid out to dry, but when it was empty, village youngsters climbed over the fence and played there. A dye house was attached to the mill. Dances were held on platform near mill.

Daniel's son, James, would fill a wagon full of Yauney blankets, sheets, socks, selling them near and far, taking wool in trade. He also sold Yauney products in Europe. A blanket was woven so tight that when held by the four corners, water could be poured into it and would not leak out.

The dam which provided power for the mill was built by criss-crossing logs on top of which timbers were placed which extended back into the dam, creating a ramp over which the water flowed.

Many people worked in the mill, some walking great distances. It has been said that one employee earned \$13 in thirteen weeks, including room and board. Howard Smith remembers that in 1906 his father had a pair of trousers made for him in the mill.

After Levi died, the mill stood empty until 1911 when Mr. A. D. Sheffield, agent for the Mohawk Electric Company, purchased it from the Levi Yauney estate for \$13,300 with the intentions of reequipping and running it, providing the electric line went through. This was to be a trolley line to extend from Little Falls to Johnstown, but it never materialized. First the roof of the mill caved in and then a blast in the quarry toppled part of the walls.

Thomas Benedict built a store in 1810 and began a mercantile business. He is buried in Indian Castle cemetery.

Charles Yauney, son of Henry Yauney, Jr., was a tanner, shoe maker, manager of a store and postmaster ten years in the building east of Edward Ahrens. Since then Charles Gray owned the store while his daughter, Marion, managed it. It was then sold to Ray Hill who married Marion Gray's sister Ella, and other owners have been Ray Hill, Albert Ropeter, Morris McGowan, Henry Saltsman and Milton Decker. It is now closed. H. Crouse also ran a store.

George and Steven Cogswell ran a store and erected a distillery. Lester Getman operated one in 1897 and the next year Norman and Garry Snell, brothers, managed a store in a building east of John O. Saltsman's house. The business was taken over by Earl O. Handy who ran it until it burned in 1928. Joseph Caldwell had a store in part of the house now owned by Allan Polmateer. In 1933, a WGY store was opened in the I.O.O.F. building, managed by Brooksby Gray and Willard Vrooman with the help of Orrin Bauerman. James Yauney operated a store and the one owned by Thomas Yauney

burned in 1908 or 1909. In one of these two years, after the fire, Earl Handy built and operated a store which is the building now being torn down west of Edward Ahrens. Willard Beebe had a business east of what is now the Charles Mrazz home. His wife was Mary Saltsman and after Mr. Beebe died, she married William Quinn who had a store west of the house in which Raymon Saltsman, Jr., now lives. Later it was moved back to be used for a garage.

At one time there were three (3) meat markets in the village. In the early 1900's, Charles Wood moved the old Jerome Cook dwelling to his property and opened a meat market. Wesley Cretser not only operated a slaughter house, but sold meat from a small building in back of his home and also delivered in the area. This building was later moved nearer the road where Edna Cretser sold ice cream and other items for several years. James Smith and Albert Beard also had meat markets.

In 1868, the firm of Randall and Matthewson was located about half a mile down the creek from the Yauney mill. They also manufactured woolen products and had an advertisement in the 1869-1870 Business directory. An 1867 assessment book lists them having 36 acres of land. W.R. Randall was on the building committee when the Methodist Church was erected. To reach the mill, one turned right on a road east of property owned by Adolph Munson, continuing past the home of Adam Swartz to the creek. Simon C. Matthewson died May 12, 1885.

Mortimer Wade owned a bark tannery on the site of Duesler's garage. The dam on Sprite Creek provided power and a sluiceway running from it to the Garoga Creek can still be seen. Later, Mr. Wade became member of Assembly.

A lumber mill was located on the Caroga Creek past Sanderson's cider mill on the old road and later Richard Christman ran a lumber business and saw mill farther north on Route 10. Frank Hill and his sons, Arthur and Ray, with the help of George and Clarence Knoblauch, operated a saw mill on the farm now owned by Gordon Hill. At noon, a whistle on a steam engine, was blown and could be heard for miles around. Celora Brown had a portable mill with which he cut timber in various locations.

Abner Yauney ran a knitting and fulling mill.

A cheese factory built in 1870 by Willard Snell was located on what is now School House Road and was leased to Darius Getman by the Ephratah Cheese Stock Company. It had the use of a nearby spring. William Spoar who was fourteen years old in 1877 began working there. Phinion Smith was another employee. In that year, 130,000 pounds of cheese was made from an average of 420 cows. It required ten pounds of milk to produce a pound of cheese. Milk was delivered to the factory in large cans containing more than 100 quarts of milk. They were fastened to a crane which carried them to a tank where they were emptied. Roy Shibley was the last operator. Another factory was built in 1897 on the Turnpike by Albert Getman, and a dance was held to celebrate its opening. The factory was later sold to Allan Rickard who moved it across the line to his property where he continued the business. He had been taught the process by John and Fanny Rickard who had operated a factory in Stone Arabia. The remains of a cheese factory can be seen on the Fred Seeley farm which was once owned by Ira Whitlock. It was later managed by Mr. Smith whose son was drowned in a nearby creek. One can still see the cellar of a cheese factory just beyond the town line on Route 10 on the Fox farm which was once the Gray homestead. Milk from Ephratah dairies was delivered to that site.

John Y. Edwards made cheese boxes on Bolster Hill assisted by Carey Edwards and Wesley Cretser.

Shoemakers were John Kennicut, Michael Myers, C.J. Smith, Jerome Smith and Levi Spoar. The building between the house of Charles Mrazz and Cora Knoblauch's on the Knoblauch property was where Levi Spoar made shoes.

John Gray built the first blacksmith shop and others in this business were John Spoar, located on the south side of the street, Seymor La Grange who built a shop on property now owned by Edward Oliver. Frank Kurienko took over this business. In 1908, Coppernoll and Whitlock started a shop used for the same purpose by William Fancher in the former days. Calvin Spoar's blacksmith shop was the garage on the Ronald Smith property. Coppernoll and Whitlock's business was located next to property now owned by Mrs. Constance Gallt.

Joseph Shibley was born in Switzerland and married Elizabeth Eigabrodt of Fort Plain. He ran a wagon shop in Ephratah. Daniel Wait also had a wagon shop which was near Calvin Spoar's blacksmith.

Amos Wait had a barber shop in his father's house and later moved it to a small red house on Sprite Creek. Mot Mulford ran a barber shop in the beehive.

The first postroad was established between Canajoharie and Ephratah. Christopher Getman was appointed the first postmaster. He was followed by Alexander Ercanbrack, James Van Voast, Sr., and his son, James, Leander Wood, Charles Yauney, Marion Beard and upon his deal, his wife Rose, completed the term. The last one was Earl Handy who held the position fifteen years. Rural routes were established in the early 1900's. At the present time, both Fort Plain Route No. 2 and St. Johnsville Route No. 1 converge in Ephratah and less than one mile farther, continue on in different directions. Mail emanating from St. Johnsville has been carried by Arthur Smith, Ray Krum and Philip Terricola. That from Fort Plain has been delivered by Adelbert Tatlock, Jeremiah Saltsman and Harley Flanders. The Fort Plain route commenced in 1902.

A stone quarry near the site of the Yauney mill produced an especially good grade of limestone and was used for local mills, the power house, foundations for many homes and road building.

Dr. Henry Wood, formerly of Mapletown, came to Ephratah in 1827 and lived in the house now owned by Ira Duesler. He rode horseback in order to reach and treat his patients. His son, Levi, also a doctor married Myra Kieth. He purchased what is now known as the "Dr. Wood house", from the Edward's estate, remodeling it extensively. Doctor Burnap had an office here in 1863 and Doctor Van Voast in 1867.

Doctor John Yauney built the house east of the Methodist church and was a contemporary of Doctor Levi Wood. Doctor E. J. Hagadorn married Eva Yauney, Doctor John Yauney's daughter and after practicing in Ephratah for a time, moved to California. Doctor John Edwards lived in the stone house from 1869 to 1872. One of the babies he delivered was Wesley Cretser.

Amy Wait took care of many newborn babies.

T. Hockgrave was an undertaker who once lived in the center of the village and then moved to the house later owned by Grace Polmateer. He sold the property to John Cretser. Mr. Hockgrave not only made coffins, but was a cabinet maker. Mrs. Hockgrave's niece, Carry Handy, who lives on Murray Hill, owns some of the furniture he made.

A bill dated April 13, 1901 to a local resident covered the casket and cap for his grandmother in the amount of \$66 and was receipted by William Fancher.

At one time, Edward Shibley, who lived on property now occupied by George and Irene Andres, was an undertaker. The story is told that while he and Mr. Fancher were cleaning the hearse, one said to the other, "I wonder which one of us will ride in this first". Two weeks later Mr. Fancher died.

Adam Swartz was the last one to follow this profession in Ephratah. His place of business was off the main road east of property now owned by Adolph Munson. His horses were well cared for by Eugene Gray. In 1916, the business was moved to Fort Plain.

Mr. William Duesler, a pioneer and carpenter, built a barn on a farm later owned by James Yauney which remained standing more than one hundred years. Another barn on the Ivan Duesler farm, now owned by the Lyons family was built in 1801.

There was a brick kiln on the Eugene Gray farm that produced quantities of brick, some of which can be dug out of the ground. The name "Nebraska" appears on some.

Marion Beard and his wife made cigars in the house once owned by Clark Empie located next to the beehive and later the business was moved across the street to the house west of the Methodist church where he also had charge of the post office.

Frank Wade lived in the basement of the house now owned by Ira Duesler where he also had a glove shop and supplied many residents with glove work in their homes. At one time, about every house had a special machine on which women made gloves in their spare time. Delivery men from Johnstown firms brought new work and picked up the finished product. A few small shops with makers were managed by Emerson Cool, Patricia Lake and David Wert. Willard Beebe made gloves.

Before the advent of refrigeration, cutting ice on small ponds was a lucrative business. Earl Abel supplied many farmers and village homes with ice cut from the dam on Sprite creek in back of his property. Because farmers were required to cool milk to a certain temperature, each farm had an ice house. Blocks of ice 15 inches square at the top and as thick as the weather froze them were out on the pond with an ice saw that had coarse teeth. As each strip of blocks was cut, they were lifted to the sleigh with tongs and special care had to be taken not to fall in the water. Upon delivery to the ice house, each block was packed in saw dust, a thicker layer being deposited next to the outer walls and over the top. If properly packed, the ice would keep until the next cold season.

Various means were used to cool the milk and about the time a good system was perfected, it would be condemned by the milk inspector and another device had to be found. One manner which many a farm youngster will remember, was tediously pumping up and down in the milk can, a metal rod with a disc affixed to the bottom. The idea was to push the milk against the outer edges of the can which was being cooled by ice in a vat of water. Upon deliver to the creamery, each can was tested as to temperature and if too warm, was not accepted. It meant a loss of money for that amount and created an extra chore of making it into butter or otherwise disposing of it. The milk was also tested for bacteria and if the count was too high, it was also rejected.

Price of milk was figured according to quantity and butter fat content. That which tested above 3.5 paid a bonus.



The modern method is to use milking machines connected to a pipe line which conveys milk directly to a bulk tank with an electric powered inner revolving device which cools the contents. It is then pumped into tank trucks and carried to market.

Hamilton Caldwell, a surveyor owned the "Flats" a portion of Ephratah between Route 67 and Wohlgemuth Road.

The first garage was opened by Clifford Montony about 1924 or 1925. Harvey Nellis repaired cars in a building on the corner of Mill and Main Streets. It was later moved back and used for storage of farm machinery by Ivan Duesler. It finally collapsed.

Garry Snell's house which stood by Brookside tavern was moved to the corner of Route 67 and County Road 334 and converted into the Fairview house, later conducted as Mylott's Grill.

"The Whig Congressional Convention will assemble at the Court House, Johnstown, New York, October 3, 1838 for the purpose of nominating a candidate to represent the 15<sup>th</sup> congressional district." David Getman, John W. Fry and Sylvester Hill were members of the party.

Snuff in dainty tin boxes, carried by both men and women, was used by snuffing a pinch of it up one's nose producing a sneeze. It was an "absolute cure" for catarrh, dizziness, falling sickness, weak eyes, nerves, headaches, fits and shaking palsy. A bottle cost 25 cents in 1838.

Dr. Hitchcock's Magnetic "O-Dontica promised that it would strengthen teeth and Albridgies Balm of Columbia assured one of a good head of hair and a cure for baldness.

## **A SAD DAY IN TILLEBOROUGH**

**By  
James F. Morrison**

In the afternoon of Tuesday, April 20, 1779, a party of nine Indians entered the Tilleborough settlement undetected.

At this time, Captain Nicholas Rechter who was in command of the local militia company was about a mile from his house in an open field drilling his company.

The Indians on entering the settlement proceeded to the house of Henry Hart. A daughter of Hart saw the Indians approaching and stole away and headed for the place where the men were gathered. The girl on reaching there informed Captain Rechter that the Indians were at her father's house. Captain Rechter with Jacob Apply, Peter Shyke and two (2) other men went with Rechter to his house. The other militiamen ran to their homes to protect their families.

While the girl had gone to warn Captain Rechter, the Indians had broken into her father's home. Hart was tomahawked and scalped and his son William was taken prisoner. The Indians then plundered the house and afterwards they set it on fire.

The Indians now proceeded to the house of Jacob Apply which they also plundered and set on fire. The Indians now went to the house of Captain Rechter which was bigger than the other houses in the settlement.

Two of Rechter's daughters were in the nearby woods getting sap and carrying it to a kettle to be boiled. Henry, the youngest son of Captain Rechter was playing near the edge of the woods when the Indians arrived. The Indians tomahawked and scalped the boy and then went to the house to plunder and burn it.

The Indians on entering the house took Mrs. Rechter captive and took her outside. Just then Captain Rechter and his men arrived. Captain Rechter and his men fired at the Indians killing two and accidentally wounding Mrs. Rechter in the leg. The remaining Indians immediately returned the fire at the militiamen. Captain Rechter was hit in the arm, Peter Shyke was hit in the elbow and Jacob Apply was killed.

The Indians after firing retreated into the woods thinking that the militiamen were superior in number. Unknowingly, an Indian named Leween was left in the house who was still plundering and thought the shooting outside to be that of his companions killing the cattle.

Captain Rechter and his men secured the door and had fixed bayonets but Leween determined not to be taken prison attempted to run through them but he was fired at and stabbed. Leween was shot in the knee and stabbed in the arm and in the chest. Leween although badly wounded again attempted to run through them brandishing his tomahawk and then he grabbed a musket out of one of the soldier's hands and fought his way through and although the militiamen fired at him they missed and he escaped into the woods.

Leween just about dusk found his companions encamped in the woods but just as he reached them he passed out. Leween's<sup>3</sup> companions took him back to Canada in thirty days where his family tended to his wounds and he recovered.

The two uninjured militiamen helped Captain Rechter<sup>4</sup>, his wife, and Peter Shyke back to Fort Paris where their wounds were tended.

The next morning, Sergeant Jacob Snell, Privates Dennis Augustus Flanders, Lodowick Kring, Adam A. Loucks, Henry Walrath and sixteen other men went to the Tilleborough settlement to gather the dead.

After Sergeant Snell and his men had left the fort, Captain Rechter's two daughters reached the fort unharmed. The two girls on hearing musket fire near the house hid in the woods and remained during the night and thinking it safe in the morning they headed for the fort.

Later that morning, Sergeant Snell and his men returned to Fort Paris with the bodies of Hart, Apply and the Rechter boy where they were buried.

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<sup>3</sup> Leween was in an attack against the Sacondage Blockhouse on March 27, 1780. The blockhouse was defended by First Lieutenant Solomon Woodworth and the next day he pursued the Indians with five other men and on catching up with the Indians they killed five of them which included Leween.

<sup>4</sup> Captain Rechter not long afterwards resigned his commission as Captain in Colonel Jacob Klock's Regiment of Tryon County Militia *Second Regiment* and moved from Tilleborough to his father's house near Albany.

## THE FATE OF JOHN MARKEL AND ANNA TIMMERMAN

Anna Eve Timmerman Zimmerman was born February 4<sup>th</sup>, 1743, the daughter of Adam and Catherine Nellis Timmerman. She was thought to be a descendant of an Indian chief. Supposedly, Jacob Timmerman married Anna Margaret Peeterse, who was said to be the daughter of Hendrick, a chief and a great friend of Sire William Johnson. Hendrick was killed in battle at Lake George. It is claimed that Jacob Timmerman/Zimmerman was married in Queen Ann's chapel at Fort Hunter in 1713 by Rev. Andrews and that Adam was his son.

Anna Eve married John Markell during the beginning of the war and lived in the western part of Minden. One day in 1757 while en route to a neighbor's house they met some strange Indians. Markel said to his wife, "I am afraid our time is up". At that moment, he was killed by a bullet which passed through his body into hers. She fell on her face and feigned death even while she was scalped. After waiting until she thought it would be safe, Anna Eve ran to friends where she was treated. She recovered but the bullet remained in her body the rest of her life.

A few years later, she married Christopher Getman and lived in Ephratah until she died April 25<sup>th</sup>, 1822. Another source claimed she died in 1821 at the age of 85.

Anna Eve and Christopher Getman had eight children of who four survived. Catharine married Ludwig Rickard, Peter married Elizabeth Rechter, Christian married Mary Eacher and Jacob married Susanna Joslin.

Peter was a private in the Second Regiment of Tryon County militia under Colonel Peter Bellinger, enlisting when he was sixteen years old. His monument is in the Getman cemetery on Route 10 south of Ephratah.

Local residents remember hearing that Anna Eve combed her hair over the scaled spot and when she wanted to frighten the children, she showed it to them! She is also buried in the Getman cemetery near Peter. At one time, it was decided to move her remains to another Getman cemetery and her body was exhumed. Someone felt it was not the right thing to do so she was reburied in her original plot. At that time, the bullet was found.

## FORT PARIS

While Fort Paris was not located in the Town of Ephratah, it protected the area and almost every man belonged to Captain Christian Getman's Rangers. It is believed to have been located about one mile north of the Stone Arabia churches on a hill about twelve rods from the road where one could see for miles around. Supposedly, it was in the vicinity of the schoolhouse on Route 10 that is now a grange hall.

The fort was erected in 1777 with a palisaded enclosure with blockhouses so constructed that the upper portion extended beyond the first floor. It could accommodate three to four hundred people. It was taken down in the early 1900's and its timbers used in buildings in that area.

A paper once possessed by Nellis Getman stated: Resolved that the Rangers of Captain Christian Getman's company stationed in Stone Arabia shall, in their time of leisure, when and which of them are not employed in ranging, cut timber for building a certain fort in said place under the sole direction

of Isaac Paris, Esq. Signed by Jon. Eisenlord, Secretary. Colonels Klock and Wager were also commanders.

Both Isaac Paris and his son were killed. Mrs. Paris was granted one of the first widow's pensions. Her son, Daniel, married Catherine, a sister of Washington Irving, and she is buried in the old Colonial Cemetery in Johnstown. The Paris family occupied part of the Gramps farm in the vicinity of the farm owned by Rutherford Downs.

A small stockade stone dwelling named Fort Keyser was located about a mile south of Stone Arabia.

### **AN INDIAN CASTLE**

Archeological excavations have been made from time to time at the Mohawk Indian Castle located near Ephratah on the bank of Caroga Creek. It has been determined that it was protected by palisades built in concentric rows from six to thirty feet high, connected by a platform where defenders could stand. On the platform were piles of stone to be used as ammunition and tanks made of bark contained water with which to extinguish fires started by the enemy. The foundation of the long houses were 100 to 500 feet long and 15 feet wide.

From refuse piles, there was evidence that stone axes, sharpened sticks, bones, tortoise shells and shells of fresh water clams were used as tools. There were arrow heads, fragments of pottery and pipes for smoking.

The Mohawks designed their pottery with incised straight lines, but so varied that no two were alike. Curves were used only when a human figure was depicted. Pipes made of clay in the form of an animal or with a human face on the bowls, were artistically carved.

From evidence unearthed, it was learned that missionaries had visited them leaving crosses and medals.

Simm's History stated that nearly all the trouble between the Dutch and Indians started in a brandy bottle.



## RECRUITING POSTER OF THE REVOLUTION

To all brave, healthy, able bodied and well disposed young men in this neighborhood, who have any inclination to join the troops, now raising under General Washington for the defense of the liberties of independence of the United States against the hostile designs of foreign enemies, take notice, that Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday at Spotswood, Middlesex – Lieutenant Riuting and his recruiting party attendants will be given by Major Shutes' battalion of the 11<sup>th</sup> Regiment of the Infantry commanded by Lt. Col. Aaron Odgen for the purpose of receiving the enrollment of such youth of spirit as may be willing to enter into this honorable service. The encouragement at this time to enlist is truly liberal and generous, namely a bounty of twelve dollars, an annual and fully sufficient supply of good and handsome clothing, a daily allowance of a large and ample supply of provisions, together with sixty-eight dollars a year in gold and silver money on account of pay, the whole of which the soldiers may lay up for himself and friends, as all articles for his maintenance and comfort are provided by law, without any expense to him. Those who may favor this hearing and feeling a more particular manner the great advantages of which these men will have, who shall embrace this opportunity of spending a few happy years in viewing the different parts of this beautiful continent in honorable and truly respectable character of a soldier, after which, he may, if he pleases, return to his friends at home with his pockets full of money and his head covered with laurels.

