

TO: MY DESCENDENTS

FROM: RICHARD (Dick) ANDERSON

I originally wrote these articles, to pass on to my grand children, so those who follow, would have some idea of their ancestry. A local paper heard of them and asked if they could use them in their publication, I agreed and they were published over a period of time.

I know little about my family, from my Grandfather on back. I know the first Anderson, was named Ahira, and was born in Norway, arriving in the Candor area in 1810. And settling on the corner of what is now called Anderson Hill and Lord road. He married Mary Andrews and they had ten children, of which eight grew to maturity. Their son Stephen, married Jane Chapman and my grandfather, Frederick, was born to them February 22, 1858. He married Lulu Whitmarsh and they had four boys and three daughters. My dad, Harold,, was the youngest, and born in 1903. The others were Irving, 1891, Ada, 1892. Bertha, 1893, Ella, 1896, Truman, 1897, Martin, 1901

Stephen owned the farm, until recently the home of Tom Cavataio, and lost his life by being gored by a bull. My grandfather Frederick, later lived on the farm now occupied by Owego Contracting. I spent many days, weeks and months working on this farm. Everything was done the hard way back then. There were no tractors, only horses, and hay was harvested loosely, all by man and horse power. Milkiing was done by hand, and milk was shipped to the creamery in Candor daily and in cans. If we wanted to go to town, we would catch the milk truck, run over town while he was unloading, and get back before he loaded the empty cans back on the truck.

My dad married my mother, Laura Middaugh, and they had seven children, of which six grew to maturity. They were Mary, Charles, Richard, Harold, Bernice and LeRoy. A seventh and the first, died within months of her birth from pneumonia, I have been told. Her name was Helen. As of this writing, my brother LeRoy, and myself (Richard) are the only ones left.

I hope these write ups will give you some idea of life back then. It was hard and we were poor, but didn't realize it, because during those depression years, just about everyone was in the same condition. I hope you enjoy them and save them for your grandkids.

RICHARD (Dick) ANDERSON

Sent on 7/8/10
7/15/10

CATATONK IN THE 1930'S & 40'S

By Dick Anderson

817 Words

We have all heard about the 'Good Old Days', but did they exist? I'd like to take you back to my childhood, during the 1930's and 1940's and let you decide.

I was born and raised in Catatonk, a small hamlet, between Candor and Owego, on New York State Route 96. It is a strange sounding name to some, a wide place in the road to others, but to us it was home. Those were the years of the Great Depression, which did not end until World War II began. The big difference on the home front was that during the 30's there was products to buy but no money to spend, on in to the war years when there was money to spend, but little to buy. You might say we were poor in both decades. But for the moment, let's take a look at living conditions in the 1930's and early 40's. The best way to do that is to describe a day in the life of our family.

My folks would arise around 5am each morning, starting a fire in the cook stove, using small pieces of wood and old newspapers. As the fire increased they would add larger pieces of wood until the stove had sufficient heat for cooking. The coffee pot was then filled with water, from a hand pump in the kitchen, placed on the stove to percolate, while a flat metal plate was put on the stove for frying eggs, making pancakes and sometimes bacon, ham or sausage when available. Slices of homemade bread were toasted in the oven.

While this was going on, Mother would shout up the stairs to awaken us. In the winter we would rush down to dress near the wood stove in the living room, as the upstairs was so cold we often wore socks to bed to protect our feet and covered ourselves with blankets and even coats to keep warm. There was no central heat, just the aforementioned wood stove which usually went out at night allowing the whole house to get freezing cold. We burned wood, because it was only \$2.00 per truckload, while coal was an extravagant \$12.00 per ton.

During those early years, after breakfast and chores, we walked to a one room school house, about a mile north of Catatonk, now occupied by the Seventh Day Adventist Church. We had no supervision for this walk, and we did it in both good weather and bad. I will describe this school and it's operations in future columns.

Although we were extremely poor, along with most other people, as kids we didn't realize it, all others were in the same condition. But thinking back I am sure our parents did, as they struggled to keep food on the table and heat in the house.

Laundry day or as we called it Wash Day. was an adventure for Mom. It was usually done on Mondays. For years we did not have a washing machine, and Mother would put a large tub on the cook stove, fill it with water, letting it heat up. She would then put the clothes in along with home made soap and use a tool that, looking back I am sure was a toilet plunger, which she worked up and down on the clothes much like the agitators in today's washing machines. Eventually she did get a washing machine, which was a stand up device with an agitator and wringer rolls on top for removing excess water. Winter and summer they were hung outside on a line to dry. The wringers were somewhat dangerous, and many a woman got her arm or other parts of her body caught in them which could be painful and embarrassing.

Did I mention that we also had no inside plumbing. Out back was a small building, often called an Out House, hot and stinky in the summer, cold and frosty in the winter. Needless to say, you did not sit and read the paper. You did your thing and got out. Every couple of years, we would have to dig a new hole and move the building to it. Crude? Maybe but we knew no difference. Most homes were the same.

Without plumbing. Taking a bath was a somewhat difficult affair. We had no bath tub and no shower. Except for special occasions, baths were usually taken on Saturday nights, in the same tub as the laundry was done. It was placed on the kitchen floor, water was heated on the stove, poured into the tub and according to age, each brother took his turn in the tub. By the time the youngest got his turn, you could probably walk on the water which had gotten cold. Age had it's privileges.

Next: Work and Fun in these days.

MEMORIES OF CATATONK (2)

By Dick Anderson

Sent 7/15/10 Published 7/22/10

As I mentioned in the previous article, life was not exactly easy during the Great Depression years of the 1930's and the war years of the 40's. We didn't realize it at the time, because we knew no difference and we did have many modern conveniences. Modern for the time, but antique in today's society.

Our phones were usually wall mounted and several households were on the same lines. This meant that every time there was an incoming call all members on the party line would hear the ring. Each home had a unique number of rings. It might be one long ring with one short ring, two long rings, two short rings or any combination of the two. Many people would quietly pick up the receiver in their home and listen to the neighbors conversations. This was called 'rubber necking' and caused many a disagreement. To call someone on your own line, there was a crank on the side of the phone box which, when turned, produced rings on the line. Turn it a short ways, produced a short ring. A complete turn of the crank produced a long ring. Wishing to talk to some one not on the line, you pushed a button and turned the crank, which notified the operator. She would come on the line, ask what number was desired and, using a switchboard, would connect the two lines allowing conversation between the parties. It was very easy for her to listen in on the conversation. Switchboards are collectors items today, but were modern technology in those long ago years.

Electricity was installed in most homes but not all. It was very weak in power, usually 30 amps, which was later increased to 60 amps. It was sufficient, as it was mostly used for lights and radio. We had no electric vacuum cleaners, few refrigerators, and fewer if any freezers, no television, no computers, and most of the modern conveniences, common in today's society, were lacking. The one problem was electricity often went off for various unknown reasons, but usually when the sky got dark before a storm.

In place of refrigerators, we had what was called an ice box. It was an insulated cabinet, for storing perishable food. Every few days a delivery man, we called the iceman, would come around and place a block of ice in it. Crude, maybe, but it worked. Actually food storage was a real problem in those years. There were few if any home freezers, and ice boxes had limited capacity. To augment this storage, some meats, such as hams, were hung in a small building called a smoke house, where a wood fire was started, and the smoke would 'cure' the meat to keep it from spoiling. Then it was hung in the cellar until needed. In addition, my dad would fill a crock with some kind of brine, I have no idea what it was made of, and he would put the meat into it where it would remain fresh until needed. Crude? Maybe, but it

was the best we could do, and it worked. In the 40's and 50's, freezer plants came into existence. They were buildings designed to keep the temperature down to freezing. Customers rented drawers in the building to store perishables. Items were removed, during business hours, as needed. This worked fine until home freezers became more prevalent. Candor had a Freezer Plant in the building behind the old Loft Restaurant, which, before that was a school bus garage, and now is a residence.

