

The Story of Mayfield

ERIC CLOSE, TOWN AND VILLAGE HISTORIAN

SECOND ISSUE - VERNAL RETROSPECTIVE - APRIL THROUGH JUNE 2024



LATE SPRING AT EASTLAND DAIRY

CIRCA 1971

Apparently, a picture is worth about a thousand words or so. But sometimes it doesn't even take one word to invoke the feeling of nostalgia. An image, smell, taste, or sound can teleport us directly into our memories. And just for one fleeting moment, we can feel young again. So, what are our memories worth? A thousand words? A million bucks?

No and No. They are *priceless*.

Spring came in like winter and quickly turned to summer. The biggest snow storms of the year happened consecutively in the first week of April. Contrarily, we made it the entire month of May without a single frost, which turned out pretty favorably for any farmers and gardeners who took the risk to plant early.

Until 1752, March 25th was the first day of the year. This was a time when people lived in rhythm with the world around them. The new calendar year started just as life had started to rebirth out of the frozen, barren winter. **Spring is the season of life, rebirth and a new chance to capitalize on endless opportunity.**

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Former Mayfield Historian Sandy Town has done a great amount to preserve Mayfield's history. I would like to take the time and ink to thank her for her persistent efforts over the last several years—of which I must say, has made my job incredibly easy. Leading up to her retirement, Sandy has digitized nearly the entirety of the Town's archives, making it all searchable on my computer. This has made my research and writing incredibly easier, and without her work, mine would truly be nothing. So, thank YOU!

- Eric Close



Sandy Town,
Retired Mayfield Historian

MAYFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWS IN BRIEF:

The Mayfield Historical Society at the Rice Homestead is now open for the summer on Wednesdays and Saturdays 12 – 4. We invite you to enjoy a free tour, stepping back in time inside the 1810 Federal style home of Oliver Rice who, as a young teenager, served as a courier during the Revolutionary War delivering messages for the American Patriots and he even delivered a message to George Washington! Oliver was one of the first settlers in the Riceville area. He became a prominent business man, Riceville's first post master, and an organizer of the Riceville Masonic Lodge and Riceville School. The theme in the Mayfield History Room this year is "School Days". Take a relaxing stroll through Oliver's Nature Trail and enjoy the Heritage Gardens in bloom.

Upcoming summer events are:

Thursday, July 18th - Annual Ice Cream Social and Concert

with music by Dan Lynaugh 6-8 pm at The Rice Homestead. Rain venue is the Mayfield Presbyterian Church.

Monday, August 19th - Presentation by the Amsterdam DAR

at the Mayfield Presbyterian Church. 6:30 pm.

For school or other group tours, please call

Carol Johnston at 518-332-0538 or Bob Suits at 518-857-2820

Come take a step back in time at The Rice Homestead! We look forward to seeing you!

"Like" us at

www.facebook.com/ricehomestead!

Bob Suits

President,

Mayfield Historical Society

Rice Homestead

328 Riceville Rd

Mayfield, NY 12078



Rice Homestead, April 1936

Would you like to be interviewed for a town history project?

As your historian, it is an important part of my job to not only share our local history, but to preserve the present. Capture details about your life in Mayfield to be stored in our historical archives. Preserve a piece of yourself for generations to come!

Generations of our ancestors are forgotten. Their pictures have nothing written on the back. Their stories, memories and likeness have all faded with time, and all that remains is a gravestone. Some gravestones are faded beyond legibility—but some of our ancestors don't even have a marked gravesite. There are many abandoned, unmarked graveyards in the mountains here in town, and everyone buried there is forgotten. Don't let yourself be forgotten.

I will be placing forms in the entryway of town hall. The form is one page, double sided, and titled "FACES OF MAYFIELD."

For more information, send an email to historian@mayfieldny.org or get ahold of me, Eric Close, through Facebook, or call (518) 774-0703



Garry Barney shows an abandoned graveyard in Tomantown. Some graves there were accidentally excavated during the 1930s and reinterred elsewhere.

PHOTO CREDIT TO SANDY TOWN

EDITOR'S MESSAGE



ERIC CLOSE
MAYFIELD TOWN HISTORIAN

I WISH I HAD ENOUGH TIME IN MY SCHEDULE TO GET OUT AND VISIT WITH PEOPLE, TALK, AND RESEARCH OUR LOCAL HISTORY. AS WE ROLL AHEAD FULL-STEAM INTO SUMMER, MY TIME AND EFFORTS IN OUR LOCAL HISTORY ARE HEAVILY CONSTRAINED BY THE ENDLESS WORK THAT IS TO BE DONE ON THE FARM. WE HAVE JUST COME OUT OF PLANTING SEASON, AND AS LONG AS THE SUNSHINE AND RAIN DO THEIR DANCE, TALL SUMMER THE CROPS WILL KEEP ME BUSY ALL LONG. I THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR PATIENCE AND I WILL BE CATCHING UP ON ANY QUERIES WHEN I GET THE CHANCE. *EXCELSIOR!*

P.S. IF YOU ARE NOT ON FACEBOOK, YOU CAN FIND SOME OF MY WORK PUBLISHED ON THE MAYFIELD TOWN WEBSITE.