God save the United States.

## PIONEER LIFE

Sir William Johnson had much influence over the settlers and not only provided seed for their crops but advised them on all matters of life.

The circumstances under which the pioneers labored was most difficult. First cabins were built of logs, to be followed later by those of wood or stone. To clear land for buildings and cultivation, trees were cut and the limbs burned. The stumps were also burned and the roots dragged out. When dry, the logs were burned.

Grains were grown and when ripe were threshed with the flail by hand or horses were driven over it after which the straw was removed and the grain swept up. To free the grain of unwanted material, it was poured from one container to another allowing the wind to blow through it, should there be more than enough for home use, the grain was taken to Albany to be sold. That was a three day's journey.

In the home, garments were made from wool and flax which was made into cloth. Lights were made by filling a container with tallow, a fat from beef, and inserting a wick. There was no tea or coffee, so a drink of dried peas was made, sweetening it with maple sugar.

Utensils were handmade and herbs were relied on for medicine.

Flip and Kill devil were made for the men to drink. Flip was a kind of beer made with malt and hops, to which was added liquor and sugar and then heated by a hot iron. Kill devil was the same except that cider was substituted for beer.

They derived pleasure in horse racing, wrestling and bees, followed by food and conversation.

The first kerosene lamp had a place on the side to hold a candle which was lighted when carried as it was considered safer than kerosene. Flat bottomed lamps were set into a bracket with a reflector to increase light intensity. Tall ones with fancy bases and bowls with a fat bellied chimney were considered fancy, and one lamp was made entirely of nickel. There were those having a cut and colored base with shade to match that were pretty. The *gone with the wind* lamp graced the parlor table. Hanging lamps with prisms around a fancy shade could be raised or lowered over the dining table. The hall lamp was also suspended, the light being enclosed in a rectangular form with panes of etched or colored glass. Small lamps were used for easy carrying. The last one made giving the most light was the mantle lamp. It had a cone shaped net bag that was tied over the burner and was so fragile that it was not carried about.

Onto the bowl which contained the kerosene was affixed a burner which held a wick that could be turned up or down. Chimneys were of various lengths chosen to conform with the lamp.

## EPHRATAH PLANK ROAD COMPANY

A notice was sent to subscribers that a plank road was to be constructed under Act of May 7, 1848 from the west end of Ephratah village to a point intersecting the Fonda and Caroga plank road at or near the house of Joseph Keg in the Town of Johnstown. It was signed by Henry Edwards. The notice was dated October 27, 1849 Keck Center.

At a meeting, it was decided that the association would be known as the Ephratah Plank Road Company and should continue for thirty years from date. The amount of capital stock was to be \$20,000 and would consist of 400 shares at fifty dollars each. The association was to be managed by five directors. The road estimated to be five miles in length and three rods in width.

Subscribers were Henry Edwards, Thomas Benedict, James Van Voast, Peter Putman, James Edwards, Jacob Empie, Henry Spontable, Thomas and George Davis, John Fuller, Joshua Getman, Nicholas Cretser, James Hayes, Aaron Staly, John Shults, Henry Wood, Renselaer Getman, Philip Martin, Nicholas and Joseph Caldwell. Total shares mounted to \$7,350.00.

The directors elected were Peter Putman, Henry Edwards, John Fuller, George Davis and Henry Wood. James Edwards was declared contractor. The cost of building the road was estimated to be \$1,500 per mile or a total of \$8,362.50.

At a meeting in January, 1851, it was agreed necessary to raise a tax of 30% on stock subscribed by the stockholders for the purpose of paying up demands of the Ephratah Plank Road Company.

In October, 1851, John Shults was appointed inspector along with Charles Whitlock and George Davis. It was disclosed that the road had cost \$8,663.62. Tolls collected in 1851 amounted to \$208.18.

The following year, the Plank Road Company was in dire straits and was in the hands of the sheriff to be sold January 5, 1853 to satisfy a \$746.19 debt. More shares of stock were sold to pay the amount due. At this time, it was noted that 150 feet of plank work on the road by a team and two hands amounted to \$3.88. The time it required was not mentioned.

It was disclosed at a meeting February 1, 1859 that there was a balance on hand to be used for graveling and improving the road and slate was to be used from the premises of Jacob Christman for top covering. Each director had the right to have work done to the amount of his respective shares and draw pay from the treasury to the amount of dividends made.

By May 30, 1860, the condition of the road having been rendered impassable, the Ephratah Plank Road Company was dissolved, a decree signed by Henry Edwards, James Van Voast and John Shults.

## **ROADS**

One of the early known trails started in Stone Arabia, continued through Ephratah, Garoga, Rockwood, Canada Lake and terminated in the vicinity of Lake Piseco.

It has also been suggested that an early road from Johnstown followed Route 67 to Keck Center, a distance of 5.13 miles. In Ephratah it terminated at the foot of Church Hill. Stone from the quarries at Keck Center and the one near the site of the Yauney Mill was used in the construction. Stone taken from stone fences was also used.

Mr. Anderson rented the stone house then owned by Mrs. Shike for the duration. Two employees were William Sprung, who manned the roller, and James McMaster, the time keeper.

In the early 1920's Route 10 was constructed. Instead of going south out of Ephratah via Church Hill, a new road was made opposite Saltsman's hotel. Rather than to continue over Turn Hill, it took a more direct course around the hill, eliminating a section that passed the former Lester Getman farm.

When proceeding north out of the village, the old road made a left turn past Sanderson's cider mill, a saw mill, crossing a bridge, the abutments of which can still be seen, proceeding along an unnamed creek, meeting the present road at the foot of the hill. Route 10 carved a straight course.

A concrete road was completed in 1925 from Palatine Bridge to Rockwood.

Route 10 was widened in 1973.

## **COVERED BRIDGES**

There was a covered bridge across Caroga creek on the road leading off the main thoroughfare near Saltsman's hotel. It was taken down about 1925. Mr. Ralph Lighthall engineered the building of the new one. Steel girders were slip under the floor of the old bridge and the entire structure strengthened.

Note: Covered bridges were considered less expensive to maintain because it was cheaper to build a roof than replace a floor.

Mill Street once continued across Caroga creek terminating at the Eugene Gray farm. The first bridge was covered, but when the roof and sides became poor, Mr. Gray removed that portion and built a rail on either side of the floor.

While road commissioner, Ira Whitlock replaced it with a truss bridge. Some years later, Mr. Nellis Gray was crossing the bridge, driving a team of horses. An abutment slid out from under one end, dumping bridge, horses and driver into the stream. Neither driver nor team were injured. After that the road was discontinued and another route was taken.

During the time it was a covered bridge, there were a couple of town characters who picked berries and sold them at the hotel in exchange for a loaf of bread and some liquid fire. They proceeded to enjoy their repast in the coolness of the bridge. Sometimes it was necessary for Lillian Gray Knoblauch and her brother, Charles, both children at the time, to cross it. They were frightened out of their wits by the occupants, but knowing that they had to complete their errand, would join hands and race through.

## HOTELS, INNS AND TAVERNS

An inn in Ephratah was located on property later owned by James Van Voast. The ownership passed on to Abijah Eldredge, John H. Alien and John Fuller who was manager when it burned in 1849.

In 1838, a hotel operated by John Empie occupied the site of Gravel Hill Dairy Farm on the four corners where Turn Hill crossed Turnpike Road. While Raymond Suits owned the farm, the house burned and was replaced with a new one. He sold it to Donald Rice, the present occupant.

An inn known as the Hostelry was located on East Turnpike road which was a main thoroughfare to Albany. Its origin is unknown but the last owner to operate it as an inn was Anthony Christman, known as Antone. His wife was Elizabeth Abel from Ephratah. Their daughter Mary, married William Lenz, a son of Charles and Elizabeth Keiner Lenz. A section of the ballroom can be seen. A trap door which has been covered, once led to the bar. One room was referred to as the check room. Sheep herders were known to have stayed there and a certain field is still called the sheep pasture. At present, the farm is occupied by Carlton Christman.

### A DOCUMENT HANGING IN SALTSMAN'S HOTEL READS:

Peter Schram was born in 1805. Built tavern at an early date. Believe this to be the present site of Saltsman's hotel. Frederick and Margaret Empie or Eliza Empie, widow of Philip Empie were owners 5/1/1848. Eliza Empie to Hiram K. Putman 4/6/1867 called APPOLLO HALL, Hiram K. and Mary Putman to Mrs. Maggie E. Sornborger 10/9/1871. Mrs. Margaret Sornborger to Nicholas Fancher 1/27/1873 subject to mortgage. Nicholas and Harriet Fancher to Henry Quackenbush 4/7/1880. A judgment sale in foreclosure proceeding to Jacob I. Saltsman 12/13/1889. Jacob I. and Julia Ann Saltsman to Reuben Saltsman 12/21/1889.

The property then went to John O. Saltsman, to Raymon Saltsman, Sr., and the present owner is Raymond Saltsman, Jr.

The older people remember attending the New Year's parties and numerous other affairs at Appollo Hall dancing to the music of Eigabroat's orchestra from St. Johnsville. One piano player was Bion Wilson who played on a Steinway piano.

The building was once lighted by carbide gas lights, the gas being produced by a plant in the building. The ballroom was on the second floor and some of the village youngsters, who are now senior citizens, remember sliding on the floor. The last dance held there was a benefit for the Boy Scouts when Raymond Saltsman, Jr., was a member of the troop.

There were pool tables in the first room to the left which is now used as a waiting room. Just beyond was and still is, the bar. Across the hall are two more waiting rooms. The spacious dining room is decorated with reminders of the past and of successful hunting trips. In the hall a raccoon patiently holds a dish of tooth picks. Before the church had facilities, donation suppers were held in the hotel dining room.

FROM THE GETMAN NEWS VOL. 2, NO. 1, DATED 1964:



Peter Empie assisted in building and conducting a hotel on the north side of the street about three fourths of a century ago. His wife was Miss Eliza Burdick who survived her husband several years. Their children were: William B., David, Philip, Thomas, Margaret, Sally, Mary, Anna Marie, and Eleanor. William B. conducted the hotel for many years. He was a very popular hotel keeper and had many mammoth dances at this noted hotel. He was also a very popular host, and an abstainer from strong drink. He built the present ballroom had it frescoed and called it APPOLLO HALL. Later this hotel passed through several hands and finally lodged with Reuben Saltsman.

A legal suit was once held in the ballroom involving a dispute over a boundary line. Anson Getman was one of the lawyers.

Our tavern was built by Earl Abel with lumber from an old garage. For some time, he sold gas.

What was known as Green's Tavern stood in the vicinity east of Alvia Leavenworth's property.

## SCHOOLS

The first schoolhouse is believed to have been located south of Ephratah. Honnas Moot, the teacher, taught in German. Later, a log schoolhouse stood on what is now the corner of Main and Church Streets where Mr. Mc Lean used the English language.

Many will remember the old yellow school standing on a bank near the center of the village. There was a front hall where outer garments were hung. The main room had wainscoting around the sides and was heated by a chunk stove. Myrtle Leavenworth taught there in 1921 and had thirty-six students. During this period, a panel was missing from the back door and much to the amusement of the children, cats and dogs meandered in and had to be chased out which was not always their intention!

Other teachers were Mr. Krum, Hezekiah Baker, Mr. Rice, Mortimer Wade, Thomas E. Burdick, Miss Handy, Miss Jones, O. C. Belding, Pearl Early, Eva Richards, Edward Trumbull and Mr. Ketterhouse. This was District 10.

About 1923, outlying districts were consolidated with that of Ephratah causing a lack of space. A partition was built through the center with a teach for each side. Still more area being required, some of the students were transferred to two rooms in a house up the street later owned by Lee Lake. Cora Knoblauch taught there. Also, Philip Hines rented one room for a class in what is now the Robert Lord home, but it was of short duration.

The yellow schoolhouse burned in 1938, the paper stating that it had been built over a century before. It had been used by the Methodists for services, a library conducted by Eugene Knoblauch and then was renovated for use as a town hall.

A new brick school was opened in 1930 on School Road. At the present time only the first three grades are taught there; the rest of the students being transported by bus to Johnstown. Having consolidated, it is now under the jurisdiction of the Greater Johnstown School District.

At various times, Wesley Cretser, Dudley Argersinger, Mae Hill and Edna Cretser were truant officers.

The school on Mud Road was a typical one room affair where all eight grades were taught. At one time, it was located on Leavenworth property across from the Darby house, but in 1909 one-half acre of land was purchased from William Darby and the building moved across the road and farther west. The flag pole came from a nearby woods. Drinking water was carried in a pail from the Darby well by one of the boys. It was placed on a stand in the back of the room where one filled a glass from a dipper which rested in the pail. The room was heated by an oblong stove which the boys took turns keeping it supplied with wood. A boy, teacher or neighbor was appointed janitor and received remuneration.

Teachers who taught in this school were Miss McKenzie, Zaida Hayes, Abigail Durfee, Miss White, Elizabeth Hainsworth, Mrs. Palmer, Elizabeth Lachmayer, Louisa Youngs, Ethyl Waltz, Marguerite German, Martha Thompson and Ollie Dutton. It was the custom from the teacher to board and room with a neighbor. This was District No. 8.

FOLLOWING IS WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN THE LAST REPORT OF THE ANNUAL MEETING HELD IN DISTRICT NO. 8 SCHOOL BEFORE CONSOLIDATING WITH DISTRICT NO. 10:

In May, 1922, at the annual meeting of District 8, officers elected were: E.W. Leavenworth, Trustee; Frank Tittle, Collector and Charles Christman, Clerk.

School district No. 11, stood at the cross roads where the Tillaboro Road intersected a now abandoned road. Early students were Lillian Allen, her father and grandfather, Carrie and Wesley Cretser and Melvin McLaughlin.

Often the room was so cold that the children stood around the stove to keep warm. Their lunch froze on the way to school and would not be thawed by noon.

Lather, Lillian Allen taught in this school and one day while playing Fox and Geese with the children, fell into the creek and had to be helped out. It being winter, there was no way to dry her heavy clothing so school was dismissed for the day. By the time she reached home which was about a mile, her garments were frozen stiff. She was immediately put to bed with warmed bricks and a hot drink and suffered no ill effects from the episode.

In the early days of teaching, it was sometimes necessary to have a paddling ruler to keep discipline. Lillian Allen Wohlgemuth wrote about the one she kept handy. It was an old maple ruler made by her grandfather, Hiram Allen, in 1869 when he was trustee. When his son, Alfred, attended this school one of his teachers was Jane Murray who later married Norman Saltsman. The ruler was presented to her with this advice, *You will have several large boys who, during the winter months, might need more than a shaking up.* It was still in the schoolhouse when Mrs. Wohlgemuth taught there, but she never used it. Her form of discipline was to keep the student in during recess and make him write punishment five hundred times. At the time the Tryon County Muzzle Loaders were restoring the schoolhouse at Fort Klock, the ruler was presented to them to be used as an exhibit.

Other teachers were Jennie Gray, Jennie Polmateer from Rockwood, Esther Weaver, Frank Walrath, Mrs. Phelan whose father, Albert Kring, ran a hotel in Lassellville.

Some of the students were Ivan, Ira and Vernon Duesler, Vera Myrtle and Maynard Spoar, Maria Hillie, Edward Hulett, Allen Snell, John, Peter and Anna Yanko and Frances Blotto.

One Arbor Day, Ira Duesler and Maynard Spoar dug two pine trees out of Clark Dockstader's woods and replanted them on the school yard. They are still there.

After the school was closed, Herbert Kneeskern tore it down and the land reverted to the Smith property.

School District No. 9 was located on the New Turnpike and was known as the Christman district. Students in the Ephratah area could attend that school or the one in the village, whichever was nearer or sometimes due to a more appealing teacher.

Two who taught there were Elizabeth Hainsworth Mc Laughlin and Mabel Lynaugh Murdock. In 1914 Miss Lynaugh received \$11.00 per week. She remembers teaching Leland and Edna Rickard, Florence Christman, Larkin, James and Eva Christman, Edna and Edwin Peter Christman who were twins, Thurman Frasier, Jr., and Anthony Christman, Ralph Lighthall, Carl Getman, Raymond, Mildred, Inita and Clara Nellis. James Christman was janitor.

Other teachers were James Sullivan, Miss Cartier, Miss Emma Parrot, Mrs. Aimee Baker, Miss Minnie Heron, Miss Beatrice Thompson, Mrs. Martha Kneeskern, Miss Gertrude Brown and Miss Emily Dorn.

Grace McLaughlin, sister of Clinton McLaughlin taught in Garoga and Sammonsville schools.

It was voted that the teacher's annual salary would be raised to \$450. Twelve dollars was to be expended for wood which was to be cut in sixteen inch lengths. The amount required depended on the inventory. The janitor was to receive eight dollars.

One evening while a gathering was being held at the schoolhouse, some shots were heard outside, iron and old pans were beat upon, creating a deafening noise. It turned out to be a horning for the teacher, Martha Thompson and Herbert Kneeskern, who had recently wed.

District Number 11 school, located on Bolster Hill had a fine library. Katie Shaver, one of the early teachers, taught there when she was sixteen. Her lunch pail is now owned by a relative, Mrs. Stephen Smolik. Cora Knoblauch served as teacher in 1914-1915, receiving \$11 per week and served again in 1954. Jennie Gray was another teacher.

Two very old seats from this schoolhouse were given to the Fort Klock Restoration by John Y. Edwards.

#### THE EPHRATAH RURAL CEMETERY

On July 12, 1875 Philip Miller, John F. Empie, John Fraley, Hiram Allen, Peter Dockstader, James Van Voast, Horatia Crouse, Daniel Yauney, Hiram Lighthall, Jacob Snell, Jay Mallet, Lawrence Christman, Lester Getman, Alpha Nellis and Henry Berry met for the purpose of forming an association and purchasing land to be used for a cemetery.

Daniel Yauney was elected president; Jacob Snall, vice president; Henry Berry, secretary and J. Van Voast, treasurer. It was resolved that four acres of land be purchased from Hiram Lighthall at \$100 per acre.

Stumps were removed and a fence built of chestnut posts and hemlock boards. Maple trees were to be planted along the east and south ends.

In May 1876 there was a public sale of lots. Hiram Lighthall had first choice.

In 1879 the cost of opening, laying up of plank or brick walls, closing and sodding an adult's grave cost \$2.00 and that of a child \$1.00.

In 1881 lot No. 1, Section A was set apart and called the Soldier's Lot.

Four more acres were purchased in 1894 at a cost of \$800.

In 1930 the Rebekahs donated \$65 for new gates and in 1940 they gave money toward a new entrance. This entrance was changed in 1949 and blacktopped.

The new fence along the highway was erected in 1960, the east half having been donated by John O. Saltsman in memory of his wife, Grace; the west side by friends and lot owners.

The roads were paved in 1970 and in 1973 additional land was purchased from Clinton McLaughlin.

Present officers are: Emerson Cool, Vernon Duesler, Sr., Maynard Spoar, Ivan Duesler, Leonard Polmateer, Donald Hill, Edward Duesler, Edna Allen and Stephen Smolick.

The first male buried in the cemetery was George Mattewson who died December 3, 1875 and the first female was Permellie Yauney who passed away February 27, 1876. She was Daniel Yauney's first wife.

The Morris J. Edwards American Legion Post 168 located in Fort Plain, was named after Morris Edwards who was born on Bolster Hill near Ephratah. He was a member of the 58<sup>th</sup> U.S. Infantry and the first native killed in World War I.

#### PRIVATE CEMETERIES

##### CORNER OF HART AND MURRAY HILL ROADS

	<u>Date of Death</u>	<u>Age</u>
Thomas Henry, son of Daniel Sealy	1/3/1831	
Phebe, wife of Benjamin Soules	4/15/1848	31
George W. (Twin sons of Benjamin and	3/26	10 Mos.
Lord W. Phebe Soules)	1/24	19 Days
Hanna Margaret, daughter of Timothy and Candice Riggs	10/9/1815	2
Margaret Hannah, daughter of Timothy and Candice Riggs	6/24/1814	11 Mos.