Today, music is stored on compact discs, usually referred to as CD's. A machine, called a CD Player, powered by electricity, produces a sound equal to, and sometimes better than, the original production. In the 30's, we had spring operated record players. There was a crank on the side, to wind the internal spring, which when released would spin the turntable at 78 rpms. By placing the arm containing a needle on the spinning record, sound was reproduced. Although the production was no where near the quality of today's equipment, to us it was beautiful music. The records were wax based and easily scratched or broken. In the late 1940's, small flexible records were introduced, playing at 45 rpm, producing a better sound and not as easily broken.

These entertainment tools, and work saving devices, seem archaic in today's world, but in our time they were actually modern conveniences. We were happy with them and knew no difference.

Next: Work and Play in the 1930's

CATATONK MEMORIES
Chapter 3

In the previous article, I described living conditions, and conveniences in our Catatonk home during the 1930's and 1940's. This issue, I would like to discuss work and entertainment during that period.

Those were the years before television, computers, cell phones and DVD Players, when radio was the prime source of news and entertainment. We enjoyed such programs as Inner Sanctum Mystery, Jack Armstrong, The All American Boy, The Jack Benny Show, Red Skelton, Amos & Andy, and of course the all time favorite, The Lone Ranger and his faithful companion, Tonto. They were extremely popular programs and you created the set in your own mind as you listened.

Saturday after noon was often movie time. Tioga Theater in Owego, which is still in operation, charged ten cents for the matinee and fifteen cents for the evening show. Saturday afternoons were great for westerns, starring Roy Rogers, Gene Autry or other heroes of the day. Along with the feature film, they usually had a serial running. This was an action figure such as superman, Batman or others, and a small segment was shown each week, usually for 15 weeks. This kept you coming back to see how it turned out.

During the week, we kids had other forms of entertainment. We might leave the house in the morning and not return until supertime. Our parents didn't know where we were and were not worried. We might be down at the old swimming hole, hiking in the woods or playing ball in some open field.

Sleigh riding and skating were our favorite winter sports. We would use everything from a shovel, skis, sleds or just sliding down on our backsides and it didn't matter who owned the land. The neighborhood was like a big happy family where everyone knew everyone and enjoyed watching the kids having fun. Skating was done wherever we could find a patch of ice. We would build a bonfire to take off the chill and skate into the night. Many adults joined in the fun.

But life was not all fun and games. We also had to work. The garden needed weeding, animals needed care and we had to keep up our school work. In addition my brothers and I worked on nearby farms, plus Hollenbeck's Feed and Sawmill, to get spending money. Our parent's money went to daily survival. Life would have been extremely difficult, with out the help of Arthur and Gerald Hollenbeck. They were our mentors, and found work for us even at an early age and we were glad for it. I started working there at ten years old. At twelve years of age, I was milking 11 cows, morning and night, for a neighbor who was working in IBM during the war. I enjoyed this, while earning \$3.00 per week, along with developing work habits that lasted a lifetime.

My brothers and I also worked on our grandfather's farm. There was little modern equipment and horses were the main source of power. Many a day was spent there harvesting hay, wheat, corn and oats. Hay was not baled like today. It was loose, cut with a horse drawn sickle bar, raked up with a dump rake into rows, piled in to small stacks called cocks of hay. A horse drawn wagon was brought out, with one person on the wagon and one on each side, using what was called a pitch fork, hay was put on the wagon and transported to the barn for storage. Corn was also hauled to the barn by horse and wagon, and blown into the silo using a chopping machine while oats and wheat were put into what was called a thrashing machine to separate the grain from the stalks. There were no combines or field choppers.

It was all hard, dirty work. But I loved it. My grandfather taught me how to harness, drive and care for the horses plus milking and caring for the cattle. The barn on the farm, was just below where the Catatunk Café stood, and the house was across the road where Owego Contracting have their offices. The day pasture is now the back nine of the Catatunk Golf Course.

MEMORIES OF CATATONK

Chapter 4

By Dick Anderson

In the 1930's and 1940's Catatonk had a limited but enjoyable social life. The center of activity was the Community Hall, built in 1922, on land donated by Sidney Toft, with concrete blocks manufactured right in the neighborhood, by Fred Kyle, a local farmer. The hall is still standing, and is now owned by the Historical Society. Round and square dances were held there nearly every Saturday night during the winter months and attracted persons from near and far. I met my future wife at one of the square dances. A mutual friend introduced us, I liked what I saw and chased her until she caught me. Been married nearly 58 years. Think maybe it might last.

During Christmas and Easter seasons, churches used this facility to present religious programs for their membership and the community, with gifts and candy for all. At Halloween, local businesses featured parties, with everyone invited, for a night of fun which included ducking for the apple, wandering through the haunted house, judging costumes and much more. These festivities were well received, and nearly the whole community joined in the fun. Looking back, maybe it was a way of giving the Anderson boys treats, so they wouldn't do the tricks. Didn't work though.

Roller-skating was another very popular event for young people and skates were available for those not having their own. We even played some basketball in the hall, although it was not exactly designed for this type activity, with its low ceilings and hanging lights. It was great for wedding receptions, private parties, and showing movies while local businesses often conducting their meetings and/or conferences. I recall a very prominent group of local women, called the Ladies Aid Society, using the hall on a regular basis for meetings. I am not sure of their mission, but this was in the days when women stayed at home, kept house and raised families. It appears to be one of the beginnings of the Women's Rights Movement.

Although our social life in the 1930's was very low keyed, Sunday's were preplanned. It was church in the morning, and during summer months, baseball in the afternoon. Every small hamlet, and/or village, including Catatonk, had it's own baseball team. But our favorite was the Candor Town Team. There were some prominent names on that squad, such as John Robinson, Bruce Fessenden, Bob Brown, Cecil Taggart and many others. Most have long since gone to their glory. Later two exceptional ball players Ed Winnick and Sam Osovski, came out of the Catatonk area. They played in the mid 1940's, and were an outstanding pair. Ed was a pitcher, while Sam did the catching, and both were considered good enough to play in the major leagues. Ed did go on to pitch for Cornell while Sam chose to remain on the farm.

Lynch's Store, just south of the County Highway Department, was one of the favorite hangouts, for my friends and me. We would purchase a five cent bottle of soda, a ten cent package of cupcakes, and listen to the owner, Harry Lynch and some of his friends tell stories of the 'old days'. To us they were fascinating. Now those are the old days. Unfortunately, that store burned in 1945, and was replaced by a block building, which did not have the same character as the old store. It still stands, but is no longer an operating store.

Looking back, we did have some interesting moments. Joey Chitwood's Hell Drivers, were a big event at the county fair. After watching the show, we would try to duplicate the stunts with our bicycles. Once after watching a motorcycle jump six people laying on the ground, we came home and built a ramp. Six of my friends laid on the ground in front of it. I got on my bike, came at it full speed and the ramp broke. Ran over Dick Weber's head. His father heard about it and was a little upset. Did I say 'A LITTLE'. Needless to say we did not try that again. Later I will tell you some more about the 'Anderson Boys' and their toys. Why did I always get the blame?

CATATONK MEMORIES

By Dick Anderson

My education began in a one room school house, located about a mile north of Catatonk. The building, much smaller at that time, is presently home for the Seventh Day Adventist Church. Decades have passed, since those days, but the memories remain amazingly vivid.

Entering the building, the first area was a mud room, where jackets were hung on hooks, lunches put on a shelf, and boots left on the floor. There were doors on the right and left for entering the class room. Facing you were rows of desks. First grade was the row furthest to the right, the second grade was the next closest and on through the grade levels, each grade having it's own row or part of a row. Being in the first grade and the only student in my class, I sat in the front desk of the first row. The teacher for all grades, was Donald Perrine, a member of a local family. Austin Howard who lived on Howard Hill Road, in Candor, taught there for many years, but had retired when I started school.

Heat was furnished by a wood/coal furnace in the back. During extreme cold weather, coats were often worn during the school day, because the room was difficult to heat. It would get so cold that lunches, out in the mud room, would be nearly frozen, and were often put on top of the furnace to warm before eating.