Mayfield's History Tour SPRING 2024

Come along for a quick tour of some of Mayfield's history. For the spring of 2024, the waters of the Sacandaga Reservoir have been let out to reveal the former hamlet of Munsonville, which was drowned in 1930. Rising above the former hamlet stands Beacon Island, which is on its way to rejoining its long-lost neighbors in Munsonville. We headed up toward Jackson Summit to visit the Brower Family Farm, their fresh produce, and two hundred and twenty-four years of agricultural history.

Comfortably nestled on a foothill at the southern gateway to the Adirondack Mountains lies one of Mayfield's long-standing treasures -- rich in fertile land, fresh-quality produce, and family history. This is the Brower Family Farm, est. 1867.

If you drive north on NY-30 out of the Mayfield Village, you will see the sign guiding you up the Jackson Summit Road right to their dooryard. You'll be greeted by the charming homestead, barns, produce stand and the high-tunnel greenhouses. Their fields sprawl out across the nearby rural roads; and as spring turns to summer, you will find some twenty-odd acres of their signature crop--sweet corn. Aside from their famous corn, which is sought after even in the far reaches of Florida, you can find a variety of homegrown vegetables as well as apples, peaches, blueberries, and maple syrup.

The fifth and sixth generation of this family farm are continuing to uphold over a century and a half of agricultural traditions here. Brothers Dan and Matt Brower, Matt's wife Beth, along with their nieces Jessie and Lindsey, organized the Brower Family Farm, LLC in 2017. Together, they carry forth the



BROWER FAMILY'S BARN, c.1954

Local Business Spotlight



torch passed on by the oldest brother, Mike, when he retired from his fresh produce business on the farm that year.

The family and farm have operated in many different forms, yielded success, and faced times of great difficulty. Regardless, the family is still active in agriculture, which in this time and place is rare.

There is a very long history on the Brower farm. It has been in their family since Abram and Louisa Brower purchased the 50-acre lot from William and Phebe Cozzens on March 25, 1867. But the history goes well beyond that.

The farm was first settled in the spring of 1800 by William Cozzens' parents, John and Lydia, along with her brother Edward Kinnicut. Their family originally came from Rhode Island, having briefly settled at Pittstown, NY shortly prior to the turn of that century. They jointly purchased the one-hundred-acre lot no 61 of the Mayfield Patent. They came to this frontier and cleared a trail through the virgin forest for their oxen to haul their supplies in to settle their land--as this was before Jackson Summit and the road to it existed. The lot was divided nearly in half by a small tributary of Roberts Creek, and Mr. Kinnicut settled the 50 acres below it, and Mr. and Mrs. Cozzens settled the upper 50 acres.

Although the land remained a wilderness until 1800, it has a paper trail that takes it back to before the Revolutionary War. It was acquired originally by John Collins, who owned several lots in the Mayfield

Patent. Although the original deed to this particular lot is not yet found, several adjacent lots were acquired by Mr. Collins as early as 1773. He appeared along with several other colonial landowners before Sir John Johnson at Johnson Hall to pay the mortgage in May of 1774.

For the first 150 years of the farm's life, its operations remained relatively unchanged. It was a homestead or sustenance farm. All labor was done by hand and failing in your work meant starvation. Mr. Kinnicut opened a blacksmith shop on his lot in 1801, and most of the remnants of that farm are now gone. The Cozzens family also operated a wagon shop among other small businesses. On this farm, there were usually not more than five or six cows, a half dozen pigs, and roughly three dozen chickens. After Abram and Louisa Brower bought the farm in 1867, operations remained basically the same through the end of the second world war, but the family endured many great changes and survived numerous hardships.

Selah Brower was born, raised and lived his entire life on the family's farm. The farm was his life, his occupation, business, and the sustenance for his family—and it was furthermore something he excelled at. Carrying on with farm work, Selah became interested in harvesting honey and keeping bees. Over the course of his exploits and experimentation, Mr. Brower invented and filed a patent on an artificial beehive. Unfortunately, I haven't found any additional information on the patent or any related material.

On Tuesday, September 17, 1895, the Brower family home broke out in fire and subsequently burned to the ground. The fire, which started from the chimney engulfed the house, a pair of sheds and a wagon house. The Dennie Hollow fireman managed to save only some furniture and clothing belonging to Selah and his family. Luckily, they hadn't put the potatoes and apples away in the basement yet, so they managed to survive the winter and rebuild.

Abram and Louisa Brower sold the farm to their son Selah in November of 1898. Selah was 30 years old, married, with a young child and full of ambition. He was involved in agricultural endeavors all over this area, and while delivering a load of manure to a barn on Second Avenue in Gloversville on October 10, 1901, Selah was severely injured. The horse pulling the wagon drove Selah's head into a beam, fracturing his spine. Mr. Brower was brought to

Nathan Littauer Hospital and put under the care of Dr. Hagadorn. He was paralyzed and after seventeen days of a deteriorating condition, Selah Brower succumbed to his injuries at the age of 33.