### YANNEY CEMETERY ON RICHARD AND LORETTA CHRISTMAN PROPERTY

Major Henry Yanney, Jr.	9/21/1816	
Christian Yanney	4/11/1818	25
Robert	9/25/1858	3
Elizabeth, daughter of John S. Allen	5/28/1826	3
Edward, son of Philip Empie	9/2/1826	19
Cornelia Lansing, daughter of James Yanney	9/15/1862	2

### DUESLER CEMETERY ON SOUTHERN END OF TILLABORO ROAD

Peter Duesler	5/13/1872	
Lucy, wife of Peter	5/8/1864	
Elizabeth Duesler	1/20/1865	37
Alson Duesler	6/13/1863	22
Edward Duesler	12/21/1835	12
Henry Duesler	1/27/1840	13
Marietta Duesler	2/24/1852	15
Naomi Duesler	12/17/1860	12
Matilda Duesler	8/26/1862	
Jessie Duesler	11/24/1826	2 Mos.
Jacoh Duesler	3/13/1864	39
D. Seymour Duesler	2/10/1865	12
J. P. Duesler		
Peter Duesler		
D. S. Duesler		
Henry Duesler		
Edward Duesler		
M.D.		

The last six were believed to have been babies.

### GETMAN CEMETERY LOCATED ON FARM OWNED BY GORDON HILL

Elizabeth, wife of Thomas Getman	10/6/1837	40
George T. Getman	1/23/1831	60
Deborail Getman	9/6/1817	9
Robert Getman	3/4/1872	66
Lucy, wife of Robert Getman	3/12/1872	63
Nancy C. Getman	1/6/1874	--
Mary E., Daughter of Moses and Eliza Suls (?)	8/24/1820	2 Mos.
Malida, daughter of Philip and Coindia Young	5/16/1823	10 Mos.
James H. and David, children of George Getman	3/10/18--	--
Infant son of Aaron and Mary Getman	8/10/1870	--
Christopher Getman	3/3/1847	54
Mary, wife of William Nellis	2/8/1865	78
Louis, son of William and Mary Nellis	4/25/1840	8
William Nellis	11/1870	90
Anna, daughter of Mary and William Nellis	1/20/1872	19 (?)
Magdalane, wife of Robert Nellis	10/17/1875	54



Mary, wife of H. Williamson	9/23/1851	76
George, son of Josiah and Eliza Williamson	6/30/1844	2
George Williamson	1/28/1822	25
Delia Rickard, wife of George W. Williamson And Joseph Getman	3/4/1883	85
Jesse Getman	11/7/1834	27 Days
Joseph Getman	3/11/1851	62
Betsy, wife of Joseph Getman	9/28/1827	37
George Getman	11/14/1828	73
Thomas Getman	12/25/1820	68

#### SNELL CEMETERY LOCATED ON PROPERTY OWNED BY JAMES WALKER

Nancy, wife of Barnard Demelt	11/6/1840	
Mary, wife of Benjamin Snell – 1 <sup>st</sup> wife	3/21/1825	24
Elizabeth, wife of Nicholas Snell	4/1/1857	61
Benjamin Snell, drowned while ice fishing	12/9/1853	58
Phoebe Snell	11/5/1871	72
Alma Ann, wife of Oliver Ladew	9/15/1846	
Ruth, wife of Henry N. Snell	11/16/1844	37
Lucind, wife of James Snell	11/19/1848	18
Nicholas, son of Benjamin and Mary Snell	4/11/1842	22
Ward, son of Benjamin and Phoebe Snell	10/17/1832	
Nicholas Snell	6/16/1833	51
Catharine, daughter of Joshua and Phoebe Seaman	11/26/1847	18
Eugene P., son of Nicholas and Angelina Snell	1/29/1849	3 Mos.
Henry Snell	9/17/1835	30

#### THE TILLABORO CHURCH LOT

This lot covered about 100 acres of land in the Magin's patent on property now owned by Ivan Duesler. It was a gift from Rev. John Ogilvie and Isaac Lowe of New York City for the purpose of school and church facilities. The land was given to Johannes Winkle, Jury Frey, Hendrick Herring and Philip Cool in 1757 as a trust with the understanding that a church be erected within seventy years.

At a meeting held in 1823 at a schoolhouse which had been erected on this lot, it was agreed to form a society called *The United Reformed and Dutch Lutheran Church of Tillaboro in the Town of Palatine*. Trustees elected were Nicholas Smith, Philip and Jacob Cool, Jacob Duesler and Peter Smith. A small church was built in 1827 and the first ministers were from the Lutheran and Reformed churches at Stone Arabia. For the next twenty years Rev. Wack preached and collected rents from the land. Although a new board of trustees was elected each year, there was little activity. In 1866 another group formed a society and unsuccessfully attempted to take the title from the former one.

Ten years later the Supreme Court of New York State granted permission to sell the property and use the proceeds on religious services to be held in school districts 4 and 11. The last trustees were Benjamin and Edward Duesler, Henry Cretser, Philip Cool, Wallace McLaughlin, Solomon Gray and Nathaniel Christman. Ultimately, the church was purchased and torn down by Elmer Lighthall.

Christmas gatherings were held here in the evening with tallow candles lighting the tree. There was singing and speaking by the district pupils. The church was filled with parents, relatives and friends. At the end of the program, Santa arrived with a bag of small gifts and candy for the children. It was at one of these meetings that a local child recognized the old long black fur coat Santa was wearing, thus revealing the fictitious character.

#### THERE IS IN EXISTENCE THE FOLLOWING RECEIPTS:

5/31/1902      Received \$8.00 in full from J. A. Duesler, treasurer of the Dillenberg (Fillaboro) church for preaching during the month of June.

(Signed) Rev. B.B. Williams

11/17/1902      Mrs. Ira A. Duesler received \$51.00 from Ira Duesler, treasurer of the Dillenberg Church for playing the organ ten Sundays.

(Signed) Eli Suesler  
S.A. Snell

5/15/1902      Ira A. Duesler, treasurer of the Dillenberg church paid \$3.00 to Mrs. I. Duesler for cleaning the church.

(Signed) Eli Duesler  
Henry Cretser  
Wallace Mc Laughlin  
Peter Dockstader  
TRUSTEES  
I. Duesler, CLERK

According to a research made by Mr. and Mrs. Howard Smith of Cobleskill (former residents) the first church was erected in 1827 and was replaced by another one in 1882.

#### THE EPHRATAH METHODIST CHURCH

The organization of the Ephratah church was perfected in 1842. While the parsonage was in Ephratah, services were held in Rockwood and at one time in the yellow schoolhouse located near Church and Main Streets.

In 1861, Sally Benedict sold a piece of land for the sum of one dollar for the purpose of building a church. The building committee consisted of W. A. Randall, S. Peters, A. Coolman, J. Getman and Adam Getman. The church was erected that year. Edward Mc Laughlin put a 50 cent piece on top of one corner stone. At that time there were two entrances, one on each front corner. The bell tower had four spires resembling an up-side-down table which were later removed. The sanctuary was heated by two pot-bellied stoves in the back.

A bell was installed in 1892, having been purchased from the Meneely Bell Company of Troy. It consists of seventy-eight parts copper and twenty-two parts tin. These metals constitute a genuine cast bronze bell.

The first parsonage burned about 1903 while occupied by Rev. May. In that year a house was purchased from Nellis Van Voast to be used as a parsonage. It was sold to Maynard Spoor in 1942.

About 1912, the church was remodeled and redecorated. The building was raised creating a basement and a balcony was added.

A pipe organ was installed in 1914, a gift of the Edwards brothers from Syracuse who had been former residents of Ephratah. This organ was operated by a hand pump. Amos Wait, Homer Tucker, Leon Christman and Rolland Putman were some of those performing this task. One had to stand on one side of the organ in a small space that was most uncomfortable in summer. A hand lever was pumped up and down to keep the bellows full of air. They were controlled by a gauge at the highest point for as long as the organ was in use. Laura and Jeanette Beard and Barbara Groves served as organists. An electric organ replaced the old one in 1959. Randall Krum was the first organist and the present one is Mrs. George Andres. The pipes of the old organ were left for decorative purposes.

The pulpit chairs are very old, probably dating back to 1861.

#### THE REFORMED CHURCH

This church was erected in Ephratah in 1832 on the east side of Church Hill. The first consistory of the church included John Lasher, John H. Snell and Christian Suits who were elders. Peter Putnam and Moses Suits were deacons. Rev. Isaac Ketchum from Stone Arabia was the first minister. At the time Rev. W. B. Van Benschoten was pastor, the elders were James L. Van Voast, James Hager, Oliver Suits and James Getman. Deacons were Daniel Yauney, Hiram Lighthall and Benjamin Snell.

One of the pastors, Rev. John Robb, was rather eccentric in his habits. He boarded with James Getman and while practicing his sermons Rev. Robb walked back and forth in a certain area, wearing a path that was long remembered. On one of these occasions, a stranger passing by observed the minister's exhortations and thinking he had taken leave of his senses, quickly hastened away.

The following addenda was compiled by James E. Baker, lay minister who has served the Ephratah church since 1973:

A congregational meeting of the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church of Ephratah was called for in August 1901 to vote on the question of moving the church upon a lot deeded to the church by Mrs. Fraley.

At the time there were two opposing factions in the church – one wanting it moved to the new lot, the other wishing it to remain where it was. One night the group who desired it moved, got together and began the operation. When the opposing members learned of the activity, realizing they were beaten, joined the others and aided in the moving of the church.

On Sunday, February 15, 1914, rededication services were held at the church in the morning and evening conducted by Rev. W.N.P. Dailey, the Classical Missionary. Renovation and redecoration of the building had cost \$1,440.

A Centennial celebration of the church took place in 1932.

When the church stood on the hill there was a cemetery across the road. Mr. Leland Christman provided the following information:

*As per agreement between Frederick Empie and the trustees of the Dutch Reformed Church of Ephratah, a deed having been granted by John F. Empie in 1833, gave a piece of land for a cemetery, Book of Deeds No. 13. This agreement was dated May 13, 1860 and signed by Henry Edwards, Mortimer Wade, Thomas Edwards and John Putnam.*

Also in possession of the church is a pew rental Indenture made August 17, 1833 listing the rental per year. Pew number was designated and not only were the signatures made in writing, but also in blood by both the renter and officials of the church. Pews nearest the front cost more and gave greater prestige.

In 1962 this church observed its 130<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Arrangements were made by Rev. Robert Geddes, church pastor, and members. It was revealed that the church is the oldest wooden building in the village.

Around 1900 when the history of the Montgomery County Classis was written, elders were Daniel Burdick, Charles Gray, Elmer Lighthall and Alpha Christman. Clark Dockstater, Seymore Snell, Adam Swartz, John Saltsman and Frank Tittle were deacons and the trustees were James H. Yanney, Norman Saltsman and Jacob I. Christman. Daniel Duesler had been the chorister since 1875 and Mrs. Ella Christman Lighthall, the organist since 1895.

#### "REFORMED CHURCH TO HOLD KITCHEN SHOWER"

DOMESTIC SPECIAL 5/20/1915

We are going to have a kitchen shower:  
Thursday – our church –  
Five-thirty the hour; we want you to  
fetch some jars of fruit, -  
Some chickens or biscuits – even salad would suit  
We need dishes and tin – and kitchen  
devices – or even some money  
would be very nice. But what we need  
most – and this is quite  
true, - is the present of all and that  
includes you.

A ticket for the supper was 25 cents.

An assessment book dated August 24<sup>th</sup>, 1867 was signed by D.M. Durfee, Josiah Chritsman and James Getman before Cum Spencer (spelling uncertain), Justice of Peace. It listed familiar names such as Allen, Beck, Berry, D. Burdick, A. Coolman, Christman, Clause, Cretser, Duesler, Dempster, Dorn, Empie, Edwards, Grey, Ficael, Getman, Hart, Handy, Johnson, Herring, Kegg, Lighthall, Lassell, Morey, Murray, McLaughlin, Miles, Nellis, Ostrum, Palmateer, Randall and Matthewson (36 acres

\$2600) Sammons, Snell, Smith, Spoppable, Suits, Saltsman, Spoor, Trumbull, Underwood, Van Voast, Weaver, Whitlock, Mortimer Wade, Levi and Daniel Yauney (18 acres \$3400) and many others.

A personal tax was noted with or without real estate assessment, military tax to the extent of \$3500 @ \$500 each and 100 dogs @ 50 cents each.

In the back of the book there were leased lands in the northwestern part of the Stone Arabia patent owned by Peter Beck, Sidney Grey, Benjamin England, Josiah Rickard, Chauncey (?) Christman, Alexander McLaughlin and Nicholas Shults. In the Klock and Nellis patent: Jacob Fox, Murial Fox, widow, Hiram Higsley, William Nellis, Jacob Fox, Jr., Ambrose Klock and Isiah Failing. In Magin's patent: Augustus Snell rent \$25. Leases in Lott and Lowe patents: Anthony I. Bradt 100 acres \$18. Northwest lands in Lott and Lowe patent: Estate of G.L. Banyer (?), Estate of J.C. White or Wite and Belding & Flanders. James Dexter was agent for those living in the patents.

As of 1867, there were 23,325 taxable acres, assessed valuation \$235,528; personal tax \$21,783 and corrected aggregate \$257,311.

At one time if one could not pay his taxes, he was allowed to work on the road long enough to cover the amount. His time was recorded by a path master.

#### TELEPHONE

Through a search by the General Telephone Company, it could not be ascertained when telephone service came to Ephratah or by what company. It appears that the first telephone company in Fort Plain (which provided the Ephratah service) was the Hudson River Telephone Company. A Bell affiliate, apparently headquartered in Albany. -----Glen Telephone Company (our Company's predecessor) was one of the first in this area and it was founded in June 1899. Glen purchased Hndson River Company in 1904

#### EPHRATAH

"WATER POWER TO COST MILLIONS" Mohawk Valley Register, September 28, 1910

Curious crowds watched the building of the power plant near Ephratah.

Every pleasant day hundreds of people from Gloversville and the vicinity visit the locality where the Mohawk Hydro-Electric Company is building a monster dam near Garoga and a large power house near Ephratah. There are five hundred men employed. As previously stated, the Company has a contract with the Fulton County Gas and Electric Company to furnish them power on a long term contract.

The power will go through a meter at the Gloversville power house. The juice will be received at the station of the local electric company in the north end. The latter company is at present building a line of steel towers at this station with the base sunk in concrete. The company has purchased the right of way for this purpose.

The workmen are quartered in the houses in the vicinity. Every farmer who wishes can get all the boarders he wants and they are not summer boarders either! One hotel has over two hundred guests,

all of whom keep "bachelor hall" and do their own cooking and washing, living as happy as larks. The five hundred men are hard workers and of a most peaceful type.

The dam to be erected at Peck's Park will be 36 feet in height and will be of solid masonry. The water will cover 1,400 acres from the outlet in the Town of Johnstown to within one mile of Bleecker village. It will be four miles long. The water at Peck's dam will measure ten billion gallons. The dam will measure 900 feet across Peck's pond and will occupy the space over to the point where the present mill stands. The road in the vicinity will be under water and a permit has been secured for the purpose of straightening the road. Two thousand feet of highway will be under water.

The water will be taken out of the east side of the dam about 50 feet above the dam proper by a tunnel through the east bank of the pond. The tunnel will measure 400 feet in length and will be constructed of reinforced concrete. The dam has a solid rock foundation and is built 60 feet wide at the base with a core wall out in the rock ten feet wide reinforced with concrete. Four thousand feet of pipe has already been built and looks like a mammoth snake curling as far as the eye can reach. The scope of the enterprise may be realized by recalling the fact that among the other engineering feats under way, is this large truck of pipe line extending from the dam to Ephratah where the power house is being built. The trunk line will measure 12,000 feet in length and seven feet in diameter. It will be spanned by one inch iron bands five inches apart. The lumber used in the construction of the truck is the best cypress obtainable in Seattle, Washington. It will require fifty seven car loads of this timber. Already 4,000 feet of the trunk line has been constructed and lies in the trench, winding its serpentine path through the fields. The power house will cover a space of 60 feet by 100 feet. It will be furnished with four 1,000 kilowatt engines, generated by 1,750 horse power water wheels, with 300 foot head.

The source of water for this project consists of three (3) lakes and one man-made reservoir. The lakes are: Peck's, which is owned by the company and East and West Caroga Lakes from which 4½ feet of water may be drawn. The water from these sources is conveyed to the forebay dam at Garoga which is formed by a concrete arch and buttress 720 feet in length and 58 feet in height. The dam covers 50 acres. The distance from the forebay to the power station is 11,430 feet over which the water is conveyed in a surface pipe line. Part of the pipe line is concrete and the rest is wood or steel. A surge tank 55 feet high of reinforced concrete and 25 feet in diameter guards against excessive pressure.

There are electrolytic lightening arresters on the outgoing power lines from the power station.

### EPHRATAH POWER STORY

The Mohawk Improvement Company had storage of water in Peck's Lake that contained about 1/3 of the amount necessary for the year. The Company had developed the Ephratah Hydro Company between 1910 and 1920.

All the options that had been purchased for the right of way to be used by the Ephratah Hydro Company were not all turned in, especially those around the Rockwood area. This person had an idea that some money could be made and therefore formed a partnership with an engineer-contractor and a financier.

A dam was built at Rockwood which covered a large area. Huge gates were installed to allow the dam to empty quickly and then were shut on Sunday so that no water could run through. The foredam at Garoga was not large enough to retain the required amount of water needed to run the power house over the weekend, leaving Johnstown and Gloversville without electricity.



A cadet-engineer had to reopen an old steam plant in Gloversville which had been closed ten years to provide Gloversville's requirements.

In the meantime, the Company got an injunction which was eventually made permanent preventing a reoccurrence of this situation. In 1924, the financier, who held the mortgage on the property had made a fortune in the Florida land boom, was willing to sell his holdings.

The Ephratah Hydro Company had obtained a franchise to service Caroga and the Canada Lakes area and later Fulton County. The County had never secured a franchise for the reason it had not seemed important to them. The agent for the Company was able to get the franchise from the Town Board, but it had to have the signature of the town clerk who lived in Johnstown. There had been a bad snow storm closing the roads to traffic, but by using an old Ford snowmobile he went as far as he could and then resorted to snow shoes. In record time, the paper was in the town clerk's office where the seal was affixed and then it was taken to Judge Carroll's office. By afternoon, it was approved by the Public Service Commission. The Rockwood company which had tried to get this franchise failed due to the weather.

*Excerpts from an interview with Harold S. Chartier by Jack L. Mowers 3/22/73.*

ADDENDA TO THE POWER STORY – Memories of Miss Ruth Sheffield, daughter of Albert Sheffield who was affiliated with the Ephratah Hydro Company.

The first source of power in the Mohawk Valley was the Fort Plain Gas Company which furnished fuel for home lighting and an occasional plate for cooking.

Mr. William Barclay Parsons later he entered the war and was made Colonel from New York City and Henry Brinkerhoss from Boston who had laid out a subway in Chicago were both engineers and saw the need for electricity in the Ephratah area; also the vast source of water that was available. Together they laid out the plans for the power house and how the power could be made available. Their investment was \$1,500,000.

Erection of the building on the Caroga creek began May 4, 1910, using stone from the quarry near the Yauney mill. It began operation in February, 1911.

Options were taken on the land and the system was to be composed of waters from East and West Caroga Lakes and Peck's pond. There was to be a dam at Rockwood and a forebay at Garoga.

When Wellington Peck was asked how much he would take for the lake, he quoted a sum he thought too large to be accepted and approve. However, under the direction of the Company, the money was put in a leather bag and in company with Mr. Dunn, a jeweler in Fort Plain, Mr. Sheffield carried the money and gave it to Mr. Peck.

The original dam at Peck's Lake was of wood construction.

Mr. Sheffield, as representative of the Ephratah Hydro Company, purchased the mill from the Levi Yauney estate with intentions of reopening it, providing the electric line went through. He also had charge of taking options on land for poles north of Ephratah, Garoga, Murray Hill and on to the Peck's

Lake area. Going south, the power line followed Caroga creek to Route 5 at Palatine Church, thence to Nelliston and Fort Plain. Miss Sheffield remembers the switch being turned on which lighted the streets of Ephratah for the first time. A. Homer Loring, millionaire from Boston, also helped finance the power project.

At present, the height of the water in Caroga Lake is maintained by a plank dam and is used only at certain times of the year. In the fall, the planks are removed and after the runoff in the spring, are replaced.

There remains about 5,000 feet of wood and 6,000 feet of steel pipe.

When the Company converted to an automatic system, the houses on their property had to be removed. Ashley Beard and George Decker each purchased a house and had it moved to the "flats" while James Hartman moved one north for a camp. The house in which Alvin O'Brian lived was torn down.

During the blackout of 1965, this area was without power only a few hours due to the Ephratah power house being fully activated.

In 1971-72, an ultra high voltage transmission line was built along the southern edge of Ephratah.

#### POWER STORY

When electricity was made available to the public, many were afraid to use it. The Sheffield home had electric lights in the summer and winter kitchens but the rest of the house was lighted with kerosene lamps.

The dynamos for the power house were transported in winter from Fort Plain to Ephratah on sleighs drawn by several teams of horses. To keep the load from tipping, men went ahead and shoveled snow, making the road level.