At most, 20 students were in attendance on any given day. The majority, if not all, students walked to school, in good weather and bad, including those who lived some distance away. My home was just about a mile from the school. During the spring and early fall, many of the older students, children of farmers or farm workers, stopped attending. They were needed at home to help with planting and harvesting.

Among the teachers many responsibilities were maintaining the fire, cleaning the school, the toilet and sundry duties, performed by building maintenance crews in present day school systems. The toilet was unisex, and of course an outside privy. One of the necessary duties, to provide some student and teacher comfort, was keeping the water bucket filled. Each morning an older student would cross the road to the Kyle Farm, where Jean Dence now lives, fill the water bucket from a hand pump, bring it back and place it on a shelf in front of the classroom. Anyone wanting a drink would use a cup with a long handle on it, which was always in the pail, take a drink and place it back. Everyone used the same cup.

To better understand life in a one room school, let me describe a days activity. Our teacher would instruct the first grade students in a subject, give them an assignment, and then move on to the next grade. Upon reaching and teaching the highest grade, he would return to the first grade class and start over. It was difficult for all grades to study, because the teacher was nearly always talking to another group. Reading, writing and arithmetic were the key subjects. Nonessential ones were, for the most part, not addressed.

There were, of course, recess periods, plus lunch time, and weather permitting outdoor activities were enjoyed during these breaks. The road was much narrower then, the building smaller and the front lawn much larger. A chain was hung between two large trees in the front, with a seat on it, creating a wonderful swing. Because of the long chain, it could reach amazing heights. Younger students enjoyed a teeter totter during recess. Some of the older students other activities were playing catch with an old baseball, no gloves available, or chasing each other in a game of tag. The teacher would often join in the fun and games.

The best part of the day, was walking to and from school. Going to, was pretty much a direct line, but when returning home, we would often get side tracked, exploring the creek, walking down the railroad, climbing the hill, digging out a wood chuck hole and a variety of other simple but fun adventures.

But, as all good things must come to an end, the teacher announced one day that it would be closing at the end of the school year and we would all be attending the new centralized school in Candor. I have wonderful memories of those long ago days, with my friends, when we were young. But, we must also recognize the tendency to forget difficult times and only remember the good ones. Maybe that is for the best. Never dwell on the negative.

NEXT:

MORE CATATONK MEMORIES

Chapter 6

I am sure it is difficult, for young persons today, to understand life in the 1930's. Those were the years of the great depression, or the period, some refer to as 'the dirty 30's, when people from all walks of life were, through no fault of their own, jobless, penniless and in hopeless situations. The stock market had failed, dragging down banks, business and individuals. When businesses failed, jobs were lost, when banks failed, savings were lost. Bank accounts were not federally insured, so the money was gone forever.

One of the results of these, somewhat hopeless times, were hobos, or tramps, as they were often referred to. These men, wandered from town to town, looking for work. They often climbed on a freight train, while it was stopped or slowed down and rode it to another stop where they would get off and look for work and/or food. It was called 'riding the rails' or 'riding the rods' because they often climbed underneath the boxcar and held on to the braking system rods, which ran from one end of the car to the other. Dangerous, but these were desperate times, and desperate people do desperate things. Often, when no train was available they would walk the tracks to the next town.

The railroad, from Owego to Ithaca, had its share of hobos. I watched many times, as my mother fed them. The railroad ran behind our house, on the west side of and parallel to Route 96. Although we were one of the poorest families in the area, my mother always found something to feed the hungry. Somehow these hobos knew a free meal was available at our house. I can remember one time, when four or five came walking up the tracks. One came to the door and asked if they could get something to eat. We didn't have much, but my mother made them tomato sandwiches. Not very appetizing to me, but they sat on the rails and seemed to enjoy them. We often had the hopeless stopping by for food. My folks had small pocket books, but big hearts and these men seem to appreciate it and never took unfair advantage of their generosity. I say men, because although there might have been women hobos, I never happened to see one.

One time my brothers and I were trying to push my dad's car on to the road in attempt to start it, as the battery was dead. We didn't realize our youngest brother Roy was directly behind the car and it rolled over him. Our mother rushed out, grabbed him and frantically started down the road to get help. A hobo came out of nowhere and stood right in the middle of the road, stopping a car and told them to take her to a doctor. They did and he disappeared. It probably saved Roy's life. We don't know where he came from, or where he went, but he was there when we needed him.

To better appreciate the difficulty of the times, my dad earned about twelve dollars a week, working at the Endicott Johnson shoe factory in Owego, now the location of Home Central Supplies. He raised six kids on this, and bought a house in 1931, for one thousand dollars, which is still in the family, owned by our son Jeff, as a rental property.

As difficult as these times may seem, we always had something to eat. We raised pigs and chickens, along with a large garden. I don't know if there were welfare benefits, back then, but if there were, my dad was too proud to take advantage of it. We sometimes ate corn meal mush for supper, but it was ours. Much of our winter meat came from hunting. My dad would hunt rabbits and squirrels while we kids would fish in the local creek for sunfish and blue gills. Any way to put food on the table

To sum it up those may have been bad times, but in many ways they were good times. Neighbors were like family, and I miss that relationship. Some people in the country, still had money, but most were extremely poor. Catatonk was no different. We were poor but happy. .

Any questions or comments Call Dick at 659-3714 or dicka2@hotmail.com

NEXT: Summing up Early Catatonk

CATATONK MEMORIES

Chapter 7

By Dick Anderson

In past articles, I have pretty much explained my childhood in the 1930's. Before I move on to life in the 1940's, let me give a little history of Catatonk,

Catatonk once had it's own post office, railroad passenger station, tannery, black smith shop, stores, gas stations, hotel, feed mill, sawmill, milk station, oil line pumping station and several other small businesses. Most of these were gone before my time, except the feed mill, sawmill, stores and gas stations. The building housing the post office, milk station and railroad passenger building, were still standing, but long unused. The back or old part of the feed mill was once a hotel. The buildings, now housing the Tioga County Highway Department, were built to house a pumping station for the Standard Oil Company pipeline. It was taken over by the county many years ago, probably in the 1920's. Everyone still called it the 'Oil Station' in my youth.

Along with freight, passenger service was offered by the railroad in the 30's and early 40's. It cost ten cents to ride from Catatonk to Owego. Normally the train did not stop in Catatonk, but if there were passengers waiting, Gerald Hollenbeck, acting as a representative of the railroad, would wave a red flag. The train would stop, passengers got on and paid the conductor. I did this several times, all alone at an early age, riding to Owego to visit my aunt. After I got there it was a mile walk from the station to her home. No one thought it unusual.

The Owego/Ithaca spur line, connected with the main line in Owego, across the River, east of the present Court Street Bridge. A passenger and freight terminal were located there, along with a turntable, so an engine could be turned around for it's trip back to Ithaca. The main line of the Lackawanna Railroad ran along the river where Route 17 is now.

Looking back to those long ago days, present society would probably wrinkle it's brows, and say 'no way would I want to live like that.' It's true, we didn't have the technological advances enjoyed today. There was no television, computers, cell phones and thousands of other wonders taken for granted in today's world. We didn't miss them because we didn't know what they were. The only thing I would want, if time sent me back to those years, would be today's medical advances. Many diseases and illnesses considered minor today, were fatal in the past.

But we enjoyed life. We spent little time in the house. If we were not doing chores, we were enjoying the great outdoors, fishing, swimming, sleigh riding, hiking and many other activities, young people seem to overlook today. But times were different too. Boundary lines meant little. If you wanted to go hiking, hunting or just wander around the hills, no one paid much attention. Posted signs were seldom seen. If one appeared, we assumed they were for out of town people. Not us. We went every where.

Swimming pools were unheard of around our area. That was what creeks were for. We swam in the mill race, in Catatunk Creek behind the mill, or beneath the bridge on Catatunk Hill Road, which in our time was called Germany Hill Road, and other spots along the creek.

Our favorite swimming hole, was behind the County Highway Department. People came from all over to enjoy that spot. There was a tree along the bank, with branches hanging over the water, ideal for jumping. In addition the roots were such, that we could swim under the tree. The first time I tried it I almost panicked, because I could not see the exit. Made it though. As we age our attitudes change. In my youth chasing and trying to catch snakes was fun. I no longer desire to swim in creeks, but if I did and seen a snake, I would be the second man in history to walk on water. Age creates cowards or common sense. I let you decide in my case.