BROWER FAMILY HOMESTEAD c.1932

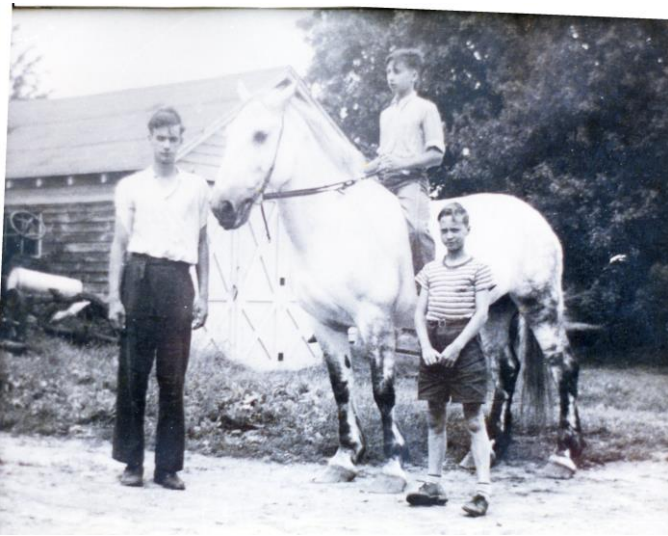
The widowed Mrs. Della Brower, then pregnant with Selah's son, not only had to bury her husband, but fight to raise a young family and keep the farm. Times were very tough for many years as the children grew up and took on responsibilities. The young son who was born in the spring of 1902 was named Vernon Selah Brower. The boy grew up with deep red hair, which led him to be known as "Brick."



VERNON "BRICK" and HELEN BROWER

Brick Brower married Miss Helen Winnie of Munsonville in November of 1921, the following year, aged 20 and 17 respectively, Brick and Helen bought the farm. They continued homesteading as they grew gardens, raised beef, pork, poultry and milked cows. They churned butter and brought the excess to the village for cash. Brick also worked as a

foreman for Park Hallenbeck at the Mayfield Glove Company. Helen took care of the home, children, animals, and sewed gloves at home for wages.



TOP: PRESTON, WINSTON AND CARLTON BROWER

MIDDLE: HELEN AND FLOSSY, HER FAVORITE COW

BOTTOM: VERNON "BRICK" PICKING CORN

Things on the farm began to change as the three sons of Brick and Helen grew up and went out into the world.

Preston Brower, the oldest son of Brick and Helen served honorably with the Army Air Corps during the Second World War; and thankfully came home. Through the G.I. Bill, he was afforded the privilege to go to college and enrolled at Cornell University. He graduated from there in 1950, bringing his knowledge home and began to transition the farm into a dairy business. The operation took off after the youngest son, Carlton "Sprout" returned home from the Korean War and took over the reins from his older brother. By the end of the 1950s. "Vernon Brower & Son" had a herd of 20 cows and was consistently leading in various production categories among Fulton County dairy farms. For the farm's achievements in 1960, Brick was honored with the award of Fulton County's Dairy Farmer of the Year.

The Brower family's dairy business was booming, and since Carlton and his wife Marion had eleven children, they basically created their own workforce. After nearly thirty years in dairy, Carlton retired, and his oldest son Mike took over the business in 1979. Mike rented a farm on NY-29 in the town of Johnstown and moved the dairy herd there. They continued to raise calves, heifers and undertake other homesteading operations back on the home farm. They got out of the Dairy business and sold the cows in the Spring of 1984, as dairy prices began to sour. Mr. Mike Brower then established a fresh produce business that he operated until his retirement in 2017. Mike made a considerable impression on this area with his sweet corn and numerous other farm-fresh products.

Maple Syrup is a long-standing Brower family tradition that dates to day one. The 1880 Ag Schedule reports that Abram Brower made three gallons of maple molasses in 1879. To this day, the Brower farm has a thriving sugar bush, which is the result of never cutting their maples during firewood season. The maple syrup operation picked up considerably in the early 1990s, but with the construction of a new sugar house in 2019, The Brower Family Farm has been working to increase their maple syrup production and has been successful in that venture.

In this day and age, the Brower Family Farm, LLC, carries a long legacy forth into the future. This



hallowed family tradition of working the land, raising animals and a family span six generations and beyond. The fertile land has been cultivated there summer after summer for the last two hundred and twenty-four years, and they are putting in the necessary work to continue for many, many more.

Brower Family Farm

249 JACKSON SUMMIT RD E.,
MAYFIELD, NY 12117

Open 7 days a week, 10am – 6pm

<https://www.facebook.com/browerfamilyfarm>



A Ghost of the Past

MUNSONVILLE



If you haven't been around Mayfield for very long, you may not have heard of Munsonville. Unless you are on intimate terms with our town, our people and our history, then it is understandable if you couldn't point it out on a map. There are no signs for it on the highway, nor any arrows leading you there. The only sign for this place is a Historical Marker near the end of Vandenburg Point Road that described **what once was**—Munsonville: An early farming settlement that was flooded by the Sacandaga Reservoir in 1930.