Before poles were set to carry electricity to outlying areas, Seymour Snell, Alfred Allen and Steven W. Smith paid for and installed their own.

While still empty, several people walked through the pipe line from Ephratah to Garoga using lanterns to light their way.

The Fulton County Gas and Electric Company owned the Cayadutta Generating Company forming the Fulton County Gas and Electric Company. It consolidated with the Courter Electric Company of Schoharie and the Mohawk Hydro Electric Company and after other mergers, all segments united to form the Niagara Mohawk Power Company.

Some of the managers of the Ephratah Plant have been William C. Dunlop, August F. Baurman, Louis C. Smith, William J. Fox and at the present time, John Pickard is the chief operator.

Before electricity was available, some homes were lighted with carbide gas lights. This gas had to be manufactured in the home. There was also a Delco Electric System run by a series of batteries and a generator.

Before 1916 to 1920, the gates at Peck's Lake were in charge of Wellington Peck and the one at Caroga Lake under the care of Frank Bradt. When more water was needed at the forebay, the chief operator at Ephratah called Peck's Lake manager and gave instructions and likewise Caroga Lake.

At one time, measurements of forebay water was taken by Raymond Saltsman, Sr., and LeRoy Whiting. Floyd Flanders and Earl Able took measurements and made observations of gate openings in the Rockwood Dam.

It requires ten hours for water from Peck's Lake to reach the forebay dam at Garoga.

## PEDDLERS

During the 1920's, peddlers drove around the country selling their wares often taking farm produce in trade.

Jakey Metz from Rockwood will long be remembered for his witty sayings and advertisements. One ran something like this:

Come to my store. I carry everything from  
buttons to real estate. You will always  
find me home except the days when I am gone.

The store was so filled with merchandise that it was difficult to walk through, but the effort was worthwhile as he usually had good bargains. He also peddled around the country with a horse and wagon.

Chauncey Beard carried fish in wooden buckets or in boxes packed in ice.

Corliss Frederick from St. Johnsville had a van-like truck with shelves from which a customer could make a selection.

Mr. Ryder peddled meat and groceries and Mr. Lansing from Amsterdam had a covered truck with a great variety of general merchandise including dishes, pins, bairnets, et cetera.

Perry Failing brought meat and groceries from Oppenheim and after he discontinued the route, Mr. Bradt took it over.

Mike and Moses Tony from Amsterdam carried fruit and groceries.

John Maloney peddled dry goods from Gloversville and one of the last peddlers was William Abel who carried groceries from Keck Center where he also had a store in what is now the home of Charles Mrazz, Jr.

## EPHRATAH FIRES

On May 23, 1928, William Beard was spending the night with his grandmother, Melinda Snell. After the village had seemingly fallen asleep, a fire started in the store next door owned by Earl O. Handy, spreading to the Snell house. The Hestors were passing through the village en route from Buffalo to their home in Johnstown and saw the fire. Had they not aroused the occupants, both would have perished. The Johnstown fire company was summoned, but very little saved.

Frank Kurienko perished in a fire that destroyed his barn about 10 o'clock on the night of February 3, 1941. After notifying his wife, he went to the barn to rescue some animals but was overcome by smoke. Word spread and in a short time the men formed a bucket brigade from the creek in front of the house. When they realized it was impossible to save the barn, they turned their efforts to the house which did not burn.

An octagon barn built by Levi Yauney which had been a land mark for years, burned August 4, 1948 with an estimated loss of \$50,000. Mr. and Mrs. Howard Carpenter, who were away at the time, had made plans to purchase the farm October first. It was the largest barn in the area with storage capacity for 300 tons of hay and could house 70 head of cattle. David Hart was temporarily overcome by smoke while bringing two (2) horses and a tractor out of the building.

On June 30, 1938, a fire which began on the property of Mr. and Mrs. Chauncey Beard destroyed the barn, residence and town hall. Neighbors who discovered the blaze awakened Mrs. Beard and led her to safety. As the fire had started in the barn, most of the household furnishings were saved. The flames next spread to the house and then to the town hall. The Canajoharie Fire Department was called but due to inadequate water supply, they concentrated on saving the William Beard house. Much of the equipment in the town hall was saved. This building had been built more than a century ago and was the first school house in District 10. During the time it was used as a school house, it also housed the First Methodist church congregation on Sundays and at one time was a library, cared for by Eugene Knoblauch.

A garage owned by Ivan Duesler burned December 17<sup>th</sup>, 1974, the loss being estimated at \$80,000. Even with the help of other fire companies and water from both the Sprite and Caroga creeks, the building was a charred ruin within an hour. For a time, it was a raging holocaust, but often the wind parted the dense blackness, showing a neat, calm spiral of smoke emanating from the chimney, as it had all day.

## SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

Corn husking bees were held in the fall which was a time for work and fun. Neighbors came to remove husks from the ears of corn and if a red ear was found, that person had the privilege of kissing his sweetheart. Sometimes, the women helped, but usually they enjoyed visiting, leaving the work to the men. After husking was done, the affair might turn into a pie eating contest. Great was the embarrassment of the hostess if she had incorrectly anticipated the quantity needed.

For many years, the Ephratah baseball team was a challenge. Carlos Rossiter of Rockwood, played and also was the umpire. One year, St. Johnsville's team seemed invincible. Ephratah had to develop a new strategy and decided to make their opponents most welcome. As they arrived in Ephratah, each

one was met with open arms and some O. B. Joyful. As planned, St. Johnsville staggered to defeat but their spirits were still high.

Some of the players were Harold Lake, Warren Gray, Alpha Christman, Jr., Willard Beard, Percy Bronk, Clifton and Stanton Saltsman, Harlan Gray, Wellington Knoblauch and George Andrews.

On August 27, 1891, a large crowd enjoyed a horse race on the Ephratah flats.

In winter, there were sleigh rides, box socials, home parties, skating, ice-fishing and quilting bees. In summer, church picnics, ice-cream socials, excursions, croquet, baseball and pitching horse shoes were enjoyed. Church suppers were held in every season.

An amusing event took place on the Sand Flats when a minister vainly tried to stem what he considered a sinful affair.

A crowd had gathered to watch a horse race intermixed with some gambling. A German minister from Stone Arabia felt it his duty to protest race track betting, so he rode there in his chaise. He had no more than commenced his tirade against the evils when a rouge, who knew that the minister's horse was a veteran racer, stopped to comment on what a fine horse he had. At the same time, he tapped both horses with his whip and yelled, "Go". The pair raced down the road toward the parson's home. Someone was heard to yell that he was betting on the minister's horse. Before he could stop, a long distance had been covered and the clergyman realizing his presence was ineffectual, avoided horse races from that time on.

### MAPLE REST DANCE HALL

This hall was built in the 1920's by Mr. Henry Prime. It was a wood construction approximately 40 x 75 feet. Dances were held on Wednesday nights. Tickets sold for 10 cents each or six for 50 cents. Orchestras that played while under the Prime management were Leon Jeffers of St. Johnsville with Arthur Smith, a rural mail carrier, as caller; Loren Cross and Red Carino, Roosevelt Smith and his "Melody Rangers". Both round and square dancing were enjoyed. Tommy Billington was appointed constable and attended the parking of cars. He will be remembered wearing his shining badge and carrying a four cell flashlight.

In the 1930's, the hall was operated by Edward Trumbull who held dances, wrestling and boxing matches. The place was closed until 1945 when it was sold to Lester Hill. Again, the "Melody Rangers" furnished the music; also Abie Hoyt and the "Irish Mountaineers" entertained.

In 1950, the State condemned the hall and MR. Hill tore it down. He erected a new one of concrete blocks on the same lot, but east of the site of the old building. This had more space, being about 50 x 100 feet. The "Melody Rangers" furnished the music.

One again the hall was closed and in 1962 Elizabeth Hill, wife of the late Lester Hill sold Maple Rest to Beatrice and Clifton Holland. Dances were held until 1967 to the time of the Happy Valley Gang.

At the present time, the building is being used for roller skating.

## THE BEEHIVE

Originally, this building was on Mill Street but was moved to Main Street across from Earl Handy's store and post office. It was so called because of its multiple occupancy. It was owned by Mrs. Mae Abel. At one time, Mr. E. Handy had a store in one-half of the lower floor and the other half was occupied by "Mot" Mulford who ran a barber shop. The Mulfords and a Lewis family lived upstairs. Later, Seymore Devoe occupied the upper floor. Eventually, the house was torn down. Recently, there was a picture in the Courier-Standard-Enterprise showing a hearse and a team of horses belonging to A.G. Swartz in front of the beehive and a house owned by Clark Empie.

## THE ROUND BARN

The round barn was located on Route 10 south of Ephratah and was a landmark. It was designed and built for Levi Yauney in the late 1800's. It had a round cupola and the roof consisted of eight pie-shaped wedges. The only windows were in the basement which had a dirt floor. The second story was reached by a ramp and so constructed that one could drive around the center of the interior, with hay mows and grainery toward the outer wall. A windmill once furnished power for pumping water. The barn, also known as an octagon barn burned in 1948.

Seven generations of Getmans had resided on this farm. Frederick Getman came to America in 1710 and was naturalized on November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1715. He purchased 600 acres of land in the Stone Arabia patent and settled in 1720. The Christian Getman will made in 1821 is still in existence. The present owners are Charles and Ellen Komar.

## THE SLAUGHTER HOUSE

This was an Ephratah enterprise for many years. The building is located on the property of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Allen. Among those who used it were: Arthur Able, Albert Beard, James Smith and in 1937 Ludwig Baer took over the facility. His brother, Fred joined him in 1938 and for a time, a brother-in-law, William Lett was associated with the business. In 1941, Mr. Baer moved to Nelliston where he started the Fort Plain Packing Company which has become a prosperous undertaking. The last ones to use the slaughter house were Charles Schrader and Floyd Nagele.

## CIDER MILLS

The last two cider mills operated in Ephratah were managed by Ira Whitlock and Wilson Sanderson.

## LEE'S PAINT SHOP

One of the thriving business establishments in Ephratah at the present time is Lee's Paint Shop managed by Leland Christman. After working as an apprentice learning auto body work and car painting, he opened a shop in 1937 in a garage back of his home. In 1940, a building was erected on an adjoining lot and since then, several additions have been made, making it a modern commodious place in which to work.



With the combined efforts of Leonard Polmateer, Arnold Edwards, two brothers, Mayland and Bernard, Mr. Christman rebuilds complete wrecks and restores antique cars.

In his spare time, Mr. Christman creates beautiful pieces of furniture and grandfather clocks. He and his wife, the former Edith Saltsman, live next door. Both are active in the Reformed church.

### DUESLER'S GARAGE

In 1928, Mr. Ivan Duesler started repairing cars in a blacksmith shop owned by Frank Kurienko. Later, he moved the business to a barn on Sprite creek which had belonged to Wade's bark tannery. Harold Lake wired the building for electricity.

Around this time, an auto robe company purchased a lot next to Mr. Duesler's garage with intention of erecting a manufacturing plant. Foundations were laid. The enterprise was to be financed by stock holders, but when not enough money was forthcoming, they transferred to Waterloo, New York where they were successful.

The property was sold to Earl Abel who erected a building with a small room in front and a garage in back. Behind this site was the water wheel which had been used in connection with the dam, Mr. Duesler rented the garage for three (3) years after which he purchased a lot from Carey Edwards. A wagon house was moved from Tillaboro to Ephratah and located on the site. Gas pumps were installed, 14 feet were added to the garage for an office and then the garage was enlarged 30 feet on the west and 20 feet on the back, creating a working space 46 x 80 feet. A paint shop was built on the other side of the old raceway leading from the dam.

A house standing next to the paint shop was purchased from the Lewis Snyder estate, which had formerly been owned by Amos Wait. Maynard Spoor bought it, tore it down and moved it away.

From 1936 to 1940, Mr. Duesler sold cars and then took over the Ford tractor dealership along with Dearborn farm machinery for Montgomery and Fulton Counties until 1960. In 1973, he retired and his son, Edward, carried on the business up to the time it burned December 17, 1974.

In 1929, Mr. Duesler purchased a house located on the Edwards' property, moved it near the garage and remodeled it for a home. Because the land was low between the house and garage along the river, he drew 600 loads of fill in a Model T Truck.

Mr. Duesler now lives in Tillaboro with his wife, Mary, who had taught in District No. 4 from 1925 through 1927. Last year, they celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

### BROOKSIDE TAVERN

Earl Abel built and ran the tavern for several years. He rented it to Edwin Goody and then sold the business to Arthur Hill, who in turn, sold it to Mr. Taberski. Mr. McIntyre, a later owner, divided the upstairs section into bedrooms to accommodate the workers on the power line. The McIntyres lived in an apartment house adjoining the property. At the present time, it is operated by Myra and Richard Hal.

## SALTSMAN'S HOTEL

The history of this business has been written elsewhere. It is open from Mother's Day through October 31<sup>st</sup>, and closed on Fridays. Raymond Saltzman, Jr., is the present owner and manager.

## MAPLE REST DANCE HALL

This also has been covered previously. It has been used as a roller skating rink since last August.

## MISCELLANEOUS ENTERPRISES

Murray Hill, a road extending from Route 10 to Garoga was once populated by farmers who sold milk to cheese factories or made butter. They are gone now and many fields are returning to nature. Only three (3) places are in production.

Mr. and Mrs. Leo Pop, who live on the former George Christman place, have a vegetable and strawberry farm, selling produce locally. A son, Arthur, who lives on land formerly owned by Fay Ryder, produces maple syrup and raises strawberries for sale. He is also a teacher in Johnstown.

Mrs. Edward Kunath runs a greenhouse known as *Winds End* and her husband does contract work.

Numerous City people have restored existing houses or built new ones, doubling the former population.

Just off Route 10, south of Ephratah, Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Hatch produce vegetables, fruits, flowers and homemade items for sale at their house.

## TRANSPORTATION

Because of its location, Ephratah has required a means of transportation in and out of the village.

Each farm had a variety of vehicles, one of which was the buckboard drawn by one horse and had room for two (2) people. Some had a stationary top and others were open to the weather. It was light in weight and used for church going and errands.

A cart called the top wagon was so named because it had a soft leather top which could be raised to protect the passengers or lowered to lay along the back of the seat. It was also of light construction, meant for two (2) people and required but one horse.

A democrat wagon, strongly built, was drawn by a team. It had a long box on which could be affixed the second seat or the seat could be removed to afford room for produce being delivered to market.

About 1915, the famous surrey with fringe on top was vanishing from the scene. It had a canopy top decorated with fringe. There were two (2) seats. It was the means of transportation for social occasions and a team of horses was required. A harness of lighter make was used, often decorated with silver. It was considered an elegant outfit.

In summer when flies were annoying, a net was thrown over the horse. It was a macramé affair of heavy cord with fringe hanging along the lower side of the animal's body. Being in continuous motion, its object was to swish away the flies. There was also a head piece of the same material through which the horse's ears protruded with fringe hanging along the neck.

In winter, the cutter, with one seat accommodating two or three people, was either of plain construction or there might be a succession of graceful flowing curves. It was intended as a speedy means of travel, drawn by one horse. The bob sled with front and back bobs connected by a tongue, drawn by a team, was used for heavier loads.

A jumper sleight had a box over long runners and more than one seat could be attached.

A series of small bells could be affixed to the harness or thills offering a melodious tune when in motion. In winter, the horse's shoes had special calks inserted which prevented slipping on ice.

Often roads were filled with snow preventing travel so new trails were made through fields. If shoveling was necessary, it was an arduous task performed by men.

Skis and snowshoes were resorted to, either for fun or out on necessity.

To provide transportation to distant places, the Erie canal was completed in 1825. Senior citizens remember the lift bridge at Fort Plain and the beautiful arch under the aqueduct which can still be seen. It gave way to the Barge canal which was larger and featured many improvements. At one time, a plan was considered to connect the Mohawk River with that of the Susquehanna by building a canal to Cooperstown.

During the period of the Erie Canal, an engine was invented in England that would later run on a track. The first rails were of wood held together with iron bands. One of the first railroads in America ran from Quincy, Massachusetts to Boston, providing granite for Bunker Hill monument.

Various companies built railroads along the Mohawk and Hudson Rivers but in 1880 all lines were consolidated forming the New York Central. Engines first burned wood which caused cinders to fly into the eyes of the passengers who rode in open cars.

The Fonda, Johnstown and Gloversville line was built in 1870 and was extended to Northville in 1875. It carried passengers, freight and featured excursions. At present, freight is hauled to Johnstown and Gloversville.

Electric trolleys were used between Gloversville and Fonda. Plans were made in the early 1900's to build a line from Little Falls via St. Johnsville and Ephratah to Johnstown, but it never materialized.

It was during this period that Henry Ford changed the means of travel and by 1909 automobiles began appearing in Ephratah. James Empie owned one of the first. It was an open touring model with hard rubber tires.

Also at this time, the Wright Brothers made it possible for us to fly. In 1911, Harry Atwood made the first flight from St. Louis to Nyack, using the Mohawk as a guide.

On the Mohawk Turnpike, large wagons competed with the canal. They carried wheat, whisky and potash to Albany and returned with merchandise. These were covered wagons drawn by from three to eight horses that never traveled faster than a walk.

Herds of animals were driven over the road. When nearing the market, they were allowed to drink all they could which increased their weight. From this practice originated the term *watering the stock*.

Inns were one mile apart. In Palatine 51 licenses were issued, one of which was to John F. Empie who ran an inn on the Turnpike where Turn Hill crossed it.

At one time, the motorcycle had a side car that could be attached for use by a second passenger.

A NOTE OF INTEREST: The stage line from Amsterdam to Northville in 1869 left Amsterdam at 10:00 A.M. and reached Northville at 5:00 P.M.

### FARMING

In the early days, farming was a self-sustaining business. Hay, grains, fruits and vegetables were raised to furnish food for the family, the horses, cattle, pigs, sheep and poultry. Any excess was sold, the proceeds of which paid the taxes and upkeep with some left over for a rainy day. Horses provided power for machinery and transportation. Cattle supplied butter, milk, cheese and meat. Byproducts of cheese and butter mixed with grain fed pigs which were butchered, smoked or put in brine. Lard used for baking was also obtained from pork. Unwanted grease was mixed with wood ashes and after heating to a certain temperature, lye was added, creating laundry soap.

Buckwheat and corn furnished food for poultry which, in turn, supplied eggs and meat. An over supply of eggs was packed into cases of twenty-four dozen and shipped to a dealer. A twelve dozen carton was taken to town and traded for items not raised on the farm. Extra poultry was sold for cash. Sheep grazed on land unsuitable for the raising of crops and in the spring their wool was sheared and sold. The lambs were also sold.

Rye, wheat and buckwheat was ground into flour for use in baking.

During the winter, wood was cut to heat the home and sometimes a horse-power was used for running the buzz-saw. It was a structure built with an endless tread on a slant so that when a horse or horses were led onto it, the movement of their feet kept the tread in motion and at the same time turned a pulley wheel with an attached belt which extended from the horse-power to a buzz-saw. A smaller version operated a butter churn powered by a dog. The dog often sensed when preparations were being made and would be missing when he was needed but much to his sorrow the chore still had to be done upon his return.

With the approach of the first warm days of spring, it meant that the time had arrived to make maple syrup. Holes were drilled into hard maple trees, spiles inserted and buckets hung under each one. The sap returning from the roots to upper extremities of the trees sent forth a portion into each bucket. Each day the sap was gathered and taken to the sap house. This building contained piles of wood for fuel, shelves for storing cans of syrup and a rectangular fireplace made of stone and mortar about three feet high with a door in one end and a pipe to carry off the smoke at the other end. A metal evaporator covered the fireplace. It was divided into three or four sections with tiny gates at the opposite end of

each partition. As sap was poured into the first section, it was heated and gradually ran from one section to the next until it reached the last one where the heat was more intense. It was boiled until it reached a certain temperature and then drawn off into cans for home use or market. Some of the syrup was taken to the kitchen where it was boiled longer and either poured into molds or stirred until it was granulated. An enjoyable experience was eating jack-wax, the result of boiling syrup to a certain consistency, pouring rivulets over pans containing clean snow and winding them around a fork. At the end of the season, all equipment was washed, dried and stored.

The making of syrup today is so mechanized by direct pipe lines and oil burning heaters, that much of the adventure has been removed from the process.

Some farmers specialized in hop raising or were masons, carpenters, shoemakers or had sawmills to add to their income.

In 1869, over 165 farms were listed in the periphery of the Village of Ephratah.

As late as 1905, a farmer could make a living and add to his savings on five acres of land through good planning and a diversity of crops. One such farmer raised ginseng, hay, cherries, plums, berries, vegetables, poultry and had bees that produced from three to four hundred dollars worth of honey annually. He delivered his produce with a horse and buggy.

By the 1900's, there began a transition in farming due to restrictions and price fixing. The association between government and agriculture has always been an enigmatic problem never solved to the satisfaction of either. The disparity between the cost of producing and the value of return caused the farmer to become conscious of what industry was offering.