CATATONK MEMORIES

Chapter 8

By Dick Anderson

Before I leave the 1930's and move into the 1940's, it seems appropriate to discuss in more detail our way of life during that decade. Reading today's newspapers, listening to medical reports and warnings, makes me wonder. How did I live this long? In my youth, we drank raw milk, ate eggs every morning, enjoyed fried bacon as often as possible, drank water from springs and even the creeks. To us, water was water, no matter where it came from. There was old saying, back then that 'you must eat a peck of dirt before you die.' I'm afraid some of us came close.

Today, along with other foods, meat is inspected to ensure it is safe, of good quality, weighed on approved scales by a licensed seller, stored and sold in inspected facilities, wrapped in a special clear covering, dated with price and weight shown. In the 30's we had a local man from Candor, named Jim Luciani, who came around weekly in an open truck, with a side of beef, a pig or two along with some chickens all hanging in the open. They were neither refrigerated nor inspected. He would slowly drive down the road, and housewives watching for him, would signal him to stop, and tell him what she wanted. He would cut off close to the amount requested, weigh it on an old set of scales and sell it to her. Everyone trusted him and he apparently never let them down. I don't recall anyone getting sick from it. Our present government regulators would have a ball with that style distribution.

I'll never forget Jimmy, which is what everyone called him. He was an avid football fan and would go to our high school games, wearing a heavy raccoon fur coat, going up and down the side lines, yelling 'WE GOT TUM A BEAT'. We could be down by 50 points, but he kept on cheering. Everyone loved that old guy and whole crowd joined in the festivities, proving that winning isn't everything.

These were the years before freezers and refrigerators were scarce. Many special items were seasonal as there was no way to store them for long periods of time. One example were oysters, which were only available once a year. They would be delivered to the local store in a wooden barrel and dished out to customers as needed. They had to be sold rather quickly to keep from spoiling. Today we enjoy such delicacies all year long.

Many other food items also came in barrels. There was the cracker barrel, the pickle barrel, the cereal barrel and other bulk items in these containers. The clerk would dip into the barrel to get the quantity you wanted and put it into some kind of container, often one you brought. Cheese was kept on the counter, and as it aged would be covered with green mold, showing it was extra sharp and a delicacy to many people. The cheese was so strong, the knife used for cutting, would have to be replaced every year or so as it would actually be turn black. Strange but true.

Stores in the country and small towns, were not usually self service. They were counter stores, meaning the grocer stood behind a counter and filled your order. You either gave the clerk a list or told him each item you wanted and he would get it for you. Often customers would drop off their list, while doing other errands, come back later and the order would be ready. There might have been self serve markets in larger municipalities, but in our area it was one customer at a time. And groceries seldom sold meat. Urban customers bought their meat in what was called butcher shops.

In the 1930's there were few restaurants and fewer motels. I never heard of a motel until on vacation in the 1950's. Before that most people stayed in cabins. They were similar to motels, but were individual buildings, usually owned by mom and pop proprietors, offering nothing but a place to sleep. There were no VISA, Master Card or other plastic purchasing tools. You paid with cash.

There were other important differences between yesterday's society and today. Medical facilities were modern and doctors were well trained, for the time, but today's well trained EMT's, are probably as qualified to treat individuals, as the average general practitioner back then. Medical technology has advanced dramatically and today, what are routine treatments and medications, were unheard of and many illnesses or injuries considered minor today, were often fatal in the past. One of our biggest fears, was Polio. It was a very serious, life threatening and paralyzing disease, which became an epidemic. In 1955, a doctor, named Salk, produced a vaccine to prevent the disease, and it is practically unheard of today.

Even though we often long for the somewhat slower and peaceful life of those times, there is much that you would lose. Good Old Days? Maybe but I believe future generations will look back on these times, as the 'good old days'.

CATATONK MEMORIES

Chapter 9

By Dick Anderson

In past issues, I discussed Catatonk in the 1930's. As we moved from that peaceful, but difficult decade, on in to 1940, life began to change. In fall of that year, our government, fearful the war in Europe would expand to our shores, created the military draft. This was a method, by which young men were inducted into military service, supposedly by a lottery system.

Then, on December 7, 1941, it happened. Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, and we were in the war. Life on the home front changed, after the attack and declaration of war. National pride, and respect for our military, increased dramatically. More and more young men from our community and across the nation, chose not to wait for the draft, but stood in line to enlist. As they left, women were encouraged to enter the previously male dominated work force. Rosie the Riveter, Wanda the Welder, Martha the Machinist, and other names were used in advertisements encouraging women to do so.

There was paranoia, on the part of some officials, even in small hamlets like Catatonk. An air raid warden was appointed, a siren placed on top of the County Highway Department building and periodic air raid drills were performed. When the siren sounded, all lights were to be turned off, fearing they could be used as a guide to larger industrial areas. Certainly we had nothing worth bombing.

With the war, many products became rationed, which meant some were not available to the public, while others were limited. Example: You couldn't drive in to a gas station and say fill it up, because only so many gallons a week were allowed. Each vehicle had an A-B-C-T- or X sticker on the windshield, along with a book of ration stamps. The average citizen, had an 'A' sticker which allowed 3 gallons a week, while a 'B' sticker, usually farmers, could purchase 6 gallons a week for personal autos. Doctors, Ministers, Truck Drivers and Members of Congress, with C, T and X stickers, were allowed larger amounts, for use in their occupation. To conserve fuel, the war time national speed limit, was thirty five miles an hour.

Coffee, sugar, butter, and meat, were rationed along with many other products, considered crucial to the war effort. In an effort to prevent unscrupulous merchants from taking advantage of the shortage, government regulations went into effect, putting strict price controls on many products. Rationing didn't bother my family because we had little money, and going without, was a way of life for us. But wages did increase, and with the military's need for products, and overtime required of most employees, my dad's fortunes started improving.

Everyone was encouraged to have a garden, usually referred to as Victory Gardens, because much of the commercially produced food supply, was designated for military needs. Smokers were also forced to improvise, because the majority of cigarettes manufactured, were sent to military bases. My dad had a little hand operated machine which he used to roll cigarettes using Bull Durham Tobacco and cigarette papers. They apparently turned out quite well, because he smoked enough of them.

With men leaving to join the military, along with many older students, and women taking their place in industry, we younger ones were in demand for working on local farms and small businesses. As I mentioned in an earlier article, at age 12, I worked milking 11 cows, twice a day, for three dollars per week, and was very happy for the opportunity. In addition, we worked in the feed mill, sawmill, coal yard, mowed lawns and hoed gardens. There were plenty of jobs which we gladly accepted and no laws prevented us from doing so.

But there was also heartache and misery, as many a family received that dreaded telegram from the War Department. We regret to inform you that you son _____ was killed in action. I was at a farm working, when one of those telegrams came. It was not pleasant to see the grief and heart-ache that family suffered. A few years later, I was in Korea, and witnessed first hand, the horrors of war. Pray that it never comes here.

CATATONK MEMORIES
Chapter 10
By Dick Anderson

The war years of 1941 to 1945 were a real transition locally and for the country. Nationalism was rampant and expressed in many simple ways. Most movie theaters displayed the American Flag on the screen prior, to the main feature and spectators would clap and cheer. Our servicemen and women, were treated with great respect and given free rides on buses, tickets to movies, free meals, and many other gratuities.

Sampson, near Geneva, in the 1950's was an Air Force Basic Training Camp, but during World War II, served as a Naval Base where men from across the country, along with many locals, took their 'boot' training. My older brother Chuck was stationed there and often came home on weekend passes. During this time my dad bought a good used car, there were no new cars during the war, and he was very proud of it. That weekend, Chuck came home on pass, borrowed it and when he returned, the fenders were bent out. As my dad said 'they stuck out like airplane wings.' Apparently, he tried to put it into a parking place that was too small. I think he might have been dabbling in torpedo juice, although I never knew him to drink before the Navy.