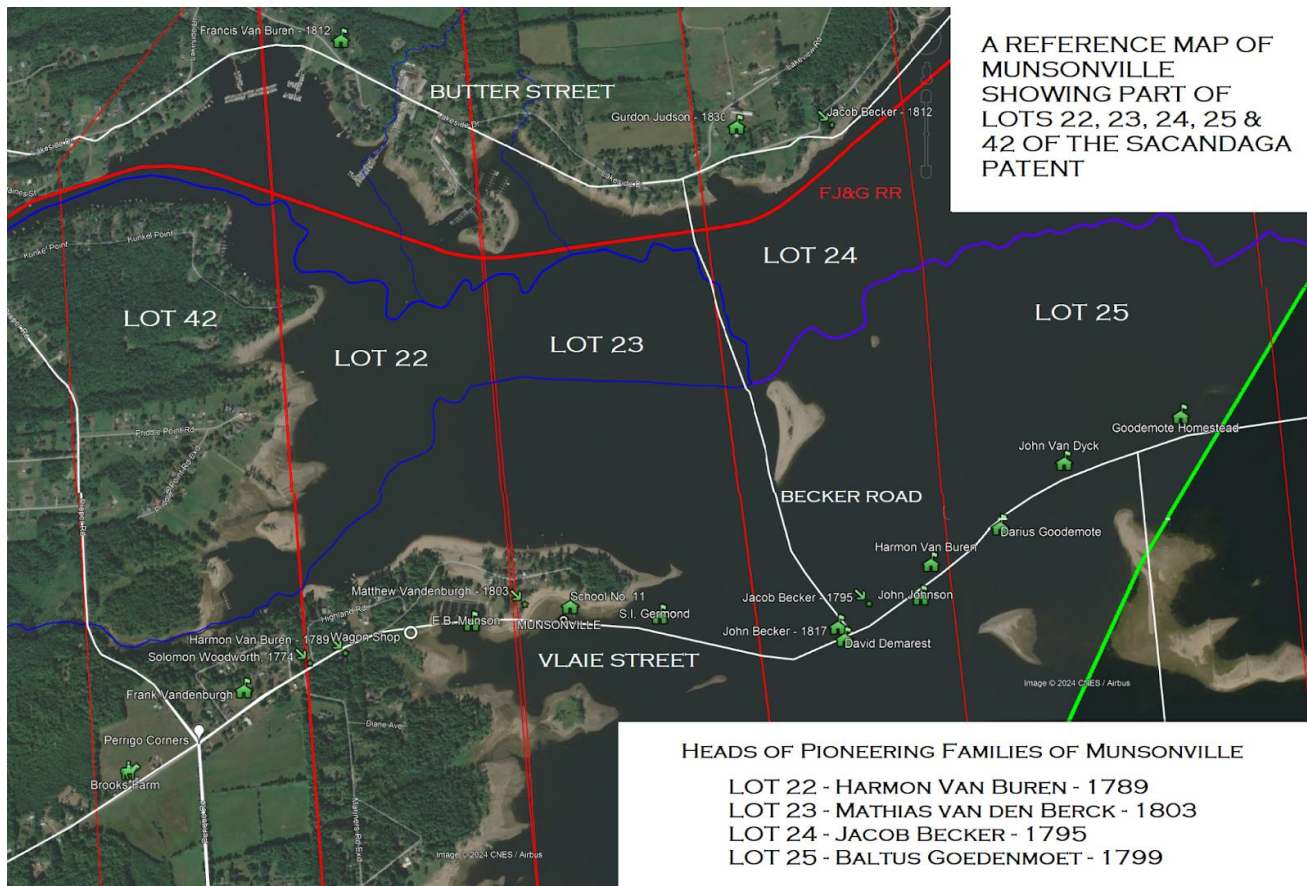
Don't be misled by the "ville" in Munsonville. There were more cows in this place than people, by a significant margin. Generally speaking, Munsonville was a series of prosperous farms along the road known as "Vlaie Street." It was situated on fertile, tillable ground just to the southwest of the Sacandaga

Valley's great Vlaie; and all activity here was pretty much limited to the confines of the Mayfield and Kenneyto Creeks which meandered to a confluence in the center of the valley's widest point. All that remains of Munsonville today is the sandy peninsula that juts out into the Great Sacandaga Lake; and the remnants of Vlaie Street is now called Vandenburg Point Road.

The first inhabitants of this area were the Turtle Clan of the Mohawk Nation. They hunted and fished the great Vlaie to the north and farmed the land there in the summers. Their people were greatly decimated by the Algonquin Warriors and French soldiers during the wars of the 1750s and 60s. Sir William Johnson came through this place in the 1760s, establishing summer camps in the valley, and encouraged the settlement of this bountiful and opportune wilderness.

In or shortly before 1774, this area was settled by Solomon Woodworth, and over the next several years, the fate of this area fell into his hands. Woodworth settled on lands that later became the farms of Jefferson Brooks and Benjamin Vandenburg. Today, some of this land is the open fields at the intersections of Vandenburg Point Rd, Proper and Perique roads. Other portions of the lands are now either permanent homes, summer camps, or beneath the waters of the reservoir.

Captain Solomon Woodworth is remembered around here as a hero of the American Revolution. He defended the valley and helped his fellow patriots find safety during the British raid of 1778. When General Clinton commissioned the construction of the *Sacandaga Blockhouse* after the Dunham Raid, Solomon helped build and defend it. He remained there with his wife after the post was officially abandoned, fending off raiding parties. Solomon eventually died in a battle out by Herkimer near the end of the War. Back in the Sacandaga Valley, with the numerous raids and skirmishes, most of the area settlements were burned and abandoned.



The area of Munsonville was settled over a period of about 60 years, spanning roughly three generations of the same families. The first wave of settlers after the Revolution came in the late 1780s, acquiring 500-acre tracts of land. They settled along the old Indian trail that connected the Sacandaga Valley to the Mohawk River. The trail was named on early deeds as "*Sacondaga Road*," and eventually became known as Vlaie Street. In 1789, brothers and veterans of the Revolution, Harmon and Francis Van Buren settled on Lot 22 of the Sacandaga Patent. Peter Snyder and his family settled on Lot 24 in about 1792, selling it three years later to Revolutionary veteran Jacob Becker and his large family. The Snyders subsequently scattered about the valley. Baltus Goodemote and his family settled lot 25 around 1799 or 1800. Finally, the family of Matthew and Mary van den Berck (Vandenburgh) settled on Lot 23 in 1803. The settlers cleared the land, felling the timber to build log cabins, barns, and harvest firewood. They plowed the cleared land and picked the stones, piling the first stone walls--some of which can still be seen today. They planted their crops and from these fields came the first harvests and a chance of survival.