Dairy farmers had to face foreign competition and the inroads of imitation products.

During the war years, due to the lack of labor, larger and more efficient machinery was built, but the cost was so high that to utilize and pay for it, one had to increase acreage and the size of the dairy. The machines were adapted for use on flat land and to make it practical, farmers divided their fields into 100 acre lots more or less. Rather than mortgage the land, farms were either abandoned or sold to City people who maintained attractive homes but usually allowed the land to return to nature. On the plus side, this has improved the ecology by increasing a refuge for wild life and maintaining a higher water level.

In the meantime, those who could not cope with the rising costs of the business moved to surrounding areas where employment was found in factories offering inducements of a 40 hour week, fantastic wages, paid vacations, retirement insurance et cetera. With the leveling off of industry after the war, the influx of returning soldiers and the lowering of tariff on imports, unemployment increased which, in turn thrust a burden on welfare. Inflation along with the energy crisis has caused a further setback to the economy and a means of solving it is still questionable.

### HOP RAISING

In spring, cuttings from six to eight inches long were set in hills seven feet apart. Poles from seventeen to eighteen feet high were set next to the cuttings which grew into vines that twined from left to right around the pole. The female vine produced flowers and a green cone-like formation which was the fruit. Once ripe, picking had to be done immediately as it decayed quickly.

By the end of August, extra men and women were hired with room and board furnished. They were congenial people who worked hard and played hard. After working in the field all day, dances were held in the hop house with music furnished by a fiddler in the group.

In the field, at harvest time, a vine covered pole would be laid across a wooden box about three feet in height and as payment was made by the box, picking was done as quickly as possible. When finished, the vines were laid back on the ground, from which new plants would spring up the following year.

The hop house was a two story building with a louvered cupola. The second floor was constructed of 2 x 6 inch stringers several inches apart with runways here and there. Burlap was placed over the stringers and as the boxes of hops were brought from the field, they were scattered over the burlap. From time to time, they were turned over with a rake to hasten drying. A stove or two on the first floor with pipes running along the ceiling, plus the ventilation from the cupola dried them.

At the end of this process, the hops were poured into huge burlap bags and pressed down to make compact bales which were picked up by a dealer or taken to a storage barn for later delivery.

Hops are used for medicinal purposes or as an aromatic, bitter flavoring in beer.

Hop raising, once a thriving business, has faded from the scene due to prohibition, foreign markets the great amount of labor involved and breweries finding a substitute. As many as fifty pickers might be employed. In 1875, a bale of choice, selected hops brought \$40.

## GINSENG

Ginseng, a medicinal plant, was one raised as a cash crop. Normally, it is a wild herb growing in the woods and so in order to cultivate it in beds, the plants had to be sheltered from the sun. Slat were placed about two inches apart around the sides and over the top. In the fall, the roots were dug, dried and sold. It took many dried roots to make a pound. The plant has red berries which were planted to start a new crop. The Adirondack Ginseng Company at Garoga was operated by Squires Gray and it was here that some of the roots were brought to be dried. Those who raised ginseng in this area were Lyman Ercanbrack, John Christman, Anson Mowrey, Sylvester Trumbull, the Smith brothers and Isaac Everest.

## THE EPHRATAH VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY, INC.

At the suggestion of Ivan Duesler and Arthur Hill, a meeting was held December 8, 1947 at Brookside Tavern for the purpose of forming a fire department. Mr. Ray Thompson, a member of the Canajoharie Fire Department, was invited to attend to offer advice in organizing the department. Seventeen men were present.

At a meeting held April 19, 1948, Sidney Hill was elected President; Leland Rickard, Vice-President; John Nalepa, Secretary and Thurman Christman, Treasurer.

The first truck purchased was 1941 Dodge which was parked one week at Duesler's garage and the next week at Leland Christman's paint shop.



During the first annual meeting held April 18, 1949, Ivan Duesler was elected Chief, Arthur Hill, 1<sup>st</sup> Assistant and Leland Christman's 2<sup>nd</sup> Assistant. At this time, the Ladies' Auxiliary received approval to organize a unit.

In 1949, Wesley Cretser donated a lot for parking space and fire house. A two story building was completed the following May. During the construction, Edna Cretser, with the help of other women, prepared dinner each day and served it to the men in her yard.

An additional strip of land was purchased from Nathaniel Cool and, in 1966, Edna Cretser donated another 25 foot strip.

In 1951, the firehouse was used as an observatory for Civil Defense.

A large lot on the opposite side of the road was purchased in 1953 from William Randall to be used as a recreational field for the Fire Department.

As of 1975, the firehouse is being extended so as to provide a new kitchen and dining area on the first floor.

Present equipment consists of a 1968 American LaFrance truck, a 1941 pumper of the same make, a Dodge high pressure 1942 fire truck and a 1969 Ford tanker.

In April 1975, Karen Berry became the first female firefighter in the Town of Ephratah and is a member of Emergency Department. In June, an Emergency Medical Technician Squad was organized by the Department. Those attending classes in Dolgeville were Allen Wasson, Ricardo Insognia, Steven Nellis, Karen Berry, Eleanor Smith and Beverley Lake. In addition, they received actual emergency training in the emergency rooms at Little Falls and Utica hospitals. Since then, Ivan Duesler, Larry Brandt and Gordon Hill, Jr., have become members.

Present officers are: President, Allan Polmateer; Vice-President, Allan Wasson; Secretary, Vernon Duesler III; Treasurer, Stephen Canipe; Chief, Leland Sweeney; 1<sup>st</sup> Assistant, Gordon Hill, Jr.; 2<sup>nd</sup> Assistant, Carlton Christman, Jr., Lieutenant, Paul F. Christman and Sergeant of Arms, Mark Hill.

#### LADIES' AUXILIARY OF THE EPHRATAH FIRE DEPARTMENT

In 1949, a group of women met at the schoolhouse and formed the Ladies' Auxiliary of the Ephratah Fire Department. Mrs. Edna Hill was elected President; Patricia Lake, Secretary; and Ethyl Nalepa, Treasurer.

Various means were used to raise money. On one occasion, a tag day was held. Members of the Auxiliary with the aid of a Deputy Sheriff were posted at the intersections of Routes 29 and 10, 67 and 10 and on Route 10 near Saltsman's hotel. Cars were stopped and as donations were requested, the driver received a key chain with a small fireman's hat attached.

From 1952 to 1956, weekend festivals were held on the recreation field. Each started with a parade. Bingo and other games were played. Soda, popcorn, ice cream, sandwiches and coffee were sold. One evening was amateur night. Roosevelt and John Smith provided music and the affair ended on Sunday with fireworks.

The organization bought their first uniforms in 1956 and paraded in many of the surrounding towns.

A memory tree was started in 1966 which was lighted at Christmas time revealing names of the donors. In 1972, Ronald Smith planted a tree that would be permanent.

Present officers are Debbie Hill, President; Nancy Christman, Vice-President; Martha Nellis, Secretary, Malanie Wasson, Treasurer and Hospitality, Karen Trumble.

### MISCELLANEOUS

About forty years ago, it was a familiar sight to see Raymond Polmateer traveling through the streets of Ephratah delivering milk. After processing it on his farm at the western edge of the village, the milk was put in bottles and loaded on a child's express wagon which he drew along behind him. Every day, he was accompanied by a dog owned by Edward Duesler, the young son of Mr. and Mrs. Ivan Duesler, and as progress was made along the route, other dogs joined the procession. It has been said that Mr. Polmateer never missed a day in twenty-four years.

Adam Bakeman *Beekman*, a music teacher from Johnstown came to Ephratah to give lessons on the piano and home organ for \$12 a term. He drove a black horse which glistened from good grooming. Mr. Bakeman was not only a talented musician but a good conversationalist and was welcome in many homes.

Piano lessons were given by Ella Lighthall in her home and by Mabel Hinkle who drove from Stone Arabia. Lessons were 50 cents each.

The Standring sisters were known for their good workmanship as dressmakers.

Dancing lessons were given in Saltsman's ballroom by Mr. Dolan and Mr. Swartz who taught the waltz, two-step and other ballroom dancing, charging 50 cents a lesson.

Mary Lizzie Nellis who lived on the east corner of Church and Main Streets, gave signing lessons and will be remembered driving a horse and buggy with her dog sitting beside her.

The house in which she lived was previously owned by a Whitlock family. During their occupancy, a fire erupted in the attic but due to a room being so well enclosed, there was a lack of oxygen preventing its spreading. A few rafters were scorched.

When Miss Nellis lived there, it was a show place inside and out. The house was painted by Rev. C.T. Lewis who purchased the ingredients making the paint and creating the colors. It still has the original paint. The roof is slate having designs of different colors. After her death, the property went to a cousin by the name of Weaver. The present owner is Charles Mrazz, Sr.

In winter, it was customary to go ice fishing in Caroga Lake. The fish were cleaned and stored in a barrel for use until warm weather. Benjamin Snell, great grandfather of Lena Wood, lived on Route 10 in the house now owned by the Walkers. He planned a fishing trip and arose at 3:30 in the morning to feed his horses and while his wife prepared breakfast, went back to bed and fell asleep. The meal being ready, Mrs. Snell awakened her husband. He sat up with a start exclaiming, *Where are all the people?*

When she told him there was no one around, he replied, *I dreamed that many people came to see me but never said a word.* Alarmed, Mrs. Snell begged her husband to give up the trip, but he assured her it was only a dream. After eating, he put on a bearskin coat and left. In the sleigh were blankets with which to cover the horses during the day and lunch for both man and team. That night, when he did not return at the proper time, Mrs. Snell became upset. It was after dark when the team was driven into the yard by someone else and in the back of the sleigh was Mr. Snell's body. He had fallen through the ice and drowned. He was buried in the family plot in a pine grove back of his house. The epitaph reads, *Go home my friend, dry up your tears. Here I remain until Christ appears.*

Empie's grove was the site of many picnics held by various organizations. The fife and drum corps from Lassellsville often furnished the music. Sack races, potato races, horse-shoe pitching and ball games were held.

Lew Crummel, a fiddler, played at many home parties.

## EPHRATAH

### NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS AND MISCELLANEOUS

The Ephratah Methodist church drama group presented a comedy No Bride for the Groom at the First Methodist Church. (Only date given was 1940) Members of the cast were: Katherine Hill, prompter; Anna Berry, Mary Berry, George Anderson, (a teacher at the local school), Laura Wood, Earl Able, Edna Cretser, Irene Andrews, director; William Wood, Anna Marie Gifford, Patricia Lake, Marian Beard, Roosevelt Smith and Florence Hill. A picture of the cast was shown.

Oliver Getman, who had served several years as a deputy sheriff, son of Nathan and Helen Heim Getman, died May 18, 1940. Norman Getman died May 11, 1938, age 76. Mrs. Gary Kitty Snell died in 1940.

Anthony Christman, Jr., son of Mr. and Mrs. Anthony Christman, was rescued from the Sprite Creek into which had drifted under the ice. Help was summoned and by their speedy efforts, his life was saved. He was taken to the home of Ira Duesler and later moved to Memorial Hospital. 1939

Mr. and Mrs. Earl Handy celebrated their 54<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary June 2, 1940. He was 75 and his wife 74. Mr. Handy ran a general store in Ephratah and was postmaster for 15 years.

In February 1943, the *big inch* pipeline was being laid from Texas to New Jersey carrying fuel.

There were many items pertaining to the war. Corporal Alton Empie had been in Tunisian battles. George Abel enlisted June 11, 1917. A picture shows Milton Heroth in a group of inductees. Men 20 to 44 must register, rations on coal and oil heating stoves started December, 1942. A copy of a letter was printed from Pfc. Clayton Heroth to his parents, Mr. and Mrs. William Heroth. He was somewhere in England. His picture along with his brothers, Pvt. Milton and Pvt. Austin Heroth was printed.

November 22, 1938 Rev. Arnold Dykhuizen of the Reformed Church and Rev. Walter Warner of the Methodist church took a religious census. They did not compile and catalog the many excuses given why people did not go to church or send their children to Church school. Many reported that mother or

father used to go or they used to go as children. Interesting stories were told about old happenings in the churches and the time that both churches were filled to capacity.

In 1956, Wesley Cretser was 90 and was busy weaving rugs. At that time, he had made from seven to eight hundred of them. He came to Ephratah in 1899 and lived to be 96.

4/14/59 – a hobby show sponsored by the Up and Ready 4-H Club featured paintings by Mrs. Lillian Wohlgemuth and George Bradt, crocheted articles by Loretta Haughton and Mrs. Jessie Hatch. Wesley Cretser, age 92, won a blue ribbon for a woven rug. Colonial equipment by Ernest Mrazz, complete with flint-lock musket, bowie knives and tomahawk; soap collection by Edna Cretser, old recipes in a special setting by Mrs. Charles Mrazz, Alvie Gault's penny collection, George Washington riding Ajax, carrying a 13 star flag displayed by Ernest Mrazz, Jr.

In 1960, Governor Nelson Rockefeller interviewed Ernest Mrazz, Sr., of Ephratah, a member of the staff of restored Fort William Henry at Lake George. Mr. Mrazz is an expert in the handling and firing of antique weapons and demonstrated the use of the Brown and Bess flint lock musket for the governor. Mr. Mrazz was attired in buckskin with hunting knife and scabbard.

Orin Sanderson, a graduate of Syracuse University invented and installed an intercom system in a Syracuse hotel. Due to lack of capital, he could not finance his inventions.

On one of his trips home he drove a Franklin car, which was made in Syracuse, and delivered it to Anson Getman. It was one of the first cars in Fulton County.

3/11/45 – T/5 Leonard Polmateer was awarded the Purple Heart after being wounded during the invasion of the Philippines while landing on Leyte. He also took part in the Easter Sunday invasion on Okinawa in the Ryuku Islands. Mr. Polmateer is stationed with the 718<sup>th</sup> Amphibious Tractor Battalion.

#### NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS

-1907-

Members of the Maple Leaf Rebekah Lodge No. 265 held a maple candy social in the I.O.O. F. rooms Saturday for which a profit of \$8.05 was made.

Adam Swatz visited Charles Gray and when it was time to go home his horse was missing. He walked home only to find that the animal had not preceded him. He returned to the Gray home where it was discovered in the grainery eating his fill of oats.

Willard C. Beebe has fine views of Ephratah for sale at his store which were taken by photographer Brown of Fort Plain.

A springtime ball is to be given at Apollo Hall, April 17, 1907. Music by Eigenbroat's orchestra. Bill \$1 including dancing, checking and stabling. It will be under the management of Professor Charles F. Dolan.

One day last week, several of our young people spent the afternoon with Mr. and Mrs. Normal Saltsman for the purpose of eating maple candy and sugar. All enjoyed their visit as the Saltsmans are royal entertainers. On Saturday, they went to the home of Avery Duesler for a repeat performance.

All members of Ephratah Lodge 836 I.O.O. F. celebrated the 88<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the order of the Reformed church. Reverend Donald Campbell preached the sermon.

April, 1907 Eli Smith opened his cheese factory this week.

Ladies of the Methodist church will hold a 15 cent lunch at the parsonage Friday evening, April 26, 1907.

A section of the Arietta road 200 feet by 20 feet dropped out of sight. Rosco H. Sammons, State Highway Engineer drilled down to a depth of 55 feet before finding a firm foundation. 3,000 cubic yards of rock were dumped into the opening. It is believed that at one time this area was covered by a lake leaving a thick layer of quicksand.

Ottis Durfee, a brother of Abigail Durfee, a teacher in Mud Road school, wrote a letter to the editor concerning the sad state of affairs caused by the Dam (Sacandaga) not having a name. As it was everything pertaining to it had to be preceded by Dam – the Dam water, the Dam machinery, the Dam camps, et cetera.

Around 1910: Mrs. Seymour LaGrange has taken possession of the dwelling lately vacated by Lehmen Whitlock. (now owned by Clifton Beck)

In 1903, a picture was taken of a new Winton car driven by John Hutchinson, motor truck dealer at St. Johnsville. The underslung engine was below the rear frame. The oil pan was rubber blanket and the tool box was carried under the hood.

In 1907, Edgar Shibly was conducting his undertaker business and on September 9<sup>th</sup>, O.C. Hagadorn opened school.

Charles Wood moved the old Jerome Cook dwelling to his place to be converted into a meat market. It will be the 3<sup>rd</sup> meat market operating in the village.

Of late, there has been quite a stir about giving George Green a license to sell bug juice in his saloon to get over it, the building has been moved back about 200 feet from the grocery store of W.C. Beebe so now Mr. Green is dispensing his goods to the public.

May 23, 1907, a Mayflower party given in Apollo Hall for the benefit of Maple Leaf Rebekah Lodge 265 netted \$50 profit.

At the annual school meeting, Honorable John F. Empie was Chairman. Officers elected were: Trustee, Charles Sitterly; Clerk, Frank Berry; Collector, James Y. Jukes. It was voted to levy a tax of \$480.

In August 1908, 1,000 people attended the I.O. O. F. picnic held in Empie's grove.

George Green has closed his saloon in the Crouse building. It is his intention to move to Fort Plain.

John O. Saltsman has made arrangements with Professor Dolan to give dancing lessons at Apollo Hall, the first class to start January 13, 1908.

Benjamin Cretser, Jr., will sit at the Saltsman House to collect taxes. They are \$15 per 1,000, road tax 25 center and poll tax \$1.

1908 – Claude Wohlgemuth has leased Yanney's sawmill and intends to add a feed mill.

1902 – School opened this week with Professor Romain Saltsman in charge.

February 20, 1904 – At a meeting of the Ephratah Cheese Factory Association held at store of Lester Getman, Clark Dockstader was elected chairman. George Bauder was elected Trustee; Lester Getman, Secretary. (Bauders lived on a farm later owned by Elmer Anderson) 150,472 pounds of cheese had been made in 1903. 1,494,461 pounds of milk was received. It required 9.93 pounds of milk to make one pound of cheese. The average price of 100 pounds of cheese was \$10.32.

Hunter and Son of Gloversville have contracted to build a vault in Ephratah cemetery.

In 1907 or 1908, a store owned by Thomas Yauney burned. The building was owned by J. E. Van Voast. The Methodist parsonage standing next to it was also completely burned. Most of the furniture was removed. At the time, it was occupied by Rev. and Mrs. May. A bucket brigade was used to fight the fire.

1908 – Albert Edick rented part of the Fancher block and will use it as a saloon.

1908 – Coppernoll and Whitlock started a blacksmith in the building which had been used for the same purpose by William Fancher. Later the partnership was dissolved and the business continued by Mr. Whitlock.

1908 – Roy Shibley is the boss cheese maker in Benjamin Nellis' factory.

1901 – Last Friday about 3:30 Lester Barkhuff placed the Reformed church on the lot given by Mrs. Fraley. Reveral Charles T. Lewis made a prayer and served cake and coffee. Daniel Yauney cut down part of his apple orchard to make room for moving.

1905 – Mrs. Levi Yauney wishes to announce that cash will be paid for wool at the woolen mill.

1908 or 1909 – Lumber is being drawn on to the grounds for the new I.O.O. F. building which will be 17 x 60 feet. Next to this lot, Earl Handy has broken ground for a new store which will fill up the gap left by fire a year ago.

About 1908 – Edgar Shibley has bought out the undertaking business of William Fancher.

1909 – a Brooktrout dinner was served by Landlord John O. Saltsman.

9/9/1909 – Menzo Cretser, mother and sister, Miss Nancy, left Tuesday for the hop fields.



The Village basketball five and a quintet from the Turnpike played a game at Apollo Hall Saturday evening, the boys from the Pike becoming winners.

4/9/1914 – The people of the Methodist Church of Ephratah have recently installed a pipe organ. The dedicatory concert will be given Tuesday evening, April 15, by Professor Frederick Hodges of Johnstown, assisted by the Johnstown choir, consisting of thirty voices. The Male Quartet will render some selections and classical solos will be given. Tickets are on sale at all the stores and hotel. Rev. Silvernail was preacher at the time.

The Swatiska Club will hold a dancing party at Apollo Hall Friday evening. Music will be by the Peerles orchestra of St. Johnsville.

In November, 1900 Eli Smith purchases the cheese factory and all the machinery of Burton Watts who is moving to Johnstown.

Mrs. Charles Yauney returned home from Albany with a fine line of millinery goods.

Earl O. Handy and Melinda Snell fire was discovered by Mr. and Mrs. George E. Baker, Mrs. Charles Morford, Mrs. H.B. Ten Eyck and Mr. Hestor of Johnstown who were passing through Ephratah and aroused the occupants. Canajoharie and Johnstown fire companies were summoned. A large tank of gasoline in front of Handy's store exploded and also a kerosene tank in the cellar. Roofs of neighboring buildings caught fire but were extinguished. Mr. Handy had conducted the store for nine years. Had it not have been for the efforts of the discoverers who pounded on the door, Mrs. Snell and her grandson, Willard Beard, who was spending the night, might have perished.

In the late 1800's, weddings were described in minute detail – even listing gifts and the names of givers.