Hitchhiking was common practice and many sailors from Sampson took advantage of this method of transportation traveling through our area, usually having no difficulty getting a ride. The uniform was a badge of respect and the country was behind them nearly one hundred percent. Although bus riding was free, where there was no bus, there was the thumb.

Our community, like most of the country, was not familiar with war time security and needed to be constantly reminded. Many stores in our area, had posters in windows, such as 'Loose Lips Sink Ships', 'Learn to Spot the Enemy' meaning be careful what you say, because spies could be listening. One the most famous posters, was 'Remember Pearl Harbor'. That phrase was used not only in posters, but on radio, in movies, on bill boards and where ever a space could be found. It was used as a battle cry to galvanize people behind the country's war effort. Until the attack many were against our country becoming involved in the European conflict.

Money was needed to support the war effort and in an endeavor to raise funds, the government sold war bonds and stamps to the public. I bought stamps each week from my wages. The stamps, sold for ten and twenty five cents, usually purchased by school children and after enough stamps were purchased, could be traded for a war bond. The bonds sold for eighteen seventy five and were worth twenty-five dollars on maturity. There were larger denominations, but these were the most popular. 'Every Scout To Save A Soldier', was a slogan used encouraging Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts to help in sale of the stamps.

CATATONK MEMORIES THE WAR IS OVER

Chapter 11

By Dick Anderson

In 1945, the war finally ended, young men and women were coming home and the country struggled to return to some kind of normalcy. Rationing ended, consumer goods were once again on the shelves and we young ones in Catatunk, had grown about five years older. Older, but maybe not much smarter.

It seems I was always on the receiving end of what ever went wrong. One time I borrowed a set of boxing gloves at school and brought them home. I was going to teach my brother Bud how to defend himself. We put the gloves on and I said, 'When you are ready, try and hit me'. He did and knocked me over a bush on to my back. I took the gloves off and said 'There I have taught you all I know about boxing.' My mommy didn't raise no dummies. It hurt.

Another time, Bud got a hold of an old motorcycle with a side car on it. I said, 'Let me drive it first to show you how it's done.' I got on the bike, he got into the side car and we took off. We were going about five miles an hour, in low gear, when suddenly I realized riding a motorcycle with a side car is a different experience. I lost control and jumped off. The bike, with Bud in the sidecar, went over a bank and through a fence out into the field. He reached over and turned it off. Never would ride with me again and I was his instructor.

Back in the late forties, several of us had old cars, with the body cut off and nothing left but the engine, frame and wheels. For seats we used potato crates, blocks of wood or anything else to sit on. We would race around the fields and have good old times. One day my brother Bud, with Karl Newman riding, was chasing Charley Toft with my brother Roy riding and they were playing cops and robbers in the field behind the County Garage. They were pretending to shoot at each other going along fine, and my brother Roy, riding with Charley Toft, was looking back over his right shoulder and the guys chasing him were waving frantically. He waved back and happened to look to his left. There was Charley, the driver, running after him. He had been hit by a branch and knocked out of the car. No one was driving. It had a hand throttle so it kept on going. Luckily Roy got it stopped. This time it wasn't my fault.

Once my brothers and I found an old buggy at our grandfathers farm. We brought it home, put some ropes on the front axles to steer, and went riding down the hills with it. It had no brakes so it was free wheeling until it stopped. One of our favorite spots, was an old dug road near the Community Hall. We would go part way up the hill and down we would come. One day my brother Bud wanted to drive it. We went up the dug road, further than before. With Bud driving, me in the middle and

Charley Toft on the back, we started down. We were picking up speed swiftly, Charley realizing something was wrong, jumped off. Being in the middle I had no where to go. Then Bud lost control, the buggy turned left and we were airborne about eight feet. When we came down we rolled over. No one was hurt, but Bud said 'I don't think I should have done that'. I didn't think he should have either.

Another time, I was driving the buggy, with Cloyd Manzer on the back and I turned too quickly at the bottom of the hill causing it to roll over quite violently. No one was hurt, but we looked up and Cloyd's Mother had witnessed the whole thing. All she said was 'Cloyd get home.' It wasn't my fault there was a turn at the end of the dug road. I wonder why the neighbors called us 'Those Anderson Boys.'

I admit, we were a little aggressive in our recreational activities. Tackle football was one of the big sports in Catatunk and we played with no equipment. Many a bloody nose and knot on the head was the result. We played hard, but worked hard and looked out for each other. My brothers were the fighters, and I was the mouthy one. I would get someone mad and they would end up in the fight. I couldn't do everything.

The Manzer house across from and just north of the community hall. had a pool table and we spent many an hour playing pool with Cloyd, Winnie(Allen), Bill and Larry. Even Winnie got good at it and could beat the boys. I heard she plays piano some too.

They might have been wild years, but none of us ever drank or smoked, never heard of drugs, and didn't commit any crimes. We just had fun. Like I said, we worked hard and we played hard. Those were hard times.

A DAY ON MY GRANDFATHERS FARM

by Dick Anderson

607-659-3714 word county 938

Farming as a way of life, certainly has changed over the years. I'd like to take you back to the 30's and 40,s to show how farming was so much different in the past. . In my grandfather's house, the day began at 4 AM. You quickly got out of the warm bed, placing your feet on the ice cold floor, hurrying down stairs and out the back door to the privy.(Some times called an out house, but in reality was an outside toilet.) When you returned to the house, you got dressed, lighted the kerosene lantern and headed for the barn. There was no electric in the barn, so the lantern was your only light.

The cows were in a row, being held there by what was called a stanchion. It was a standup frame work made usually made from two 2 x 4's, one fixed, the other moveable. The cow put it's head between them. The movable one was locked and the cow was held in them while you milked. In front of the cow was a trough for putting grain and hay. Behind the cows, was a trench in the floor, called a "drop", so when the cows relieved themselves the manure would stay in place instead of all over the floor.

Milking was done by hand, in to a pail, which when full, was hand carried to the milk house, poured through a strainer into a milk can. When the milk can was full, it was placed into what was called a vat. This was a pit in the floor of the milk house, half full of water, and ice was placed in it to keep the milk cold. Each morning a truck would come by and take the cans to the milk processing station, at the time called Borden's Creamery, in Candor for processing. This building is the one in which Quick's Concrete is now located, next to where the new bridge is being constructed..

The milk truck was a convenient transportation to town for us. We would climb on the back of the truck, ride to the creamery, where the full cans were sent up a conveyor into the milk plant for processing. The truck was then moved to the other side of the creamery, where the cans, all washed and dried, came out for reloading and transport back to the farms. Each farm had a large number painted on the cans so the plant employees would know which farm the milk came from and also for the milk truck driver, so he would know where to deliver the empty cans. While the driver was unloading and waiting for the clean cans to come out. we would run over town, do some small shopping and be back before the milk truck was reloaded and on its way back to the farms. This was our private and free taxi service.

After the morning chores, we would head for the house and breakfast. No one ever ate until the milking and chores were done. Then it was back to the barn again, for more chores. We would turn the cows loose and drive them down the lane to the pasture. It's interesting, but the same cow always led the herd . There were two pastures, one for daytime and one for night, except. during winter months. During that season, the cows were turned out into the barnyard while the stalls were cleaned, and then brought back in.

The major power supply back then was horses. Few tractors were used in the area. Tractors did not become prevalent until after World War II. Horses were used for plowing, dragging, cultivating and many other uses around the farm.

Plowing was a time consuming tedious job. There were different types of plows, but the one we used, was called a "sulky plow". It was mounted on two wheels, had a seat for the operator and two plow blades. One facing right and one facing left. That way you could plow down the field with one and plow back with the other, rolling the soil in the same direction going both ways.. For small jobs, such a garden plots, a walking plow was used. It was a plow with a single blade, had two handles and the farmer walked behind it holding the handles to insure straight line plowing.

