

Historian's Annual Report Town/Village of Cuba – 2023

The PATRIOT and FREE PRESS announced in June that the historic newspaper is for sale and will close temporarily until a new managing editor is found or the business is sold. By the end of 2023 the weekly paper had not resumed publication and it is appearing doubtful that there would be a buyer. There is a small group of local individuals who are investigating starting publication of some type of community news outlet. As of January 1st there has been no definitive action as to keeping the newspaper alive. While the paper was still publishing regularly, I continued to write a weekly column entitled "History . . . an Unbroken Chain," and I have also assisted with researching and creating material for additional historic markers relating the history of significant places in the community. This project is funded by the Ralph Wilson Foundation and when completed, there will be about 25 large illustrated placards located around the community giving the history of buildings, and the individuals responsible for them. A QR code on each sign gives the viewer a more in-depth story of Cuba.

Cuba Town Officials for 2023 SUPERVISOR, Lee James; COUNCIL MEMBERS: Jacob James, Bill Beck, Mike Mosgrove, Melody Farwell; JUSTICES: Wendy Tuttle and James Galatio appointed in 2023 to fill vacancy. TOWN CLERK: Alesia Heslin; ASSESSOR: Ryan Reed who resigned and was subsequently replaced with the appointment of Russ Heslin; CHIEF OF POLICE: Dustin Burch; HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT: Chad Smith. The Town Board meets on the second Tuesday, monthly, at the Town Building at 15 Water Street.

Cuba Village Officials for 2023-2024: James Barnes, Mayor; Steven Raub, Thomas Taylor, Liz Miller, and Jason Morrison Trustees; Corine Bump, Clerk/Treasurer; Lori Sweet, Deputy Clerk; Supt of Public works; Kris Krzos appointed mid-year to fill vacancy created by retirement of Rick Hall after 30 years of service to the department; Randy Snyder, is Deputy DPW Superintendent. In December of 2023 the board changed meeting dates and times for 2024. They will be held at the Cuba Circulating Library meeting room on the third Monday of each month at 6 p.m.(Feb. meeting will be held on 2/20/24).

BUSINESSES:

Parlor on Main, opened at 13 E. Main St. following the retirement of Al Tucker after a long career as a barber. The beauty shop, operated by Cortney George offers haircuts and hair care services for both ladies and gentlemen. Zane Young, a "Traditional Barber" joined Cortney later in the year. Zane is present at the shop three days a week giving traditional male haircuts to an ever increasing number of clients.

Tap- N'- Pour, a unique bar, first of its kind in WNY, at 18 W. Main St. opened in early Fall and features offering a variety of self-serve, on-tap (30 taps), beers, ciders, and seltzers. A limited menu of light bar food is available and a variety entertainment such as "Open Mike Nite" and "Trivia" is provided. The owner is Beth Kramer-Knight.

Moonwinks Restaurant came under new ownership effective in July when the former corporation was sold to Greg and Adam Robinson. The long-famous restaurant is undergoing a face-lift and continues to serve the area as a "premier restaurant" for Cuba and Allegany County, offering a relaxing a lounge area and more formal, fine dining and banquet areas.

B&R Food Mart at 18South St. changed ownership in September of 2023. In addition to continuing the small convenience store and gas station, the new owners are remodeling the interior including installation of a kitchen where traditional Indian food will be prepared for take-out..

Iva Ann's Restaurant – E. Main Street in the Story Block Building – opened early in the year but, unfortunately, due to various circumstances, was closed in July. As the year ended there was talk of a new restaurant coming to replace it, but no formal announcement has been made.

Southern Tier IT Service and Repair Center continues remodeling the building at the corner of W. Main and South and work on two storefronts and some apartments in the upper floors is on-going and indications at the end of the year are that a new commercial tenant will be announced in early 2024..

Cuba Restorations, LLC continues to upgrade commercial/residential properties in the village and continues to seek out and purchase additional properties for rehabilitation. The company (Terry Moot and Lionel Legry) are currently rehabilitating the former Cuba Ice Cream Co. building on South St.

The Little Alchemy Shop LLC, a metaphysical and alternative lifestyle store, expanded their footprint into the new Holistics & Mystics LLC building, located at 40 West Main St, in June, 2023. The Holistics & Mystics LLC building, a holistic care and spiritual wellness center, also contains the following seven businesses: -Falling Leaves Reflexology; -High Moon Energy Healing ; -Ohm Massage and Wellness; -Hypno For Healing ; -Herbal Gypsy Wellness; and, -Mystic Spirit Holistic Healing .

Genesee Pizzeria at 46 Genesee Street, across from the Cuba Cheese Shoppe was opened for business in the summer 2023 by Jim and Tonya Erwin. The bar-restaurant offers a variety pizzas and wings in addition to many other popular menu items. Entertainment is provided by a variety of area musicians.

Great Lakes Cheese Inc. continues building their new facility in Town of Farmersville, (north of Franklinville). There are ongoing efforts by Allegany County IDA, Cuba town and village governments, as well as the Cuba Chamber of Commerce a firm that could utilize the Haskell Road facility when it becomes available. Some 250 people are currently employed at the Cuba facility and it's hoped they will be transferred to the new plant. The company reports that the new plant will see almost 500 workers when is in full operation. There will be limited operations beginning sometime in 2024._

CTK Farms, opened a new location for the making of Maple Syrup and related products each Spring. The business continued their investment in the community by expanding the operation to accommodate making apple cider and in the Fall season selling freshly pressed cider and freshly fried donuts. The business is located on Mew Mexico Road just off Rawson Road. Owners are Clifford Karn, Tim Resch and Kendall Karn.

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES:

Town wide Assessment Role: The board called for a revaluation of the entire township and a firm from Buffalo was hired to do the total "reval" that created controversy amongst many property owners especially at Cuba Lake. The equalization rate had dropped to a record low of 50% for homes at the lake, and 69% for village homes,.

Covid Pandemic was subsiding at the beginning of 2023 but as the end of the year drew near there was a slight uptick in the number of Covid cases. Caution is still urged by the medical professionals.

The Chamberlain Park Playground Project, was completed in late summer, creating a new safe environment for our children by replacing antiquated swings, slides etc. Signage acknowledging donors etc. is to be completed in the Spring of 2024.

Cuba's 18th Annual Garlic Festival – again saw record crowds and 158 vendors and music on the grounds of Empire City Farms (the block barn) on Sept. 16 and 17.

Exhibits: I continue to assist with the operation of the Cuba Historical Society museum on Genesee Street and promotion of seasonal materials for exhibit. During the school year I continue to encourage Cuba Rushford Central School for the possible re-organization of a local Yorker Club, also

have made myself available to history teachers and other faculty to provide research materials and possible speaking engagements and have supplied some information on resource materials.

Historical Research: The number of inquiries coming to the Town/Village Historian continues to grow. Many people are doing genealogical research and there is a growing number of questions coming in regarding to history of Cuba and area in general. I continue to do research in both Town and Village Records (primarily in minute books) for information on sewer and water systems in the village as well as other significant items that could be of historic interest relative to current village and town projects etc.

I continue to maintain a file of items of interest that have been published in the area newspapers as well as a file of obituaries of current and former Cuba residents. A complete record of obituaries may also be found at the Cuba Historical Society Museum.

Respectfully submitted January 15, 2024:

David H. Crowley, Historian