Into the 1900's, deaths included the cause and what took place from the time the patient was stricken to the moment of demise.

9/22/1940 – Ephratah citizens were greatly excited Sunday morning when the six foot pipe line broke near Leo Popp's farm. It gouged a hole 60 feet deep, washing out a section of the road. The wooden pipe line was then replaced with steel.

#### FROM THE GETMAN HISTORY PAMPHLET:

The first church of Ephratah was Presbyterian, and organization formed in 1823. On March 17, 1823 in District 9 schoolhouse in the northern part of the Town of Palatine, certain residents met and organized *The First Presbyterian Church and Society of the Town of Palatine*. William Lassels was made Chairman, and Christian Getman, Clerk. Trustees elected were Peter I. Getman, Philip Kring, William Lassels, Caleb Johnson and Chauncey Hutchinson. The first minister was Rev. Caleb Knight who was active from June 1, 1823 to July 1, 1826 and was paid \$275 a year. The church became inactive and the people of Ephratah once more had to go to Stone Arabia or Tillaboro in order to attend church.

## THE RULES FOR FEMALE NURSES PUBLISHED IN 1880 WERE AS FOLLOWS:

1. Brink in a scuttle of coal each day.
2. Report every day at 7 A.M. and leave at 8 P.M. except on the Sabbath on which day you will be off from 12 noon until 2 P.M.
3. Graduate nurses in good standing will be given an evening off each week for church services.
4. Any nurse who smokes, uses liquor, goes to the beauty shop or frequents halls will give the director a good reason to suspect her worth, her intentions and integrity.
5. The nurse who performs faithfully and without fault for five years, will be given an increase of 5 cents a day, providing there are no hospital debts outstanding.

T/5 Leonard Polmateer, aged 21, who was wounded January 15 of this year, 1944, during the landing of Leyte in the Philippines has been awarded the Purple Heart which he has forwarded to his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Clyde Polmateer of Ephratah. He entered the service January 1943, trained at Fort Knox, Campbell, Kentucky, also Fort Ord, California, then started over across last year.

His outfit also took part in the Easter Sunday invasion of Okinawa where he is still stationed with the 718<sup>th</sup> Amphibious Tractor Battalion.

In a recent letter, he said he had practically recovered from his wounds.

*(Mr. Polmateer also received the following citations: World War II Victory Medal, American Service Medal, AP Service Medal, BZ Arrowhead, Good Conduct Medal, Philippines Liberation Ribbon W/W, BZ 3 stars and the Purple Heart was awarded April 11, 1943.)* He was discharged January 13, 1946.

## THE GETMAN FAMILY

In January, 1710, 3,000 Palatinates set sail from England and landed during the months of June and July on Nut ten's Island, now Governor's Island. To pay for their passage, these people were located near Kingston where they were to produce turpentine for the British Government. Because the yield was so small, many moved northward, finally settling in Stone Arabia. It is presumed that there were Getman families included in this migration.

In the State Library at Albany is a Photostat of a list of Palatine Immigrants. Among the names is Casper Getman, his wife, four sons and three daughters. They registered as Lutherans. This list covered those Germans who landed in England before being transferred to America by Queen Anne. In a record of naturalization of a group of men for American citizenship in Albany, October 11, 1715 is the name Frederick Getman, eldest son of Casper Getman who was 16 years of age in 1709.

The first record of this family in this area is of a Frederick Getman who settled in Stone Arabia and who married May Bier man, the daughter of John Bier man, his partner. It is said that Frederick Getman settled in Stone Arabia in 1720 and purchased over 700 acres of land.

Frederick and Mary had six children, George, John, Frederick, Christian, Mary and Eve. George married Delia Shoemaker. Christian married Ann Eve Zimmerman Markel. Frederick married Catherine Brodhack and John married Anna Maria Merckes. It is said that Frederick Getman and his wife are buried in the Churchyard at Stone Arabia in unmarked graves. Many others are buried in the graveyard on the Getman homestead near Ephratah.

Christian Getman was a Captain at Fort Paris. It is said that George Getman fired the first shot in the Battle of Stone Arabia. He was a son of the pioneer.

In 1812, George Getman and a man named Cogswell erected and kept store in Ephratah.

The first marriage recorded in Ephratah was Christian Getman, son of Frederick to Anna Timmerman Markel in the year 1760.

Christopher Getman, born 1793, who married Polly Miller, was Ephratah's first postmaster. He was a great grandson of Frederick.

Excerpts from a History of the Getman  
Family in America – 1923-1930

### THE YAUNEY (YANNEY) FAMILY

The Yanney family came to Monmouth, New Jersey from Alsace and Strassburg, Germany. In one branch there was Christian Yanney who had a son, Christian who married Susan Boshart. From this union a son, Henry, was born in Monmouth, September 18, 1749. When Henry was six years old, both parents died after which he was brought to Montgomery County by his grandfather Boshart between the years of 1755-1760. They lived in a log cabin which was replaced by a house in 1796. Henry married Elizabeth Kline.

Henry and Elizabeth had seven children: Henry, Jr., Daniel, Mary Ann, Elizabeth, Margaret, Thomas, James McIntyre and Susan. Henry, Sr., fought in the Revolution, was Captain of the Tillaboro Company and Major of New York State Militia. It was he who built the first woolen mill and in 1803 purchased 100 acres of land to be laid out in lots, forming the village of Ephratah. He is buried in Yanney cemetery on Saltsman Road.

Henry Yanney, Jr., a native of Ephratah, married Lydia Mead of New York City. He died in 1862 when his son Charles was fourteen.

Charles Yanney worked in the woolen mill and later owned the store which is still in existence, but closed at the present time. The Post Office was located there and he was postmaster for ten years. He married Isabel McLaughlin, daughter of John and Johanna McLaughlin and they lived in the house now owned by Edward Ahrens. He was a Methodist.

James Yanney from another line was born in Johnstown in 1800. In 1821, he married Hannah Bedford, daughter of Hannah and Daniel Bedford. Their children were: Margaret, Daniel, John, Levi, James, Jr., Persse, Nathan, and Abner. In 1829, they moved to a farm in Ephratah. James was also affiliated with the woolen mill and in 1838 was elected member of Assembly, being the first member elected after Fulton County was organized. He died in 1888.

Levi, son of James and Hannah Bedford, was born in Ephratah in 1832. He married Lucinda Pratt. They had no children. He erected the stone woolen mill in 1862, owned farms presently in the possession of Gary Sweet and Charles Komar, and was Town Supervisor from 1876 to 1888. He lived in the house now occupied by Robert Lord, which, at the time, was the largest house in the village.

Daniel and Permelia Crouse were married by Rev. L. C. Van Lone of the Reformed church. He had a daughter, Emma, who married a Gray and a son, James. After Permelia's death, Daniel married Mary Brower. He erected the house which stands on the west corner of Main and Church Hill Road.

Daniel's son, James married Ida Saltsman and lived in the house west of the one his father built. In later years, James and Ida owned and occupied the new house on the corner.

Dr. John Yanney, son of James and Hannah Bedford, was born in Sammonsville. After graduating from Albany medical College in 1857, he began practicing in Herkimer County and later came to Ephratah where he lived and practiced his profession in the house east of the Methodist church, now owned by Ernest Mrazz. In 1871, he married Margaret Van Arnam of Albany. Their children were Thomas, Eva M. and Benjamin.

Persse Yanney, son of James and Hannah, was born in Ephratah in 1837. He was a farmer, merchant and traveling salesman for Levi Yanney. He married Susan Hodges and they lived on Saltsman Road in a house that burned and was later the site where Mrs. Albert Repeter had a trailer. Their children were: Estelle, Katie, Sarah, Roy, Samuel died, age 17, Arthur and Grace. He was in the navy and recruited thirty-five men for the 153<sup>rd</sup> New York Volunteers, expending \$300 for same.

After purchasing property on Saltsman Road, Harold Wood and his father tore down a mill that might have been Abner Yanney's fulling mill. There is a raceway still in existence. While clearing land for a garden, Richard Christman, who owns property in this section, unearthed a steam engine, a plate bearing the name, *Utica Steam Engine Company*.

### JENK'S HOLLOW

Jenk's Hollow was located northeast of Ephratah in a valley between Route 10 and Murray Hill Road. It is believed to have been settled by Captain Jenks who erected a paper mill in 1857, using Garoga Creek as a source of power. Mr. Sylvester Trumbull purchased the mill in 1871 for the purpose of manufacturing straw-board.

Mr. Trumbull built several houses and a school which was known as District No. 7. Some of those living here were: Francis Weaver, Nathan Cool, John Jewell, Dewitt Cool, Mortimer Smith, Mel Levitt, Henry Prime, Flan Sponable, Mr. Trumbull and Mrs. Trumbull's two sisters. A store was maintained in a portion of the Trumbull house which carried groceries, general merchandise including special items to be used in the mil, school supplies and penny candy.

Many teams of horses were required to draw the loads of paper to Amsterdam. Nathan Cool and Francis Weaver were the teamsters. There was a watering trough on the hill toward the John Ercanbrack farm where the horses were watered.

Four generations of the Snell family attended the school. Also all the children of Mortimer Smith, Carrie Handy, Alberta Christman Duesler, Cora Handy Knoblauch, the Dorn Twins, Lena Wood, Ruth Christman Ropeter, Earl Ferguson, Bessie Fraker and Hazel Denmark. Later, Mrs. Knoblauch taught in this school. At the time, Seymour Snell was the teacher, there were forty-nine pupils. The school was closed when it consolidated with District 10. It was torn down and the lumber used in building a restaurant on the corner of Routes 10 and 29.

The mill burned in 1907 after which the residents drifted to other areas leaving Jenk's Hollow just a memory.

Mr. Trumbull had a large bed of ginseng on his property.

## TILLABORO

A farm owned by Charles Lyons is called *Grand View* because it overlooks Sharon and Cherry Valleys, a distance of twenty miles. It is located on a mountain toward the southern end of Tillaboro road. The original owner was Jacob Duesler, Sr., and was handed down to his son, Jacob, Jr., thence to Simmeon, Edward, Ira, and Ivan Duesler. The blue clay earth is especially good for soil products.

Jacob's brother, William, owned the adjacent farm, passing it to Eli, Isaiah and now is in the possession of Ivan and Mary Duesler.

*Mountain View* was so named because of the picturesque view of Sharon Valley. It was first settled by Peter J. Smith in 1831 and joins property owned by Ivan Duesler. Its springs yield an ample supply of water. Five generations of Smiths lived here, the last one being Steven W. Smith who raised thoroughbred Holstein cattle. It is presently owned by John Lane.

*Distant View* which is south of *Mountain View* commands a sight of eighteen miles. The soil is especially adapted to onion growing. One year seventy-five bushels were raised. The farm was owned by Peter Getman and his son, Peter, who sold it to Peter Dockstader in 1863. It is now divided into two (2) sections, one being owned by James A. Stella and the other by Thomas and Kathleen Oughton.

## TOWN OF EPHRATAH

In 1825, the first Town meeting was held at the home of Harvey Cook and the following officers were elected: John Eisenlord, Town Clerk; George Waggoner, H. Yaney and Jacob Heas, Assessors; Jacob Eaker, Supervisor; Commissioners of Highways, J. J. Shull, Peter Markle, Jost A. Shull; Poor Masters, George Eaker, J. Nellis; Collector, J. L. Nellis.

The Town of Ephratah was created by a Legislative Act passed March 27, 1827. At a meeting held at the home of Philip Empie in April of that year, the following officers were elected: Assessors, Joseph Getman, David C. Everest and Henry Soules; Overseers of the poor, Caleb Johnson and John Empie, Sr.; Commissioners of Schools, John McLaughlin and Peter W. Saltzman; Collector, George Beck; Highway Commissioners, Chauncey Orton and James Caldwell; Inspector of Schools, Samuel R. Dudley; Fence Viewers and Pound Masters, Philip Young, Joseph Dennis and Michael Dorn, Jr.

NOTE: As fence Viewer, the officer was to notify the owner of any breakage and should stock have escaped, the officer would then become pound master. He would keep the stray animals in a walled enclosure until the owner had fixed his fence, reclaimed the animals and paid for their keep.

A NEWSPAPER CLIPPING DATED July 2, 1838: Notice is hereby given to all persons owning animals running at large in the Corporation of this Village that they must take care of them immediately or they will find them in my charge under lock and key. Richard Butts, Fort Plain.

A new Town barn was erected on Route 29 in 1967-1968 by Edward Roberts of Ephratah.

Officers in 1967 were Supervisor, Clifton Holland; Town Justice, Squires Gray; Councilman Richard Christman. In 1968, Ernest Edwards was Supervisors; John Farquar, Town Justice; Arthur Popp, Councilman. Covering both years Carlton Bradshaw was Town Clerk and Milburn Monk was Superintendent of Highways.

As of 1976 officers are: Supervisor, Frank Bradt; Assessors, Robert Dailey, Melvin Bradt, Jr., and Doretha Christman; Town Clerk, Carlton Bradshaw, Jr.; Superintendent of Highway, William Johnson, Councilmen, Clarence Orr and Kenneth Smith; Justices of the Peace, John Farquar and Harold Smith.

In 1868, there were twelve school districts in the Town with 574 students and amount expended was \$3,790.17.

## GAROGA

Garoga, once a bustling village, is now a quiet hamlet with a dozen or so houses stretching from Route 29 to Old State Road where it is bisected by Caroga creek. Senior citizens sometimes refer to it as Grab-All, a nickname given it so long ago that the reason has been forgotten.

Early settlers were Nicholas Rechter, Colonel Zalmon Gilbert, Jessie Wood, Thurlow Weed, Chauncey Hutchinson who was postmaster and Dr. Robert Weaver who also had a gristmill. Winney and Chandler were cabinet makers, William Spencer and S. Melvin Weaver conducted a store. Joseph Putman ran a tailor shop and John Peak had a wagon repair business.

After the revolution, the first sawmill was erected. One of the workmen, a Tory who had returned to his home in the area, was bragging about some of the atrocities he had committed, especially one pertaining to the killing of a child. A man by the name of Johnson heard him and with axe in hand, was making his way toward him. A friend of the Tory saw what was about to happen and warned him, whereupon he jumped down a steep bank, crossed the creek and went to Canada and never returned.

Zalmon Gilbert conducted a hotel in the western part of Garoga. I. M. Everest operated a gristmill and in 1875 Francis Dorn purchased the Gilbert hotel, making it into a cheese factory.

The Adirondack Ginseng Company had two locations where ginseng roots were processed. A Mr. Everest manufactured paper and was a carpenter. Isaac Everest raised ginseng and was a farmer. G.W. Kennicut was a miller and A.D. Trumbull ran a sawmill and lumber yard.

The Methodist Church was located on a point next to the road and Caroga creek. After it was no longer used, it was sold in 1975.

Carlos D. P. Havens erected a hotel near the one owned by Zalmon Gilbert. After he died, William Spencer purchased it and made it into a store and dwelling. He used the old ballroom as his court room while he was justice of the peace.

In those early days a Mr. Johnson ran a hat shop in the eastern section. He was a devout Methodist and the grandfather of Caleb W. Johnson, the well known newspaper man of Johnstown.



The first school was used for both school and church and was located near Johnson's hat shop. One of the teachers was Eleanor Fry who later married Landlord C.D.P. Havens. The next schoolhouse was erected near the Caroga Creek with the road running between them. It has since been made into a dwelling.

### THE MISSING PEDDLER

At one time there was a peddler who frequently passed through Garoga accompanied by a faithful dog. After one occasion the peddler was never seen or heard of again. However, the next morning, the dog sat by the mill dam howling and continued to do so until someone disposed of him. Several years later, the mill dam broke and a box containing human bones was discovered near the flume. The bones were buried with the belief that they were those of the missing peddler.

### SPORTS

In the early days, it was customary for the men and boys of the surrounding area to congregate in the village on Saturday afternoons where they joined in feats of strength and agility, consisting of wrestling, jumping and throwing sledges. Mr. Sidney Lobdell, a friend of Mr. Hutchinson, often came to Garoga to participate in the fun. On one occasion after a native had made a standing jump of six feet, MR. Lobdell said he could do better and making a spring, leaped about ten feet into the air and then another of thirteen feet. That ended the jumping for the day!

### BUSINESSMEN OF THE 1870'S

Carpenters and millwrights were: J. Ercanbrack, A. C. Everest and David Allen. Everest and Snell and Casper Bronk had a strawboard and paper mill. Sawmills were owned by C.A. Lang and A.D. Trumbull. I.C. McDonald ran a hotel and Andrew Weaver raised hops. Stores were managed by W.L. Dorn, William Spencer and Isaac Everest who also was postmaster and a manufacturer of gloves and mittens. Ira Kennicutt and Quenstadt and Moltz ran grist mills.

### GAROGA LODGE NO. 300

"The Lodge was organized at Garoga on January 8<sup>th</sup>, 1853, moved to Rockwood May 20<sup>th</sup>, 1857 and on January 12<sup>th</sup>, 1906, the charter was moved to Ephratah. While the Lodge was located in Ephratah, a group of hunters from Clifton Springs, New York, joined the Lodge and eventually had sufficient membership to, by a special majority vote, move the Lodge to Clifton Springs, November 1<sup>st</sup>, 1911, retaining both the original name and number. So, actually, the charter was legally lifted from the people of Ephratah and the Lode is now located at Clifton Springs with nearly 200 members operating under a charter originated at Garoga well over one hundred years ago. At the time of this last move, there were 18 life memberships issued, presumably to Ephratah Masons. The Lodge is still using the original bylaws book containing many signatures of local Fulton County members.

When at Rockwood the Masonic Temple, a two-story wooden building, was located on the main road at the bank of the creek. After the Lodge moved out, the building had rather a checkered career. At one time, it became an Odd Fellows hall, later a movie theater with a hand cranked projector. It was even used once as a schoolroom with a grocery store on the first floor. Finally occupied as a dormitory for laborers building the new macadam road, it caught fire and was consumed by flames".

By R. E. Bedford through the courtesy of Arthur D. Pappert, Present Secretary of Garoga Lodge No. 300.

At the present time, Garoga is a residential section.

## GAROGA

### -----NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS-----

#### HAMLET OF GAROGA NEARLY WIPED OUT

1916

Late Fall

The hamlet of Garoga, located about nine miles west of Johnstown was visited last night by one of the biggest fires that has occurred in that area. It consists of twelve or fifteen homes, a church, hotel, grist mill, school and several barns.

Ten buildings were destroyed including four homes, the hotel, grist mill and several barns.

More than once it looked as though the entire settlement would be wiped out, but heroic work on the part of volunteers, many of whom were from Johnstown, helped to save the remaining buildings.

The origin of the fire was not known last night other than it started in the store and grist mill. The buildings being of wood and many of them having stood there for nearly a century, the flames found easy prey as they advanced from one to another along the street while the sparks, that at times dropped like rain, soon ignited the structures on the opposite side where blazes would shoot out upon the shingled roofs faster than they could be extinguished.

According to reports, the fire broke out in the grist mill before it had been closed for the night. The building was soon a fiery furnace. A bucket brigade was formed, but their efforts were fruitless.

The blaze could be seen in the sky from Johnstown, Gloversville and the intermediate area. Telephone messages were sent to Rockwood and Johnstown. Help arrived and immediately began applying wet blankets or carried water from the creek that runs through the village.

The hotel, a long two-story wooden building, was known as Erkenbrack's hotel and was conducted by the late Oscar Erkenbrack for many years. Charles Bronk, a son-in-law now owns the property. On the same side of the street are properties owned by L.H. Everest, Charles Bronk, Francis Weaver, Mary Christman, Doctor Nelson Everest and the Methodist Church. The residences on the opposite side belong to M. Everest, C. Christman, L.H. Everest and --- Everest. The grist mill on this side of the street was owned by Lyman Everest.

The burned buildings, ten in all, include the hotel, hotel barn, Francis Weaver's residence and barn, the Everest grist mill, L. Everest's house, barn, ice house and shed adjoining mill, and the Ropeter house.

The Methodist church caught on fire in five places and as the ladders had all been burned, it seemed the building was doomed in destruction. A foreman, employed in the construction of the dam in Rockwood climbed out the cornice of the building, cut the rope from the bell and used it to pull buckets of water upon the roof to extinguish the flames. The building was slightly damaged.

The schoolhouse caught on fire twice but the flames were put out before much damage was done.

The village has no fire fighting facilities other than pails and buckets, all of which were pressed into service from all the farms nearby. The water had to be carried from the creek and much credit is due those who help in this effort.

At one time when it was thought the fire was beyond control of the workers, arrangements were made to secure a quantity of dynamite from Rockwood to destroy adjoining buildings in hopes of checking the spread of the fire.

The household furniture in many of the homes was moved to places of safety before the buildings caught fire, which proved a wise thing to do, as there was little chance to save anything once the building started to burn. Most of the hotel furniture and all of the contents of the Weaver home were burned.