Filling the barn with hay was another time consuming manual labor job. First the hay was cut with a horse drawn sickle bar and left to dry. Then it was raked up into long rows using what was called a dump rake. After that we would use pitch forks to place the hay in small piles called cocks. This made it more convenient to pitch it on to the wagon. It was then hauled to the barn and dragged up into the mow with a rope and pulley system. Hay was handled in its loose form not baled as it is today. In the winter it was pitched out of the mow by hand for feeding the cows and horses.

Sadly, family farms are gone now, replaced by large corporate ventures. In the long ago past, farming was not a job, it was a way of life. Hard, maybe, but farm families were proud of their profession and maybe their finances were short, but there was always food on the table, mostly home grown. Modernization is viewed as progress. Sometimes I wonder.

Any questions, comments, complaints or suggestions, call Dick Anderson, 607-659-3714 or email dicka2@hotmail.com

CATATONK MEMORIES

Chapter 13

Final

By Dick Anderson

Over the past few weeks, I have tried to paint a picture of my childhood in Catatonk, during the Great Depression of the 1930's and the war years of the 1940's. As we look back, they seem like terrible times, but we didn't realize it. Most people were in the same financial condition, so to us it was normal. Those were not the best nor the worst years in American History. But we survived. I have tried to present them as accurate as possible, and as my memory serves me.

When I started writing these articles, it was not for publication. I wanted to be more than just a name on a gravestone, to my great grandchildren and their offspring. I wanted them to feel in some way, they knew me. I started putting my memories down on paper so they could read them someday. As I wrote, friends encouraged me to submit the articles for publication. I did so and feel honored they were accepted.

I recommend to all persons, write down your life as you remember it. Every one, including you, is a walking history book and the only person with first hand knowledge of your life. Let the memories live on and your descendents will appreciate it. I wish I knew more about my grandparent's and other ancestors. My great great grandfather, Ahira Anderson came here in 1810, building a log cabin on the corner of what is now Anderson Hill and Lord Hill Rd. He was a tanner by trade, but became a farmer. He married Martha Andrews and had ten children, of which eight grew to maturity. They are only names to me, with little knowledge of what they were like. It would be nice, to know how they lived, how they thought, and of their dreams. I do know one of my ancestors must have been a sailor. I heard he was 'sent up the river', and another 'hung around the court house'.

You don't necessarily need to publish your notes, or even put them in order. Just put them on paper, as they come to you. Later you can, if desired, rearrange them. It is surprising how much fun you can have. As you write your mind will recall incidents and friends you hadn't thought of in years. Your descendents will be pleased and thankful and, in a small way, you will live on. Do it today!

I am really pleased with the many comments and congratulations, I have received about my articles in this paper. There must be a lot of people reading the Broaderview, if the calls and other responses, are any indication.

I thank all who encouraged me to submit the articles, and thank Karen Frick of the Broaderview for publishing them. It was fun. Dick Anderson signing off.

THE LEANING SILO OF CATATONK

by Dick Anderson

607-659-3714 word count 688

Traveling on Route 96 between Candor and Owego, most people must have noticed the "leaning silo of Catatonk". Amazing that it still stands, given it's present condition, this relic of a past era, once an important part of this former dairy farm, seems to stand head bowed, like a lonesome old man, reminiscence of younger productive days. A large barn, long since gone, was attached to it, housing dairy cows, young stock, horses and all the various farm tools. This was a proud, successful farm, during the 30's and into the 40's, and owned at the time, by a man named Roland Burt. Helping him operate the farm, was a tenant family, living in an apartment within the farm house, which still stands along with a garage. During the harvest season, I worked for Mr Burt, bringing in hay, thrashing oats and wheat, plus helping fill this silo with chopped corn in the fall. When Mr Burt passed away in the late 40's, the farm was combined with another farm just up the road, losing it's identity. .

Looking at this old leaning silo, one can almost detect a note of sadness. Once an important member of the family farm, it now stands alone, bent with the passing of time, ravaged by the weather and winds, a silent tribute to the days gone by. In my mind's eye, I can still see the horse drawn wagons, coming off the hill, down the lane to this proud old silo.

Let me describe silo filling in those long ago days. First the farmer, used a corn binder to cut the corn. This was a machine, powered by horses or a tractor, going down the rows of corn, cutting the stalks, and tying them in to bundles. It was usually done a day ahead of time. Then on filling day, groups of workers, usually four or five in a team, would be out in the fields, and as the wagons came, they would load the corn stalks, to be transported to the silo, placed in a chopper, cutting the corn stalks in to short pieces and blowing them up a pipe and into the silo. One interesting method of keeping expenses down during the depression years, was trading work. Today you would help me fill my silo, tomorrow I would help you. This continued until all those helping each other, had their silos filled. A simple but excellent method. Farming could be a lonesome life back then, but this method gave them each a chance to get their work done and enjoy each other's company.

Working in the silo, as I often did, was an experience in itself. When you climbed in to the empty silo, you were standing on the floor. As the day progressed, and silage was blown in, up you went. The blower pipe at the top, was curved down, so the silage would come down into the silo. At the end of the curved section, a movable funnel was attached and the one person would move it to spread the silage around, while another would continuously walk around the edge of the silo to tamper it down. Even then, if you went in the next day, the level would have settled tremendously. There were doors on the silo, more like windows, and as the height increased, we would install another door. When the silage was removed for feeding through the winter, doors were removed one at a time as the height decreased. A simple system, but it worked.

This old silo, fragile and bent, is one of our connections to the past. Then next time you pass by, imagine if you will, the noises of the horses, the equipment and the men, as they proudly carried

on their work. Those were great days, difficult conditions, but a great life style. Cherish your memories. Even if you consider your youth a blunder, your manhood a struggle and your old age a regret, you lived it, you can't change it, so enjoy the memories. They are yours and yours alone. No one else's are exactly the same.

2/27/13

Catatonk Before My Time

by Dick Anderson
733 words 659-3714

It's good to be back. If you recall in the past I wrote several articles about Catatonk during my youth in the 1930's and 1940's, I just loved that neighborhood. The community was like one big family.

As I reminisced about the days of my youth in Catatonk, recalling wonderful memories thereof, it came to me that everyone and everything has a past. Sometimes good, sometimes bad, sometimes happy sometimes sad. I wondered, about this settlements past. What was it like before my time?

My research produced some very interesting facts. This little berg, once had a hotel, a dance hall, and a saloon. The hotel was located in the old section of the building now housing Hollenbecks Mill., the saloon was a building in front of the mill, on Route 96, where a store used to stand and was known as the toughest place around. Local young people were mostly not allowed to go near that part of the settlement after dark.

Three Van Duzer brothers, Jerry, Martin and Hank, who lived out past the mill in the home last occupied by the Truman Anderson family. built a water operated sawmill located behind the mill. They were also employed as 'bouncers' for the saloon and in their spare time held wild coon, dog and cock fights in the cellar. Dances were also held on the second floor of a building just south of the store. When the floor became to weak for the crowd, the neighbors got together and built the community hall in 1922. The concrete blocks for the building were manufactured by a local farmer, Fred Kyle, whose farm was located where the Halstead Family now resides. He also supplied milk for many of the neighbors. This was non pasteurized milk, which was common in days gone by, but would be frowned on today

There were two other dance halls in the area. One on Campbell Hill, known as 'Arbies Rock' and the other in the first house just north of the Catatonk Cemetery, at the time owned by Ed Storm;. The upstairs was a large hall and music was provided by a local band with Floyd Richards as it's leader,

Catatonk also had a Grist Mill, a Blacksmith Shop, located in the side yard of the home I grew up in, and I never knew it until now, a Tannery, a Post Office, a Milk Station, a Railroad Station, there were six trains a day going through the settlement, a pumping station for Standard Oil, in the buildings now housing the County's Garage, and two one room school houses. The first school house stood where Hills Repair Shop is located, but burned in 1882 and a new one was built just up the road, which is now a residence.

Arthur Hollenbeck, purchased the feed and saw mills in 1926. He had been a farmer until that time. When he bought the mill, it had the only electricity in the area using it's own water powered generator. In 1935 he built the new addition. There was a railroad siding at the mill for delivery of cow feed and other agriculture supplies.