As the second generation came of age, they married their neighbors, and the great lots were parceled off or willed to them by their pioneering parents. Francis H. Van Buren inherited the remnants of his father Harmon's estate, and cleared his farm to the north, across the Mayfield Creek. He built the brick house there in 1812, which still stands today. Francis also inherited one of his father's slaves, a boy named Cap. There were four slaves owned by the Van Buren Family--the most in town. They were all freed with the New York State emancipation of 1827. It is alleged that one of the slaves was Simon Van Dusen, who was living next door to his former enslavers into the 1850s.

Also around 1812, Jacob Becker sold land to one of his sons, who built a farm on the hillside on the north end of lot 24. Not long after, a trail connected these two farms with School Street and the Jackson homestead. This road became known as Butter Street, today known as Lakeside Drive. Today, the Van Buren's brick house is at 283 Lakeside Dr., and Becker's place is underwater at the end of the road, past Close's farm.

In about 1816, a Dutch Reformed church was built at the four corners where the Mayfield-Broadalbin Road intersected Vlaie Street. The church was one of three Dutch Reformed churches in town. One such church was at the head of the Union Rural Cemetery in Mayfield and the other at Vail's Mills. The latter two churches merged and the church at Munsonville remained active until at least 1870 or so.

By the time the third generation came of age, the Vandenburg, Van Buren, Becker, Snyder and Goodemote families had all intermarried and were related. Fortunately, during this time, many people came into this area and married into these families.



E. B. "Beecher" Munson came to Mayfield from Vermont in about 1840. He married Mary Vandenburg, the daughter of Peter and Edith Vandenburg, in 1846. They settled on the lot adjacent west of the Vandenburg Homestead. Mr. Munson was a blacksmith by trade and set up his business there. He also opened a wagon and sleigh shop where both were manufactured and repaired. He employed several local people to work in his shops, which brought more desire to settle there. The stage route between Gloversville and Batchellerville came through on Vlaie Street, and so Mr. Munson established a post office there, operating from his home. Thus, "Munsonville" was born.

There was mail delivered to Munsonville every other day until the Gloversville and Northville Railroad came through in 1875 and the stage route and post office became defunct. Mail was subsequently delivered via rail to Shawville, and from there on the new stage road to Broadalbin via Woods Hollow. About this time, Warren Perrigo came to Mayfield, and he married Mary Esther Vandenburg, daughter of Matthew and Harriet Vandenburg, and niece of Mary and Beecher Munson. Mr. and Mrs. Perrigo built a store and house on the north corner of the intersection of the Mayfield-Broadalbin stage road and Vlaie Street. Mr. Munson convinced his new nephew, Mr. Perrigo to establish the new post office at his store to have convenient access for the people of Munsonville. This place became known as "Perrigo Corners." Perrigo's store operated until about 1929 or 1930, but the building remains standing.

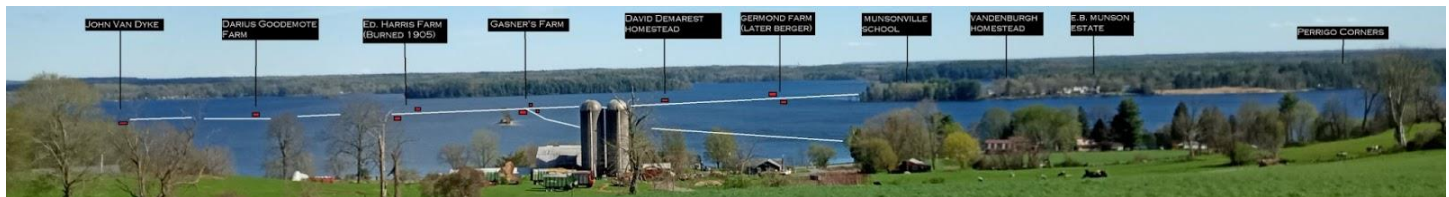
Mayfield School District No. 11 operated out of a one room schoolhouse in Munsonville. This school was just east of the Vandenburg Homestead on the uphill (north) side of the road. Today, this place is usually under water, but in a year the lake levels drop enough in the fall, one can climb the steps to the old Munsonville school house once again.

By now, we've all heard the story of the Sacandaga Reservoir and how it came to be. The residents of Munsonville had to pack their bags and vacate their homes and start anew elsewhere. For many years, the Vandenburgs had one of the largest and most prosperous farms in town. Maurice Vandenburg, a great-great

grandson of Matthew and Mary van den Berck, left the old family homestead and moved to a new farm with his family outside of Johnstown in 1928. The house and barns were burned to the ground. His cousin, Frank, stayed "high and dry," and that farm still stands on Vandenburg Point Rd. George and Emma Gasner left their farm and relocated off Route 29 in Broadalbin. Emma had inherited the old farm, as her maiden name was Van Buren. She also was a descendant of Jacob Becker, and it was Becker's farm on which she and her husband resided. All that remains of their farm today is Beacon Island. Adjoining Gasner's farm across the Mayfield Creek was the farm of Jack Close, and the majority of his farm was on high ground, so there he remained. Jack's grandparents, William and Nancy Van Nostrand acquired this farm from Barent Becker in 1867. Nearly all Munsonville can be viewed today from the hill on this farm.