The contents of the barns, some of which were stocked with hay and garden produce and fall crops, as well as wagons, harness and farming instruments were all lost. All livestock was saved.

It was stated last night that insurance was carried on all the residents except one, most of the policies being carried with W.W. Chamberlain in Johnstown.

The home of Francis Weaver and all of its contents were destroyed and Mr. Weaver, who is a cripple, had no insurance. The four members of the family have nothing but the clothing they were wearing. Supplies for the winter recently purchased were burned and the family is left in bad circumstances.

Mortimer Everest of Gloversville, started a fund for the relief of the family last night, making the first contribution of \$10. Persons desiring to contribute to the fund or give anything toward the relief of the family may notify Mr. Everest or The Morning Herald.

#### LOSSES \$10,000 IN GAROGA FIRE

When daylight dawned on the little village of Garoga yesterday morning the smoldering ruins of seven large buildings and three smaller ones, that several hours before had formed homes of a happy community, presented a sorry spectacle. Only the foundations of the buildings remained, with charred and burned furniture piled upon the cinders from which considerable smoke was still issuing.

The origin of the fire, other than it started in the Everest grist mill about 8:15 o'clock Wednesday night, is all that is known. Lyman Everest, Jr., son of Mrs. Harriet Everest, who owned the mill property was the last person in the mill. He carried a lantern but used no matches nor had any fire other than the lighted lantern. A few minutes later, the reflection of the fire was seen in the Weaver home across the street and the alarm was sounded throughout the neighborhood.

Mrs. Harriet Everest was probably the heaviest loser. Two houses owned by Wallace Everest were unoccupied at the time. The Erkenbrack hotel owned by Mrs. Maria Erkenbrack valued at \$3,500 was partially insured.

*Sometime before Francis Weaver lived in the house that burned in Garoga there was a meat market in the front room. A portion of a large tree was used for a chopping block.*

*From this same tree numerous pastry boards were made, one of which is owned by Mrs. Hattie Pettengill of Lassellsville.*

## LASSELLSVILLE

The first settlement of Lassellsville commenced under the auspices of Sir William Johnson in 1765. While the country was still a wilderness, a man by the name of Flander cleared a piece of land for his home. He was followed by Henry and Daniel Phye and for a time the area was called Flanders.

William Lassells, who came from Rhode Island settled here and was followed by Isaac Everest, John Fical, George Lassells, William Burnham, William Smith, Doctor William Drake, Squire Klock, William Hutchinson, Benjamin Van Allen, Moses and Philip Kring. William Lassells was a respected citizen, a Universalist and a republican. He had several children and a grandson, Captain John Lassells, who fought in the Civil War.

Lumbering became a lucrative business inasmuch as there were seven sawmills in and around the village. Lumber was taken to St. Johnsville where it was loaded on the canal and shipped to Utica or south to Albany or Hudson.

George Lassells was a farmer and owned a lumber business. William Hutchinson was a wagon maker, Dohn Dempster a tin and mitten peddler and Sam Watrous who was a minister who travelled horseback preaching in whatever place was available. His remains are buried in a cemetery near what was known as the Christman schoolhouse. His son, Hezekiah, a Methodist minister and abolitionist was so radical in his views that some threatened to tar and feather him.

William Lassells operated a hotel which later became the home of Zephi Dempster. Another hotel was erected by Steven Livingston which Joel Dempster ultimately purchased for a residence. About two miles east of the village, on top of Royal Hill, Mr. Leroy conducted a hotel that was patronized by drovers. After it had been closed for some time, George Keith purchased the property and had an extensive dairy business. Catherine and Albert Kring owned and operated a hotel that was located on the corner of Route 29 and North Road. Many years after their ownership, it burned in 1958.

There were three blacksmith shops, a post office, a school, two wagon shops, one printing shop, two general stores, two hotels and two churches; one Union and the other Methodist. Planks for stone boats were cut in John Dempsters saw mill. Doctor Walrath was the local practitioner and later Doctor Floyd Michael. Philip Erginbright operated a turning lathe.

Politics was a main topic of conversation and in 1860 the republicans raised a spruce pole over eight feet in height which was cut and furnished by John Bronk.

## THE UNION CHURCH

This church stood on the corner of Route 29 and Kringsbush Road. It was built by members of the Baptist, Dutch Reformed and Universalist societies, and dedicated in 1839. Half of the expense was paid by Dutch Reformed members and the remainder divided between Baptists and Universalists. The Lutherans also used the building. Rev. Francisco, Rev. Jonas Dievendorf and Rev. M. Robinson were some of the pastors. Trustees of the property were Philip Michael, Edward McLaughlin and one vacancy caused by the death of Orlando Handy in 1891. Edward Trumbull tore down the church.

## THE METHODIST CHURCH

Methodist circuit riders penetrated these wilds and preached whenever they found a listener. As early as 1814 this territory was supervised by the Montgomery circuit which included all the territory from Sacandaga to the north side of the Mohawk River, a total of fourteen towns. In 1853 it became the St. Johnsville Circuit and a Centennial celebration was held September 13, 1953, emphasizing Lassellsville's endeavor.

The first Methodist church erected in 1839 was located in the eastern section of Lassellsville near the cemetery. Joel Dempster owned a farm on the opposite side of the road and gave a piece of land upon which a new church was built in 1859. This was later converted into a community hall.

Mrs. Hattie Floyd, a granddaughter of Joel Dempster, recalled attending services when the men sat on one side, the women on the other. She also remembered the love feast and the bowl of water being passed around.

In 1892 the church had between sixty and seventy members and a well attended Sunday school, of which Daniel Bronk was superintendent. Mrs. Kulia Barker was recording steward of the charge. The trustees at this time were H. F. Butler, Cyrus Sponable, Ezekiel Brown, Z.B. Dempster and Moses Keck.

The present church was built in 1900 at a cost of \$2,000. It was dedicated July, 1901 by Rev. S.G. Dopp. IN 1953, the trustees were Daniel Clemons, Sidney Trumbull and Emerson Monk. The bell was donated by Charles B. Knox of Johnstown.

Several Dempster families lived in this community, all of whom were descendants of Rev. James Dempster, who was sent to America in 1774 under the supervision of John Wesley. He was one of the last eight missionaries sent to this country. After preaching in New York City, he was transferred to Montgomery County. His wife was Sarah Monroe who bore him six children. The oldest son, James was the first to settle in Lassellsville where he became a farmer. The third living son, Joel, married Parmelia Murdock and upon her death, married Lois Spaulding. He moved to Lassellsville where he was highly regarded. He owned the farm which later became the property of John Leek. While Greet Street was once the most traveled thoroughfare and the greatest populated area, Route 29 is now the main road and considered a military route. It was once used by General Burgoyne, leading directly to Sacketts Harbor.

## CEMETERIES

The Michael and Lassells cemeteries are on the Kringsbush Road, the Fical cemetery on Fical road, a small one on Green Street and the Dempster or Lassellsville cemetery across from the community hall.

## MERCHANTS

Sawmills were owned by Ephraim Bronk, Edward McLaughlin, John McLaughlin and Augustus Trumbull and J. R. Bronk. Marvin Bronk was a mason and Lewis Argersinger a carpenter. Zephi Dempster was a local school teacher and Leonard Dempster a glove dealer. Menzo Drake raised hops. A store was operated by J. C. Duesler and Henry Countryman was a blacksmith. Daniel and Edward Lassell ran a grocery store and sold drugs. Edward Lassell was justice of the peace, Henry Van Allen

owned a blacksmith shop. William Drake was a doctor and William Hutchinson, the postmaster. William Kegg invented and patented an air suction churn, a railroad spike jack and a cattle gag. Richard McLaughlin was a trustee and stock holder in the Excelsior Manufacturing Company. There was a cheese factory in the vicinity of the excelsior plant.

### NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS

An advertisement dated 1869 disclosed that William Kegg of Lassellsville had invented an air suction churn called "Kegg's Ne Plus Ultra Churn". It claimed that it could make 10% more butter for the reason that a great amount of air was forced through the cream by the dasher. It produced more agitation and was worked by a lever which not only saved labor but increased the output.

In May 1957, Lee's general store, which was 130 years old, was sold to Mr. Carlton Bradshaw, Jr. The building was erected by Daniel Lassells and has always been used for this purpose. His son, John, a captain in the Civil War, inherited the business but sold it to Dewitt Leek in the 1880's and it was in the family until the present sale. In early days, everything came in deep wooden boxes. During the evening the store was the social center for the men who gathered around the stove to play checkers and visit. Johnstown was then half a day's journey. At the time of the sale there remained one kerosene lantern and some chimneys. An old ledger showed that five pounds of butter cost 30 cents, three dozen eggs 54 cents and a slate with pencil 16 cents.

In 1958, the Village Inn burned and the back of Bradshaw's store received considerable damage. The supervising principal of the Oppenheim-Ephratah school, Charles McConnville and family who lived over the store, were awakened by a passing motorist and they fled from the building. Evidently, the fire was caused by faulty wiring in the garage where it started. It then traveled to the hotel after jumping the road to the store. The fire lasted over two hours, causing the hotel to be a total loss. The owner, Gerald Hoag, was away at the time. The building was believed to be one hundred years old and was known as the Old Kring Hotel.

### MEMORIES

Philip Erginbright operated a turning lathe in the village. Upon completion of the New York Central, he walked to ST. Johnsville to see the first locomotive pass over the track. The engine burned wood. In relating his experience, he was so enthusiastic that he called it a miracle. After that he was facetiously named, Miracle Phil.

A former resident of Lassellsville cut wood for the railroad, delivering it to the siding with a team of oxen. He cut 500 cords, hauling it to the Barge canal, where a boat owned by the Wright brothers, took it down the Hudson River to Fishkill where it was used in the making of brick. Some of his wood was also delivered to the Weaver brothers at Utica, who operated a brick yard in the Deerfield section.

It has been said that Lassellsville was destroyed by fire during the Revolution.

Around 1920, Arbie Fical and Thomas Keenan ran a hotel in Lassellsville and in 1959 Fred Clemons operated a lumber mill.



## ROCKWOOD, GAROGA, LASSELLSVILLE FIRE COMPANY

This fire company was organized in 1952 at a meeting held in the Garoga schoolhouse. A petition was signed by Frank Bellinger, Lyman Christman, Walter Smith, John Parker, William Perry, Herman Melackowski and John Johnson. Many hours were spent discussing suitable locations, equipment, by-laws and other obstacles. Approval had to be granted by the Town and State and officers had to be elected.

It was decided to have two stations; one to be erected between the communities of Rockwood and Garoga, the other at Lassellsville.

A meeting was held August 1, 1953 at Lassellsville schoolhouse for the purpose of acquiring the building. It was resolved that inasmuch as District No. 3 had consolidated with Oppenheim-Ephratah District No. 1, and was no longer occupied, it would be sold to the fire company for the sum of one dollar. If it ever ceased to be used as a fire house, the building and land will be turned over to the Lassellsville Methodist church and used for community affairs. This site was once owned by James Dempster.

An auxiliary unit known as *The Rockwood, Garoga, Lassellsville Volunteer Fire Department Laides Auxiliary* was formed in 1953.

An addition to the Lassellsville firehouse was completed in 1955. During the ensuing years, training schools have been attended and equipment maintained in an efficient manner. Summer carnivals, harvest suppers, bazaars and food sales have been held. Once a man was rescued while being attacked by a bull.

The Department is more than a fire fighting unit. It is a symbol of service and protection to the community.

Present officers are: President, Robert Dailey; Chief, Robert Winchell, Assistant Chief, Richard Johnson, 1<sup>st</sup> Captain, Kenneth Mowery, Jr., 2<sup>nd</sup> Captain, Larry Miles; Vice President, Ronnie Hill; Secretary, Thomas Miles; Treasurer, Peter O'Dell and Chief of Fire Police, Milton Heroth.

While the garage owned by David Miles is situated just over the line in the Town of Oppenheim, it is within the confines of the residential section of Lassellsville and services that area.

The garage was built in 1924 and at the present time, two extra men are employed. Beside servicing automobiles and selling gas, oil and accessories, Mr. Miles has the dealership for snowmobiles, tractors and lawnmowers.

## LASSELLSVILLE SCHOOL

A souvenir of Lassellsville school, District No. 3, was presented to the students by their teacher, L.D. Brownell, June 17, 1898. D.G. Michael was trustee. Those attending were:

Raymond Kring	Annie Weaver
Frank Walrath	Henry Krouse
John Leek	Edward Ostrom
Louise Dempster	Harry Betinge
George Smith	Harry Shults
Alice Dempster	Reuben Smith
Stella Weaver	Dora Bronk
Ethel Monk	Floyd Smith
Arthur Miles	Grank Bronk
Libbie Crouse	Leonard Dempster
Fannie Argersinger	Clifford Argersinger
Frank Betinge	James Youker
Leman Sponable	James Ostrom
Chloe Monk	Leone Shults
Edith Bellinger	Mable Bellinger
Lena Smith	Jessie Weaver
Daisy Miller	Libbie Gray
William Weaver	Carrie Weaver
Rossie Bronk	Nathan Fical
Carrie Sponable	Mary Sponable
Jessie Ostrom	Anna Weaver
Leman Fical	Charles Fical, Jr.
Carrie Gray	Nancy Sponable
Florence Peto	Daniel Denure, Jr.
Anna Miller	Nellie Weaver
Martha Duesler	Lela Dempster

Because James Dempster owned the land where the church and schoolhouse (The fire department now occupies the schoolhouse) are located, it is assumed that he either gave or sold the land on which the schoolhouse was built.) It is believed to be around one hundred years old.

Mr. L.D. Brownell was the Division Engineer for the Erie Canal of the Utica District for many years.

## ROCKWOOD

Rockwood, once known as Pleasant Valley, is situated on Caroga Creek. The first settlers were Herrington, Garfield, Pettit, Nickloy, Orton, Halstead, Simmons, Philip Potter, Dennis, Durfee and Dye. Mr. Halstead build a saw mill on the creek and in 1815 Adam Durfee and Ira Simmons erected a carding mill. Joseph Dennis had a grist mill and in 1826 Azel Hough opened the first store. Dr. Whitney began practicing south of the village.

Rockwood became its official name when the post office was established in 1850. Prior to this time, residents had to go to Garoga for mail. The first post office was located in the Everet Young store which was next to Pleasant Valley Hotel. In 1892, Asa Benjamin owned a store and was postmaster. Other locations were in a building owned by Harry Pettingill when Carlos Rossiter was postmaster and the Wright property when Mrs. Cannine was postmistress.

The Everet Young store passed through several ownerships and was in possession of Mr. Stahl when it burned a few years ago.

In 1831, a flood carried a grist mill owned by Joseph Dennis down the creek where it lodged in Adam Durfee's mill dam, causing it to break away. Mr. Dennis rebuilt the mill but when it burned in 1844, the two losses were financially more than he could bear. His neighbors formed a bee and replaced it with lumber from woods on Royal Hill donated by Abraham Durfee. Later, Eli Dennis purchased it and after passing through several hands, it burned.

Mr. Spence erected a tannery from lumber obtained from Harry Gilbert. After operating it many years, Mr. Loomis bought it but it was not long before it closed. Joseph and Rouse Simmons ran a distillery. Rev. Myron White was the first Methodist minister; Andrew Lowrey, constable and glove manufacturer; John Van Dercook made fanning mills. P. Simmons ran a tannery, a shoe shop and glove factory. Eli Dennis was an extensive land owner and Doctors Weaver, Dye and Brookins were other physicians.

One of the principle industries of the village was a strawboard factory conducted by Levi Stahl and son, Charles, in connection with a lumber business and grocery store.

The first inn in Rockwood was the Pleasant Valley hotel. It did not last long as such and was purchased by Henry Duesler for a home. At the present time, it is owned by Mr. and Mrs. Earl Stahl. Mr. Stahl removed the upper part of the building where the sign had been. In 1831, Peter I. Simmons built another hotel which his brother, Thomas, operated. It passed through ownerships of Burton, Alex, Frasier, George Greenman and finally by Mr. Johnson. This may have been the property which was later owned by Clarence Gray. Another hotel owned by Mr. Winslow had a dance hall across the creek.

There was a casket factory located near the creek.

## SCHOOLS

At one time, the children in Rockwood were taught in the McDouga schoolhouse located beside a burying ground a mile east of Rockwood on the road leading to Johnstown. Isaac Christiancy taught there. The first district school was held in Granny Griswold's house where Mrs. F. O. Dorn later lived. The teacher was Sylvester Larrow. The first schoolhouse built in Rockwood about 1900 was on land which later became the home of Lorenzo Orton who sold it to Mr. Chatterton. Teachers were Margaret Fry and Dudley G. Smith. In 1915, the last school building was built on a hill overlooking the village at a cost of about \$7,000. Those who taught in this school were Mr. Hill, Joshua Thorpe, Lodena Brown, Oliver Belding, Joseph B. Thyne, L. F. Burr and Benjamin Dennis. First year high school subjects were taught and it was to this school where students from outlying districts came to try regent examinations.

After centralization the building stood empty until opened by Mowrey's Buy-rite Super Market.

## CHURCHES

The Union Society of Pleasant Valley was organized by Rouse Simmons, Dutee Joslin, Joseph Dennis, Chauncy Orton, Axel Hough and Tobert Weaver. The denominations represented by the union were the Six Principle Baptists, Methodists, Baptists and Presbyterians. The church was erected in 1833. It was agreed that the Six Principle Baptists should use it every Sunday afternoon, the Baptists eighteen Sundays, the Methodists twenty-two and the Presbyterians twelve Sundays of the year. The Presbyterians became extinct, the Six Principle Baptists merged with the regular Baptists and the Methodists built their own church.

The church was torn down and the lumber used in building a home.

According to a report of the church at the last election held in 1896 – Charles Heroth, F.O. Dorn, Charles E. Stahl and Nelson Everest were elected trustees.

The Methodist Episcopal church of Rockwood has a history almost identical with that of Ephratah, in that both were under the same charge. They first met in homes and then in the Union church. Reverend Steven Parks, the first minister also had charge of Ephratah, Garoga and North Bush.

In the late 1880's, a church was built about three miles east of Garoga and one-half mile south of the Old State Road by Lorenzo Orton, Thorton and Peter R. Simmons. Trustees were Adam Snyder and Jesse Wood. After some time, there was litigation and the building was sold to pay debts. It was torn down and rebuilt in Rockwood to be used by the Methodists. Rev. S. L. Stillman officiated at the consecration. The first minister was Rev. James Connor. The church went into a decline and in 1939 Adelbert Code of Johnstown purchased and presented it to the Pilgrim Holiness Society. Rev. Robert Dettmer and Rev. Leonard Lum have been the last two pastors.

Garoga Lodge No. 300 of the Free and Accepted Masons was located in Rockwood, having been formed in 1882 by Joseph H. Putman and Daniel Dupree. It lasted about twelve years.

HEARSAY: At one time there was a plank road between Johnstown and Rockwood and the toll house was situated so that it would "catch" traffic from Fonda, Sammons ville and cork Center plank roads.

A skirt factory located by the creek was owned by J. Smith and Frank Sherman. Some of the workers were Mary cool Gray, Carrie and Inez Mowrey and Grace Smith.

There was once a band stand where music was led by William Trumbull, leader and the members were Lester Smith, Corde Smith, Harry Pettengill, Edward Stahl, S. Jennings and John Stearn. Solomon Jennings had a blacksmith shop with an upstairs porch that extended out over the front. The band often played there.

A lodge hall stood across from the blacksmith shop in which movies were shown for a short time. Also school was held there.

Not many years ago, Ray Hill operated a store and while it was under the management of Floyd Snell, it burned. Edward Pitcher manages Eddie's Lunch. At one time, Francis Putman repaired cars in a garage adjoining his home.

## NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS

6/29/1893 – Edward Mussey, having purchased the old Dennis homestead has beautifully painted the dwelling with Atlantic White and the out buildings with Venetian Red and also laid 600 feet of new sidewalk.

D.M. Durfee has thoroughly repaired his dwelling.

Levi Stahl has laid new sidewalks on both sides of the creek and also erected a new planeing mill connected to his sawmill.

Everett Youngs has established a broom handle factory connected with his sawmill and will soon erect a new dwelling.

Anson Mowrey has built a new addition to his dwelling.

J. Smith has laid new sidewalk and also built on an addition to his glove shop.

The old hotel, owned by James Tully, has been extensively repaired by the addition of a new bar, floors and piazza. It has been newly papered and painted within and a new sidewalk laid in front.

Edward Dempsey, the new postmaster, now distributes the mail at the store of Levi Stahl.

A brass band, under the direction of Captain Bradt, has been recently added to Rockwood's many attractions. The village is also supplied with a new Methodist minister, Rev. L. D. VanArnum.