Catatonk even has a criminal history. Someone made counterfeit half dollars in the field where Pebble Hill Mobile Park is now located. Later a local farmer, working the field dragged out an old iron kettle full of those coins. In later years, a farmer across from Owego Heights Park also found several of the coins while dismantling a building on his property.

Other interesting facts I have learned, is that Route 96 in Catatunk was once a toll road. Farmers not wanting to keep paying the toll, built a road next to the hill parallel to Route 96, from Catatunk Hill Road to Glenmary Drive, which for years was called 'The Shunpike Road and later just 'The Back Road'. Now it has the interesting name of 'Swamp Road'. The first telephone system was built and maintained by local farmers. The wires were strung on fence posts, and powered by wet batteries made of bottles.

Yes even a wide place in the road such as Catatunk has a past. Some good, some not so good but all part of the growing up of our country,

Coming up next, businesses and organizations, how they started and their mission. Any questions, comments, complaints or suggestions, call Dick Anderson, 659-3714 or email at dicka2@hotmail.com. Your input will be appreciated.

CATATONK CHURCHES

By Dick Anderson

To some, Catatonk is just a wide place in the road. This is true, on the surface, but this little berg was very instrumental in developing Tioga County and the surrounding area. One of the amazing things about this little settlement, is the number of churches serving the believers of a higher power. There are four churches within a one mile stretch. One of them was the Catholic Church, which a short time ago, closed it's doors, not due to membership, but for the lack of a priest.

To better understand the mission and beginnings, of this former member of the Catholic Diocese., one has to go back into the 1800's, when local persons of the catholic faith wishing to attend worship services, had to travel to Owego or Newark Valley. As more and more members of the catholic faith settled near Candor, and with no mode of transportation available, except horse drawn rigs, a trip to these services was a slow tedious venture. In and around 1870, the Kehoe family, living at 23 Church Street in Candor, invited the priest in Owego, use of their home, as a place to celebrate Mass from time to time, for the benefit of Catholics living there. A priest named, Father Francis Clark, accepted the invitation and with only a kitchen table to serve as an altar for holding vestments of the church, he performed mass. People came from all over the town, some having to leave their place of residence before dawn to arrive on time for mass. Amazing but true, services in the home, known as a 'Mass-house' lasted for nearly sixty years. The membership reached an amazing 110 in the 1920's.

A majority of the members, were Polish Farmers desiring a place of their own to worship in their native tongue. To satisfy this growing demand, a Polish Conventional Franciscan Priest named Father Stephan Musielak arrived to convince the areas Polish Catholics they needed a place of their own to conduct worship services. To consolidate this congregation, he started offering mass at the Nagel home on at 80 Nagel Hill Road, between Catatonk and Owego.

There was some disagreement as to where to build a new church. Some wanted it to be located in Candor, some in Owego and others in Newark Valley. Soon a compromise location in Catatonk was agreed upon and in 1930 construction began. Due to limited finances, most of the labor and materials were donated. The original church was only 30 x 50 feet with a parish hall in the basement. The total cost was \$800.00. A trivial sum today, but I am sure it was a horrendous sum during those depression years.

During the depression years, membership began to lag, but in 1938 a new priest arrived. His name was Father Aleaxander Stec, from Rochester, NY. Through his personality, dedication and devotion, he ignited once again the excitement and desire to maintaining a local church.

During World War II, the congregation, collected and donated funds to the war effort. One of the greatest donations, was in manpower. Twenty nine men and women from this church served their country. Two, Victor Nagel and Joseph Slawinski, gave their lives, defending our country and our freedoms. Victor was a member of the Nagel family, where the first masses in Catatonk were celebrated

Through the years, several priests presided over the congregation and in 1963, a new tradition was born. It was the famous St Francis Church's annual chicken barbecue. It not only instrumental in maintaining the financial stability for the local church, but helped in fostering good relationships with the general public.

Many locals, attended this church and have since gone on to their reward. Unfortunately, just a few short years ago, the church was closed and parishioners transferred to other churches. It was closed, not because of attendance, which remained high to the end, but for the lack of a priest. Many members transferred to Newark Valley while others chose Owego., It was a sad day for not only the members, but local citizens too. There was a statue of the Virgin Mary in the window, holding the infant Jesus in her arms, that was always lighted so you could see it while driving by. Even I, a member of the Baptist Church just up the road, invariably looked for that display whenever I passed the church. It was a disappointing day for all, other denominations included, when the congregation left this historic building for other areas.

Coming: The History of the Catatunk Baptist Church

MORE HISTORY OF CATATONK CATATONK BAPTIST CHURCH

by Dick Anderson

607-659-3714 828 words

In last weeks column, we portrayed the Catholic Church in Catatonk, it's historical and unique beginnings, it's dedication to it's beliefs and finally it's unfortunate closing. This week we move on to one of the oldest churches in the area, the Catatonk Baptist Church. This small, but dedicated, member of the religious community, has been around since the mid 1800's.

It was on March 3, 1855, that the first recorded meeting was held. The clerk keeping records was Ebenezer Daniels. Apparently most of the members and the church were affiliated with the Candor Baptist Church and maintained that relationship, worshiping in Catatonk because of the distance required to attend in Candor. On August 14, 1857, the members voted to "set off by itself" and be known as the Catatonk Church. The Candor congregation agreed and signed off all interests in Catatonk. Things must have gotten difficult for the little church, because on March 18, 1858, consideration was given to again merging with the Candor Church, sharing the name, interests and actions. But the Candor Village Church did not show a willingness to receive them back. The Catatonk congregation took a vote, and it was unanimous. They would maintain their independence and worship in a church of their own.

In January 1859, Ebenezer Daniels, clerk of the Board of Trustees, and a land owner in Catatonk, granted usage of a meeting house and 60 x 70 feet of land, as long as meetings for church purposes were held regularly. Later on Mr Daniels sold the property to the church body, represented by Thomas Truman, Henry Gaige and Richard Spalding, trustees of what was now called "The Close Communion Baptist Church and Catatonk Society", for the sum of fifty dollars.

To better appreciate the difficulty of the times, one must reflect back on the life style in those long ago days. Today we jump into our warm car, back it out of our warm garage and quickly drive to the church of our choice. At church some even have cars that can be started from inside the building. In those days, you went out in the cold, harnessed your horses, climbed into the open sleigh or wagon and drove miles in all kinds of weather, just to attend church. That was dedication.

When I was attending this church, in the early 40's, there was still no central heating. Comfort during the winter months was provided by a wood stove in the back. Each Sunday morning, a local farmer, named Roland Burt, would arrive early, start the wood fire and hope it was reasonably warm by the time the services began. No one complained, because most houses had the same style heat, outside toilets and hand pumps for water. Music was provided using an old foot pump organ played by a Mrs Kyle. Her husband was a hard working farmer just down the road. In those days, modern equipment was unknown and everything was done the hard way. Tired as he was, he faithfully came to church every Sunday, sat on the right side, in the fourth pew, by the window and invariably fell asleep. No one commented, no one complained, because all knew how hard he worked and Sunday is a day of rest.

They say God works in mysterious ways and this church is a good indicator of that. Although it sets in plain sight and there is a speed limit in Catatonk, the church has been hit several times by vehicles coming down the highway. Every time, the repairs were made the building was improved. A basement was put in, plumbing and bathrooms installed, baptismal constructed and the décor updated, along with a study for the pastor. Additional land was also purchased for parking and to make room for the baptismal, as the back of the church sat directly on the border of the original property.

There have been many pastors over the years. The present pastor is Fred Middaugh from Candor. During my years there, services were conducted by Reverend Ted Conklin, pastor of the Owego Baptist Church as well as Catatonk. Rev Conklin baptized me in 1945 at the Owego Church. For two weeks every year, Rev Conklin supervised a church camp near Cooperstown. When I was fourteen, the church sent me, and two others, to this camp and paid all our expenses. It was an fantastic experience.

Many things change, but don't change. Through the years, this church has seen it's membership, grow, decline and grow again.. This being an independent church, it has no earthly hierarchy for support in time of financial need. It must depend upon its faith and its members. One hundred and fifty plus years indicates it works. It is a wonderful church and does its best to serve its people and the living God.