Vandenburg Homestead, Munsonville



Munsonville and its landmarks, viewed from Close's farm.

After the damming of the valley in 1930, the area began to see new life. In the mid-1930s, much of the lakeside land on Vandenburg Point was developed. Lots were subdivided and dozens upon dozens of camps and summer homes were built. The lands which once were roamed by cows, sheep and farmers are now concealed by the wake of a boat on a pleasant summer cruise...or dare I say: thick ice, shanties, and snowmobiles.



The center of Munsonville's culture today is Driftwood Park. The bar is bounded on one side by Vandenburg Beach and on the other by the Driftwood Marina. You can find boaters, snowmobilers, motorcyclists, and people from all walks of life coming to enjoy the scenic beauty, friendships, and anything else this place has to offer today. ***So, if you find yourself swimming in the bay at Munsonville this summer, and you feel something in the murky water brush against the bottom of your feet-rest assured. It is just the spirit of one of the Vandenburg's curious cows welcoming you to her pasture.***

Vandenburg Point at Munsonville, circa 1958

LIVING HISTORY

BEACON ISLAND

Every place has its own distinct skyline to remember. New York City has its skyscrapers, Denver has the Rocky Mountains, and those of who frequent the Great Sacandaga Lake have the great and famous tree line on Beacon Island. In recent years, the status of Beacon Island has been a hot piece of local controversy as over the last four decades the island has withered away nearly into oblivion.

On Monday, May 27th, a storm hammered the Sacandaga, resulting in only three or four trees to remain standing on Beacon Island. Over the last 20 years, the island bore resemblance to a fine-tooth comb losing a few of its teeth each year to the

forces of erosion. A big storm late in the summer of 2021 cleared several trees that for the first time put a wide gap in the tree line. The view was akin to the kid who lost their two front teeth.

The island got its name from a light beacon installed there not long after the creation of the reservoir in 1930. The island has also been informally referred to as the "Yacht Club Island," as the Mayfield Yacht Club has held the access permit on the land since the implementation of the HRRD permitting system in about 1940. The Mayfield Yacht Club, first organized on May 8, 1930, began using the island during the first summer on the Reservoir as a meeting place for picnics and boat cruises. With the permit, the yacht club was granted exclusive rights to use the island and had to maintain and keep the grounds there clean.



Beacon Island, c.1975. Courtesy of Tom Aulita



Beacon Island, following a storm on May 27, 2024. Courtesy of Rich Giardino

Erosion of the island quickly became an issue, and as early as 1954, plans were discussed and laid out to manage the problem. However, the island was doomed from the start by geology, geography, and geometry. The island is made of sandy soil and is therefore very susceptible to both water and wind erosion. The island, with its long side being perpendicular to the prevailing winds leaves it to constantly be



Blueprints (Survey) of the future Beacon Island, 1927. Courtesy of HRBRD

BELOW: 1940s, Courtesy of Jim Botch



bombarded by waves. And in the last 20 years, with the agreement in place to keep the water level high for the entirety of the boating season, the erosion has occurred at a faster rate.

Also contributing to the erosion have been a great number of trucks, snowmobiles and ATVs that have climbed the banks during winters over the last half century, and just maybe also a 1973 Ford LTD that found its way parked on top of the bank some fifty years ago. *But I don't know nothin' 'bout that.*

It will not be long until the island will lose the remaining few trees and be reclaimed by the lost Sacandaga valley from whence she came. Enjoy it while it is still here and enjoy the memories you have there. Someday, Beacon Island will just be history, and only history.



ABOVE: 2006, Courtesy of Bev Bracchi Mosher

BELOW: 2023, Courtesy of Michelle VanValkenburg



LOCAL NEWS IN BRIEF

I NEED HELP!

Correspondents are sought for the missing communities (in red.) If you would like to contribute, send an email, or contact the editor on Facebook. The hope is to convey local news regarding nature, wildlife, public infrastructure, businesses, and public events. Discretion with respect to individual privacy advised. Help keep track of our expanding and evolving community by capturing today's events for tomorrow's curiosity.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. <u>TOMANTOWN</u> | 12. <u>SHAWVILLE</u> |
| 2. <u>TYRRELL HILL</u> | 13. <u>MUNSONVILLE</u> |
| 3. <u>MOUNTAIN ROAD</u> | 14. <u>RED BUNCH</u> |
| 4. <u>CRANBERRY CREEK</u> | 15. <u>HIGHWAY 349</u> |
| 5. <u>DENNIE HOLLOW</u> | 16. <u>TURKEY FARM ROAD</u> |
| 6. <u>JACKSON SUMMIT</u> | 17. <u>WOOD'S HOLLOW</u> |
| 7. <u>LAKE SIDE DRIVE</u> | 18. <u>BROADALBIN</u> |
| 8. <u>MAYFIELD VILLAGE</u> | 19. <u>VAIL'S MILLS</u> |
| 9. <u>RICEVILLE</u> | 20. <u>BLACK STREET</u> |
| 10. <u>BROADALBIN JUNCTION</u> | 21. <u>HIGHWAY 29</u> |
| 11. <u>ANTHONYVILLE</u> | 22. <u>PROGRESS</u> |