It is believed that the following took place about 1900 – (1/22/08):

The roof of Gray's hotel at Rockwood collapsed about 4:40 o'clock yesterday afternoon under the heavy load of snow that had accumulated. As a result, one person was seriously injured and several others who were in the place at the time had narrow escapes. When the crash came, the men in the place ran to the street and Clarence Gray was struck by a portion of the roof that slid into the roadway, pinning him in the deep snow until assistance came and the heavy weight pried up so that he could be pulled from under it. He was attended by Doctor Bookins of Rockwood who found that he had suffered a dislocation of the shoulder besides several bruises. Gilbert Bradt who ran into the street with Gray, was struck by a falling timber and had his face lacerated. A number of men were in the bar room playing pool and without warning, the roof fell. There was a sound like thunder when a portion of the roof dropped into the ball room, while other portions slid into the street and backyard. The employees of the skirt factory, sawmill and other places quickly found their way to the scene. The building was one of the oldest in this section having been erected in 1843. Clarence Gray was the owner.

One Fourth of July, a celebration was held near the Union church. Isaac P. Christiancy, of Garoga was the speaker. He later became a senator and minister to Peru.

An advertisement advised that the Davis Brothers were manufacturers and dealers in lumber. They were cabinet makers, builders and turned woodwork along with ornamental work of all descriptions.

Nov. 1908 – Everett T. Young has been appointed postmaster at Rockwood. He is a well known lumberman and businessman in the village; also an active Republican. He will succeed Hattie Long who has been postmistress four years.

### SCOTCH BUSH FREE METHODIST CHURCH

This church is located about two and one-half miles from Lassellsville in a small, but pleasant rural area.

While R. M. Snyder was pastor of the Free Methodist church at Middle Sprite, he held special revival meetings in the schoolhouse at Scotch Bush. He was a fervent preacher of the gospel and his labors are not forgotten. He died in 1895 and is buried in a cemetery near Lassellsville.

There was objection to meetings being held in the schoolhouse and so a church was built. It burned September 27, 1960. A meeting was held the same day and plans made for a new one which was dedicated a year later.

Some of the first members were Chauncey, Anna, Benjamin, Libby, Bennie and Alice Cretser; David, Malissa and Jacob Miles and a Foster.

Ministers serving in the early years were Rev. Palmer, Austin, Burley, Thorlens, Miner, Crouch, Wingate, New and Russell. Since 1928, pastors have been F. J. Dunham, Hazen Peters, Helen Balch, Charles Hollenbeck, Horace Crockett, Lura Smith, Carl Chatterton, H. H. Hutt, Charles Robinson, Mr. Carter, C. Pratt, Mr. Wright, A. Prouty, Karlis Tesalnieks, Martin E. Fellows, Herbert Seaman, Howard May and the present minister is Rev. Frances Basher Hopfer who has served since 1965.

The present officers are: Secretary, Gertrude Cretser; Treasurer, Ralph Cretser and the trustees are: Ralph Cretser, Howard May, Jr., Howard Smith and Edward Herrick.

### NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS

1/27/59 – Benjamin Cretser was reminiscing about the birth of his brother Ralph and sister, Ruth. Upon going to the home of his sister, she asked, How Mod had her baby? Baby?, he asked, There are two of them! Ralph and Ruth were twins born in 1903 to Chauncey and Anna Weaver Cretser.

1/3/57 – Mrs. Ruth Cromer and twin brother, Ralph Cretser celebrated their 57<sup>th</sup> birthday.

### SCHOOL

The Scotch Bush school was a typical rural school which was closed when it was consolidated with the Oppenheim Central School system. The building was once used for services by the Free Methodists. Some of those who taught there were: Frank Walrath, Carrie Trumbull, Metta Miles and others.



## DEMPSTER CORNERS

Dempster Corners is located between the Irish Settlement and Scotchbush. It was settled in the early 1800's, one of the first settlers being James watts Dempster, son of Reverend James Dempster. Other pioneers of this section were: G. Peterson, P. Weaver, A. Weaver, G. Sheffield, H. Myers, T. Myers, P. Twomany, W. Miles and J. DeNure. A sawmill on the Klock creek was once owned by John Dempster and instead of there being a circular wheel with teeth, there was a saw that moved up and down, but cut only while moving downward. It was called an up and down saw.

Around the 1900's, William DeNure ran a store. Joseph Lavine and some others made charcoal. William DeNure and Gene Johnson had ginseng beds.

Inasmuch as the schoolhouse, District No. 2, was located about two miles from Dempster Corners, many of the children could not walk that far in bad weather and had to miss many weeks of school. Dudley Argersinger was the truant officer. Some of the teachers who taught there were Mary Gyle, Vera May, Carrie Fical, Ann Leek, Frank Walrath, Jennie Polmateer who boarded with the Benjamin Cretser family across from the school, Meeta Crouch who was a minister's wife; Helen Balch, Laura Smith and Ruth Hunter.

In order to go to church, the nearest one was either the Methodist or Catholic church in Sprite Creek or the Methodist church in Scotchbush.

## NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS

### *HOTELS ON THE OLD STATE ROAD by Robert L. Jeffers*

Thurlow Weed kept a hotel and store on the Old State Road about three-fourths of a mile east of Garoga. He was a sociable man and having extensive accommodations for travelers, did a good business for many years. The hotel part of the long two story building was painted white while the store was red. It was equipped with a fair sized ballroom. The hotel ceased to run after Mr. Weed traded it for two dwellings and lots in Troy. One of Thurlow Weed's sons, Thurlow Weed, Jr., later became the well known editor of the Albany Evening Journal. Samuel P. Dudley operated the store for two (2) years after Weed's departure. The buildings were gone and the property was inherited by descendants of Charles Gray.

Teunis Cole ran a hotel on a sand plain two miles east of Weed's property. It was a red two story building with a long wing and had a ballroom where on Easter, egg lotteries were often held. To be entitled to a ticket in the lottery, the holder had to deposit a certain number of eggs with a committee consisting of president and secretary. Each person entitled to a draw, drew a ticket from a hat held by the president. If the holder drew the prize, he received twelve fold on his investment, but possibly might draw a blank. On a certain occasion, Peter Van Lone, residing west of Garoga, drew the prize. Many dances were held in this hotel on public days. People congregated to play ball and would form a circle on the green sward where they chased each other for drinks. White men chased Indians and vice versa. The Indians being fleet footed and good dodgers usually won. Mr. Cole died on the property after which his son-in-law, Robert Squires, operated the business until it closed two years later. His son, Rensselaer, inherited the hotel.

William Lowrie conducted a hotel two and one-half miles east of Coles. He was a brother-in-law of Judge John L. Hutchinson of the Town of Ephratah. It was a large white two story structure with a wing. It had a ballroom where dances were held and was considered quite a resort. There was a large watering trough near an open shed. Mr. Lowrie often kept droves of cattle which were on their way to market. The hotel ceased to run after Lowrie's death. The buildings eventually burned by an arsonist who was arrested, convicted and sent to prison. The site has since been plowed leaving no traces of the hotel.

William Grant ran a hotel below Clip Hill about one and on-half miles east of Lowrie's. He kept three ebony colored slaves for domestics, named Dinah, Caesar and Pompey. The last two named, attended the district school. In those days, lands about Johnstown were cultivated with one-handled wooden plows which were made by journeymen plowmakers who traveled about the country looking for jobs. On a certain occasion, Mr. Grant engaged an expert plowmaker, Benjamin Rowland, to build him a plow. When the builder arrived, the lumber was ready and the work was started. When breakfast was ready, the plowmaker followed the blacks to the table where they all were supplied with buttermilk and pudding. When the dinner horn was sounded, the menu was repeated and also on the second day. The plow was pronounced finished. Mr. Grant proceeded to hitch his team and try the plow, to which the builder demurred and departed for his home several miles distant. The following day, Mr. Grant went to Mr. Rowland's home and informed him that the plow would not work. The artful mechanic quickly responded, I knew it. What could you expect of a plow built on buttermilk and pudding? Mr. Grant then asked him if he could build a good plow and Mr. Rowland said that he could. He was asked to return to the Grant farm the next day and was told that he should not come to meals until summoned by Mr. Grant. This time he was given ham, eggs and other choice articles. The other meals were of good fare and the second plow was completed. Mr. Rowland proposed that the plow be tried out and it was found to work like a charm. The mechanic then remarked to the owner, Now you have one plow built on buttermilk and pudding and one made on ham and eggs. Business became poor and the hotel became the property of Adam Weaver and then Jacob Staley.

John B. Yost conducted a hotel about one mile east of Grant's and was known to be a jovial person. He added on some buildings, the property having previously been owned by John Hartman. Many droves of cattle, when moving east and west, were given quarters overnight by Mr. Yost. It was a busy place. One of his sons, Edward, was shot, burned and murdered in the Hayes and Wells Banking House at Johnstown, March 6, 1875. The buildings were later occupied by farmers and Mr. Yost became an extensive dairyman and farmer.

Nicholas Veghte kept a hotel on the south side of the Old State Road about sixty rods east of Yost's property. It was a white, two story wood building with basement and piazza. There was a fair sized ballroom where Mr. Jeffers often danced. Izard's army, when marching to Sacketts Harbor in 1813, halted near this hotel. Later, the property was sold to Abraham Veghte, John M. Wert and then to Philip Argersinger, who first rented the place in 1827. In about 1837, he purchased it, together with the farm of 65 acres for the sum of \$2,800. Droves of five and six hundred cattle were often kept overnight on these premises, while marching toward Waterford where the market was located. The beef was put in barrels. While the hotel was run by Philip Argersinger, who was the father of P.P. Argersinger, a well known glove manufacturer of Johnstown, Company training was held at that place annually on the first Monday in September. The gray uniforms of the noted rifle company were quite attractive, being trimmed with black velvet and shiny brass buttons. One of the early captains was Simmeon Sammons, who was Colonel of the 115<sup>th</sup> Regiment, New York Volunteers in the Civil War. Another captain was Simmeon Carmichael, of Bennetts Corners, who was one of the early 49'ers in California. Another captain of the company was Samuel Ferguson, of Scotch Bush, who died in

California. He was an uncle of the late Samuel C. Ferguson of Gloversville. Among the regimental officers were Colonel Peter Fonda and Colonel Douw Van Vachtan. Landlord Argersinger sold the hotel property to the Yosts and the hotel was then discontinued. After his ownership and that of his son Michael, the property was purchased by the late Lewis Veghte, who razed the hotel and built a fine white dwelling on its site that was later owned by Charles Mc Vean.

## A HISTORY OF THE IRISH SETTLEMENT

*Excerpts from an article written by James Brucker of Little Falls, New York*

As Ireland was experiencing a potato famine and people were starving, many came to America to seek a living.

Michael Starrs, born in Tryon County, Ireland in 1819 came to these shores in 1840 and worked in New York City until he was able to purchase several hundred acres of land at \$1 per acre in the northwest corner of Fulton County. He married Mary Owens, also a native of Ireland.

A brother, Patrick came to this settlement and Mr. Starrs deeded a portion of his land to him. It is estimated that about one hundred families settled in this area, among whom were the families of Gleason, Murphy, Fitzgerald, Fitzpatrick, Austin, Young, Ward, McGowan, Mosher, McPae, Twommley, Van Allen, Allen, Mc Brity, Derrick, Connelley, Shull, Helmar and the Starrs. The first ones marked their trail through the forest by gashing trees. This area was thereafter known as *The Irish Settlement*.

Being a religious people, they erected a Methodist and Catholic church, neither of which now exist.

The people were energetic and self-sustaining. They earned their living by farming, picking cranberries, peeling bark, lumbering, raising sheep, cows and pigs. In the winter, the men went to the logging area. The land being too sandy for prosperous farming and the lumbering source becoming depleted, gradually the businesses pertaining thereto were forced to close and the settlers moved on to available resources.

Now all that remains are foundations and a few people who have moved in to build camps.

In St. Johnsville, what is known as the Starr and Colorito American Legion Post, was named after Francis Starr, a veteran of World War I and Mr. Colorito, who served in World War II.

The Town of Ephratah can claim only the southern portion of the settlement.

## KRINGS BUSH

Early settlers were Mattias Smith, Leonard Helmer, Joseph Davis and his brother-in-law, John Kring. The settlement prospered until invaded by Indians.

## STOVE PIPE CITY

This was an area on Cromer Road where Peterson cemetery is located. Families by the name of Youker, Weaver, Cromer, Ropeter and Petersons lived there. The Weavers had a log house. Mrs.

Cromer lived to be one hundred years old. There was a hill, one side of which was called Ropeter Hill, the other side Fancher Hill. It is thought that the Repeters were the last to leave. All that remains is the cemetery and cellar foundations.

#### BRADTVILLE

This is a section in the north eastern corner of the Town of Ephratah where numerous families of that name lived.

## **CHAPTER X** **LAND USE PLAN**

A Comprehensive Plan represents a community's vision of how it desires to look in the future. A Land Use Plan displays where components of a Comprehensive Plan are desired to be located. The Town of Ephratah's Land Use Plan is a visual display of how the Town should look in the year 2033. The Plan attempts to visually display the Vision Statement contained in this Comprehensive Plan.

It is important to note that a Land Use Plan is not a Zoning Map. At present, there is no zoning in the Town of Ephratah. The Town does have Site Plan Review and Subdivision Regulations.

The Comprehensive Plan represents the vision for where the Town of Ephratah wants to be in the future. Zoning is a tool available to the Town to help implement the Comprehensive Plan. It is the recommendation of the Comprehensive Plan Committee that the Town Board give consideration to the development of a Town Zoning Ordinance to help implement the vision of this Comprehensive Plan.

The Land Use Plan identifies the following categories of land uses:

1. Town Center
2. Residential
3. Commercial Residential
4. Commercial
5. Agricultural 1
6. Agricultural 2
7. Recreation
8. State
9. Public
10. Vacant

The following is a description of each of these land use categories:

Town Center	This category would include a mixture of high density housing, commercial, public and recreational uses. This category would not include single or two family housing.
Residential	This category would include lands used for residential purposes. All types of residential uses would exist in these areas including single family, two family, multiple family, apartments, townhouses, condominiums, senior housing and others. Home occupations as a secondary use would be allowed in all residential areas.
Commercial Residential	This category would include all types of commercial, retail, office and related uses as well as single-family residential units and apartments.

Commercial	This category would include all types of commercial, retail, office and related uses.
Agricultural 1	This category would primarily be agricultural uses with single and two family residential uses. This category would include agricultural parcels located within Fulton County Agricultural District No. 1.
Agricultural 2	This category would primarily be agricultural uses with single and two-family residential uses. This category would include agricultural parcels not located within Fulton County Agricultural District No. 1.
Recreation	This category would include areas for various recreational uses including walking/hiking trails, snowmobile/atv trails, boat launches, boating, fishing, beaches, skating rinks, basketball/tennis courts, baseball/softball/soccer and similar fields, golf courses and similar uses. For areas in the Adirondack State Park, this category would include all permitted primary and secondary recreational uses identified within the Adirondack Park Land Use and Development Plan.
State	This category would include lands in the Adirondack State Park owned by New York State. These lands would be utilized as permitted and allowed by the State of New York.
Public	This category would include any land owned by a local, State or Federal governmental unit or private utility company.
Vacant	This category would include lands to remain undeveloped.

The following is a summary of how these Land Use categories are distributed in the Land Use Plan:

Land Use	# Parcels	Acres
Residential	898	12,122
Public (Government/Utility)	65	3,175
Vacant/Open Space	132	3,129
State	49	2,046
Agricultural 1	46	1,871
Agricultural 2	29	1,590
Commercial	62	495
Recreational	3	317
Commercial Residential	12	79
Town Center	1	29



## **CHAPTER XI**

### **PERIODIC REVIEW OF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

The Comprehensive Plan shall be annually reviewed, by the Town Planning Board, at their January meeting. The Planning Board shall review all of the activity/issues they discussed and were involved with over the past year. The Planning Board shall seek input from the Code Enforcement Officer on whether any issues or concerns have been identified over the past year with the content of the Comprehensive Plan. At its January meeting, the Planning Board shall develop and submit a recommendation to the Town Board on whether the Comprehensive Plan needs or should be formally updated or modified.

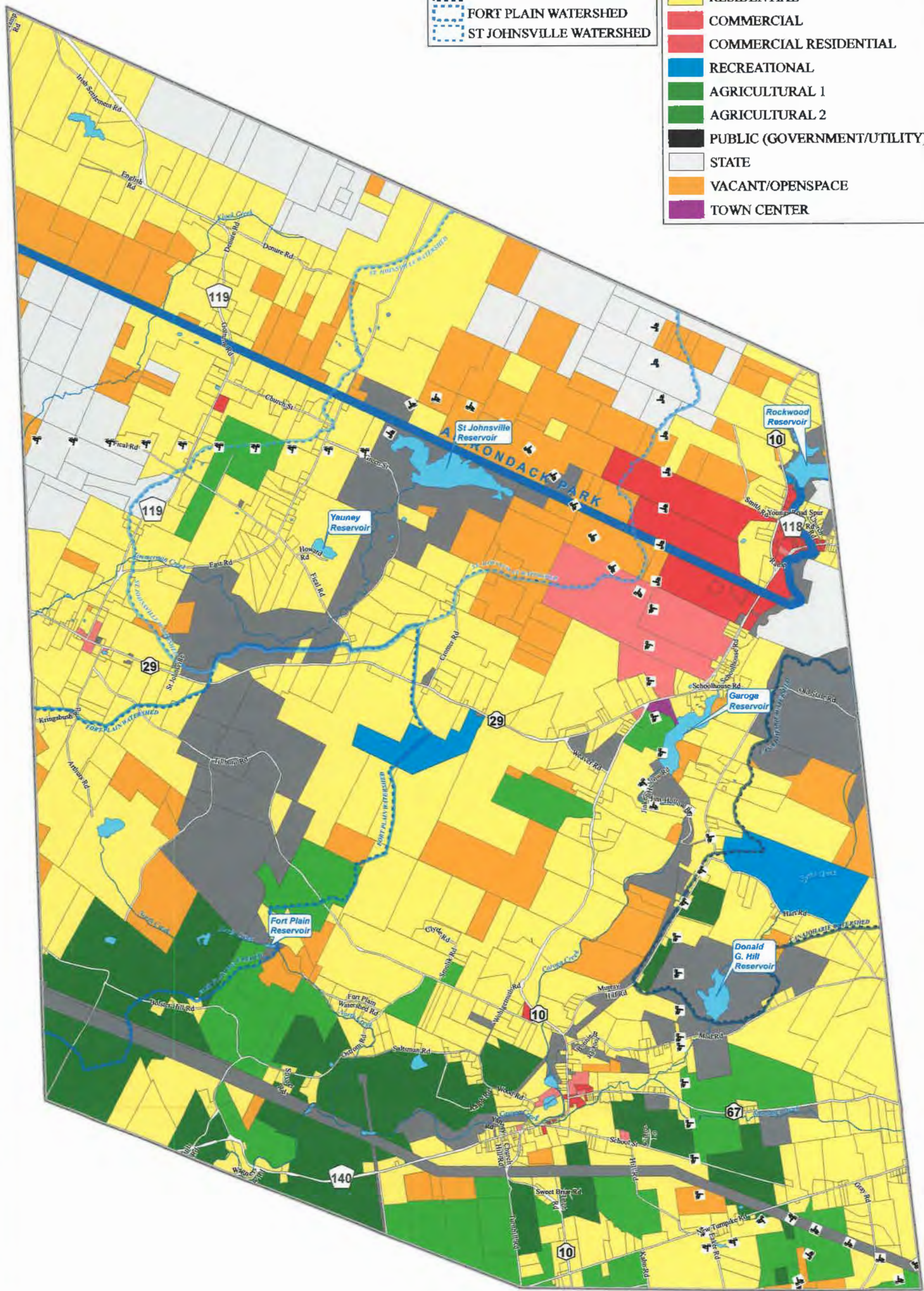
If the Planning Board recommends no update is necessary, no action shall be taken by the Town Board. If the Planning Board recommends that the Comprehensive Plan should be updated or modified, the Town Board shall either appoint a Special Board consisting of community volunteers to prepare an update to the Comprehensive Plan or direct the Planning Board to do so.

The Comprehensive Plan shall be updated no later than every five (5) years.



- SNOWMOBILE TRAILS
- CANAJOHARIE WATERSHED
- FORT PLAIN WATERSHED
- ST JOHNSVILLE WATERSHED

- PROPOSED LAND USE**
- RESIDENTIAL
  - COMMERCIAL
  - COMMERCIAL RESIDENTIAL
  - RECREATIONAL
  - AGRICULTURAL 1
  - AGRICULTURAL 2
  - PUBLIC (GOVERNMENT/UTILITY)
  - STATE
  - VACANT/OPENSOURCE
  - TOWN CENTER



0 0.25 0.5  
Miles

# TOWN OF EPHRATAH PROPOSED LAND USE PLAN

County of Fulton  
JAMES E. MRAZ, DIRECTOR  
Locations, distances and acreages of all features on this map are approximate and are not based upon an actual survey conducted by a Licensed Land Surveyor.  
PCPD Scale D. Board 6-4-2013