TOWN OF MAYFIELD



DENNIE HOLLOW has enjoyed a great spring and early summer season. I'm always amazed at how soon the growth starts on our lawn and fields with just a little sun and rain after winter has stopped. We did get 8 " of heavy snow on April 4th but we all knew that was farmers fertilizer and then it was probably the last hurrah of winter. Two weeks later I was outside fertilizing my perennial flowers and trees. You cannot figure out the great Northeast Mother Nature. Just go with the flow. I'm always happy seeing the neighbors as well as us get outside and start working on our lawn, dragging out summer furniture, washing windows and screens in the hopes that will actually be using them soon! And we did have that opportunity. My husband and I have lived here all our lives, and we definitely see a huge change in our weather conditions. The amount of strong wind and heavy rain is phenomenal. I still try to have a small vegetable garden and wonder how my grandparents who own this land since 1906 ever managed to plant gardens and feed themselves and their children. Conditions are different since we bought my parents' house 30 years ago. I just love it here in Dennie Hollow where I grew up and wanted my children to have the same experiences that I did. That brings me to a long-standing relationship between my parents and Edward and Thelma Dutcher Van Nostrand, their back door neighbors, and good friends. As a child, I remember the first warmth and friendship they had together. They have passed on as have my parents, but I remained a friend and trusting neighbor with Neil Van Nostrand Sr. Who passed suddenly on May 6th, 2024. What a shock wave went through this little area, not to mention Mayfield, Northville and Edinburgh and other surrounding areas. When you have a generational connection and you can continue it, that's not only honorable but special. If families continue to bond, it makes a strong, safe, nurturing community for us and our children. This is so rare nowadays.

In the late 1700's after the Revolutionary War, landowners used the rocks they encountered while clearing the land and positioned them to mark off their borders. The original rock wall that delineated the Dennis Dennie farmland is the old cold cellar of my parent's house tiny foundation. You can't stand up straight in it. But I can store my home-grown potatoes in it all fall and winter...cold and dark and spooky when I was a kid. Rock walls continued for many years and are still visible in many areas of our Town.

Eventually barbed wire became a new way to mark one's land and keep your farm animals on your property. It also lets your neighbors know the point of ownership. The term "Fences make good neighbors" kept not only their animals but themselves from encroaching on a neighbor's land. I still have barbed wire fencing on my parent's land which was purchased from my grandparents. This land was their grazing and farming land. Well over a hundred years later, I still see remains of that barbed wire that has grown into large trees which previously were saplings when the fence was put up. It may have been dragged down over so many, many years, but you can still pull it up from where it has lowered the ground and there it is.

Carol Jablonski

LAKESIDE DRIVE

Greetings from Lakeside Drive! This Drive rocks! Since mid-May campers and visitors have been enjoying the weather and lake. We have walkers, bicyclists, and runners daily taking advantage of the lakeside road. May 4th brought heavy winds and rain, and Beacon Island has lost more trees. It's an hourglass story: Time is running out for Beacon Island. It will be sad to see it go as it was once very beautiful. But on to other news: It was an exciting Saturday on June 15th as the famous Poker Run to raise money for Mountain Valley Hospice took place on the lake. Cigar boats and other fast motorboats participated, all beginning at Lanzi's on the Lake and then speeding off to their first stop at Wally's on Vandenburg Point. About 40 to 45 cigar boats whizzed alongside the shore of Lakeside Drive heading to Wally's and then back out to their next stop near Broadalbin. Such excitement! Until next time...enjoy the summer!

Carol Johnston



As Spring arrives here in our quaint little town of Mayfield...I'm reminded of all those days of walking around our beautiful little lake...Nestled amongst the trees...Tall grasses and wildflowers dot the landscape...and the burgeoning leaves give promise of abundant shade...The croaking of bullfrogs and the peeps of baby ducks renew our faith...that after winter...the Earth is reborn...And please remember...The duck crossing sign...In front of Walt Hertik's house on School Street...May he always be remembered as a friend to us all..

♥ ~Terrie Zierak, Mayfield, N.Y.

The Lost Sacandaga Valley

FOR CENTURIES, THE PEACEFUL SACANDAGA VALLEY WAS A BOUNTIFUL SEASONAL HUNTING AND FISHING SANCTUARY INHABITED BY THE MOHAWK PEOPLE. SIR WILLIAM JOHNSON ESTABLISHED THE FIRST EUROPEAN SETTLEMENTS HERE IN THE EARLY 1760S, WHICH BROUGHT FORTH THE FIRST FARMS AND INDUSTRY. DURING THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR, MUCH OF THIS VALLEY WAS RAIDED AND BURNED BY SIR JOHN JOHNSON AND HIS BRITISH LOYALIST AND MOHAWK FORCES.

AFTER THE REVOLUTION, THE VALLEY HEALED ITS WOUNDS AS SEVERAL COMMUNITIES BEGAN TO DEVELOP. THERE WAS PLENTY OF FERTILE LAND, VAST FORESTS AND SIGNIFICANT WATER POWER IN SEVERAL CREEKS AND THE SACANDAGA RIVER THAT LED THE FARMING, TANNING AND LUMBERING INDUSTRIES TO FLOURISH. THE GLOVERSVILLE AND NORTHVILLE RAILROAD (BOUGHT OUT BY THE FJ&G R.R.) WAS BUILT IN 1875, WHICH ALSO BROUGHT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SACANDAGA PARK — "THE CONEY ISLAND OF THE NORTH." AS THE LEATHER INDUSTRY BOOMED, THIS PLACE BECAME A VERY POPULAR PLAYGROUND, EASILY ACCESSIBLE BY RAIL FROM PEOPLE FAR AND WIDE. THE TURN OF THE 20TH CENTURY BROUGHT MANY CHANGES.

TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES CREATED A LIFESTYLE SHIFT. PEOPLE MOVED FROM RURAL COMMUNITIES TO WORK IN CITIES, FARMING AND LUMBERING BEGAN TO DECLINE AS THE AGE OF THE AUTOMOBILE BEGAN.

AS EARLY AS THE 1860S, THE IDEA OF DAMMING THE SACANDAGA RIVER WAS DISCUSSED. IT WASN'T UNTIL THE CATASTROPHIC FLOODS OF THE HUDSON RIVER IN 1913 THAT DISCUSSION TURNED TO LEGISLATION. IN 1922, THE HUDSON RIVER REGULATING DISTRICT WAS ESTABLISHED BY THE STATE OF NEW YORK. BY AUTHORITY OF EMINENT DOMAIN, THE REGULATING DISTRICT ANNOUNCED THE CREATION OF THE SACANDAGA RESERVOIR IN THE SUMMER OF 1924. AN EARTHEN DAM WAS TO BE BUILT AT CONKLINGVILLE AS A MEANS OF REGULATING THE FLOW OF THE HUDSON RIVER. THE ENTIRE VALLEY HAD TO BE CLEARED OF ALL LIFE—EVERY HOME, BARN, TREE, AND FENCEPOST.

OVER 3,000 PEOPLE WERE DISPLACED AS OVER 26,000 ACRES (40 SQUARE MILES) OF PRIVATE LAND WERE ACQUIRED BY THE STATE OF NEW YORK. 3,872 GRAVES WERE REMOVED FROM 24 CEMETERIES AND REBURIED ON HIGH GROUND. NEARLY 50 MILES OF NEW ROADS AND 10 BRIDGES WERE BUILT. SOME RESIDENTS TRIED TO REMAIN IN THEIR HOMES DESPITE EVICTION NOTICES. HOMES AND BARNES WERE EITHER MOVED OR BURNED TO THE GROUND. THE 12 MILLION DOLLAR PROJECT WRAPPED UP AS THE GATES OF THE CONKLINGVILLE DAM WERE CLOSED ON MARCH 27, 1930. HOWEVER, OVER THE NEXT SEVERAL YEARS, WORK CONTINUED ON REMOVING WHAT WAS LEFT BEHIND AS THE WATERS BEGAN TO RISE...

LEST WE FORGET THE PEOPLE AND PLACES OF THE LOST SACANDAGA VALLEY

COMMUNITIES LOST TO THE SACANDAGA RESERVOIR, 1930

CONKLINGVILLE — COMPLETELY LOST	BENEDICT — MOSTLY LOST	CAREY'S CORNERS — PARTIALLY LOST
DAY — MOSTLY LOST	NORTH BROADALBIN — PARTIALLY LOST	CRANBERRY CREEK — MOSTLY LOST
WEST DAY (BANTWILLE) — COMPLETELY LOST	WOOL'S HOLLOW (CLOREVELLE) — MOSTLY LOST	OSBORNE'S BRIDGE — COMPLETELY LOST
EDINBURG — PARTIALLY LOST	MUNSONVILLE — MOSTLY LOST	SACANDAGA PARK — HALF LOST
BATCHELLERVILLE — HALF LOST	SHAWVILLE — MOSTLY LOST	NORTHVILLE — PARTIALLY LOST
NORTHAMPTON (FISH HOUSE) — HALF LOST	MAYFIELD — MINIMALLY LOST	PARKVILLE — COMPLETELY LOST

THIS MAP IS COMPRISED OF 14 SEPARATE IMAGES WHICH WERE SAVED FROM SCRAP BY FIELD SUPERVISOR DANIEL RIGGS, HUDSON RIVER BLACK RIVER REGULATING DISTRICT. THE IMAGES WERE DIGITALLY STITCHED TOGETHER BY ERIC CLOSE, MAYFIELD TOWN HISTORIAN, APRIL, 2024.

SACANDAGA VALLEY, JUNE 1927

At the meet and greet hosted by the Mayfield Historical Society on April 15th, I presented this map as part of a project I am working on. This is a digital conglomeration of 14 large sheets that I meticulously aligned and stitched together to create a contiguous aerial map of the Sacandaga Valley *as it was*, before any clearing began on building the reservoir. If you would like a copy, Postmark in Gloversville has a digital copy on file, and they will print it for you. The image is 36" x 86" (3 feet by roughly 7 feet), and the print costs about \$18 to have done. Below is an excerpt from the image showing a closeup of Mayfield. Note the red outline is the approximate present shoreline. Here, Mayfield Lake and Mayfield Bay are shown sprawling from the top left to the bottom right, respectively. North is in the top right corner. "Shawville" is at center. "Anthonyville" is at left. The F.J.&G Railroad cuts through the center of the image and runs parallel to Butter Street in the right side of the image. At the bottom right corner is the Mayfield Stone Quarry, now underwater and adjacent to Grandview Marina.