*If you have questions or comments call Dick Anderson, 607-659-3724 or email
dicka2@hotmail.com*

3/7/13

Past and Present
By Dick Anderson

The Candor Emergency Squad is rated as one of the best around. Fully staffed by volunteers, the town has a right to be extremely proud of their sons and daughters manning the rigs day and night, weekends and holidays. The squad never rests. I was one of the original members and have watched it grow from a group of little trained but dedicated individuals, to a highly trained efficient fully equipped arm of the medical community. *It's mission is to provide emergency medical care to all those in need.*

It has been said that from a little acorn the mighty oak tree grows. This is true, but it could be expanded to life it's self. Sometimes an insignificant decision or comment can lead to amazing results. I think of the Saturday night I stopped in to a square dance at the community hall in Catatonk. A mutual friend introduced me to a pretty girl. I am proud to say we have been married for sixty years. What if one of us three had not attended that dance. Who knows..

The Candor Emergency Squad started from an off handed remark made in an Owego Bar back in the late 1950's, a man named George Montgomery, was in conversation with a local Doctor named Gillette. They were discussing how busy the local emergency squad was. The good doctor made the comment that some one should start an ambulance service to transport patients to the hospital, freeing up the squad for emergency calls. Mr Montgomery thought about it that night, and the next day approached members of the Owego American Legion about the idea. After careful consideration they thought it was a good idea, benefiting the town and the legion. A few days later he met with Dr Gillette and said "That was a good idea you had." The good doctor asked "What idea?" When reminded of his comment about the need for an ambulance service, and told the legion was going to pursue it. He said "I wasn't serious, I was just making conversation" The members were very serious, raised the necessary money, purchased an ambulance and started transporting the sick and injured. They had little training and treated no one. It was just "you call, we haul."

Then calls started coming in from out lying districts, including Candor. At the time the only transportation for the sick and injured other than private car, was the local funeral directors hearse. If you made it he took you to the hospital, if not he took you to his place of business. He couldn't lose. In 1963 the Owego Legion Ambulance Service, realized they were getting overwhelmed by calls from outlying districts, approached the Candor American Legion, and offered to provide an ambulance if we would cover Candor and surrounding areas. In November 1963, upon accepting the challenge, they sent us a 1961 Cadillac Rig. It was garaged in the old fire station next to the Laundromat, until the legion built a garage for us, and it was moved there.

We may have been untrained, but I am proud to say, the members were as dedicated as any past or present. We did the best we could with the equipment and training offered at that time. We were not a life saving EMS, but a transporter from the scene to where medical help could be obtained. We did not have individual radios, back then, but had ten phones in town. Our emergency phone number was 659-7171, and when you dialed it, all ten phones rang. Hopefully someone was home somewhere to answer it.

In the early 1970's the Owego Legion Ambulance Service, approached us about going on our own. They would sell us the ambulance along with all the equipment for \$1.00. Tom Craig, Herm Rose and myself, were appointed as committee to oversee the transition. Things went well and we became the Candor American Legion Ambulance Service. I was the last captain of the old service and the first captain of the new one.

Up until 1973, all members were male. I was elected captain again that year, and we decided to let women join the service. You would have thought I had insulted the pope. Several members complained women couldn't lift the stretcher, couldn't drive the ambulance, couldn't stand blood, and a hundred other reasons why it wouldn't work.. Well they are still on the squad and it would be difficult to operate without them.

Candor should and I am sure is very proud of our highly trained dedicated Emergency Squad and Fire Department. Having been in on it from the beginning and having served three terms as captain, two terms as Chairman of the Board I am proud of this service and the dedicated members.

MY EVENING OF FUN

by Dick Anderson

607-659-3714 word count 626

Folks I want to stray a little from my normal column style, and pass on to you a very rewarding and enjoyable evening in my life. Here is my story.

I went to a ball game the other night. It was exciting, the players enthusiastic the fans verbally in the mood, the umpire frowning but friendly and I really enjoyed the experience and it was free. The pitcher had a little difficulty with control, walking quite a few, but there were a lot of strike outs, and the batters did get a few hits. Most of the hits were difficult to catch, but the players did their best. I failed to know the score, because there was no score board. But that didn't matter, It was enjoyable just to watch the players in action.

One batter hit a high fly ball to center field. Normally it could have been caught, but the center fielder was busy chasing a butterfly. He finally fielded the ball and threw it to the second baseman, who unfortunately was waving at a friend in the stands and didn't see it coming. I guess the runner could have scored on the play, but he was on first base tying his shoe

Where did I go? I went to a little league baseball game. I really enjoyed it. I was just driving by the field, saw a lot of cars and a game going on so I stopped.. I am glad I did. I hear a lot of criticism about today's youth. People complain they never see kids out doors playing anymore, but are always inside playing computer games, sending text messages to their friends watching television, etc. Not these young people.

These teams were apparently made up of the youngest of Little League players and the kids were out there doing their best and having fun. No one should worry about the score nor should they worry about winning or losing. Just let them play ball and enjoy them selves. They will develop the skills necessary to compete, later in life. I haven't the least intention of criticizing them, their skills or their attention span. I just think it was great they were enjoying what they are doing, because the real competition in life will come soon enough, when the fun diminishes and every move is taken seriously.

I give a lot of credit to the parents, the coaches, the umpire and the crowd. They showed intelligent adult patience and consideration for these young people. A lot of damage can be done by any criticism of their skills or actions. These are critical years for these young athletes and encouragement and understanding are very important to their future development and character.

The coaches were magnificent. Instead of criticizing any player for a mistake made, they patiently showed each one how it could have done another way and maybe got that hit, fielded that ball or scored that run. My hats off to the dedicated individuals who give up their free time to serve these young ball players. The umpire was very professional and his calls loud and clear. He must have done a good job, because I heard no complaints from either coach, the players or the crowd. And from experience I can tell you, in some areas the boos and yells can come loud and clear. I heard no criticism of his decisions.

If you want to have an evening of relaxation and good old fashioned fun, attend a Little League game in your area. I highly recommend it. You will be glad you did and the kids will appreciate it. There is no greater sound than that of young people enjoying themselves and entertaining their elders. See you at the game. You can bet I will be there.

If you have any questions or comments for Dick Anderslon, he can be reached at 659-3714 or dicka2@hotmail.com

A TRIBUTE TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

by Dick Anderson

607-659-3714 word count 710

It is the middle of the night, and you are lying in your warm comfortable bed, with the howling wind swirling around your home, blowing snow against the window panes and you are thankful for not having to be out in this frigid weather. Suddenly you hear the frightening sound of the fire siren. Your senses are immediately awake, and you wonder, where could the fire be. Or maybe you just heard the siren and seen the flashing lights of the local ambulance service going by and for a moment you wonder where they are going. You go back to sleep, figuring you will find out about it tomorrow. It is late and you have to be a work in the morning. .

Do you ever think about who is up in the middle of the night to man these emergency vehicles, getting out of their warm comfortable beds, in their well heated homes, to give aid to their fellow man. They are the modern day angels, these volunteer fire fighters, ambulance drivers, emergency medical technicians, fire police and others giving time and energy to serve their fellow man. Most of them also have to go to work in the morning.

Or maybe you have noticed the local food pantry, where the staff provides nutritious food to those needing help to feed their families. The staff receives nothing in return but the thanks of those they serve. Do you or your neighbor receive food delivered to your door by "Meals on Wheels"? In many cases this is the only real decent meal some persons receive. Again staffed by unpaid volunteers.

Or possibly; you have never thought of the American Legion as serving the community. If not take a look around. Who sponsors the annual Fourth of July Parade, along with the famous Fire Works of Candor? Who has the children's programs during Christmas and other holiday seasons? Who provides walkers, crutches and hospital beds to those in need? Who first started the Ambulance Service in Candor for which they will always be remembered. It is the men and women who served their country in time of need and now with their families, the Women's Auxiliary and Sons of The Legion serve their fellow man again.

Have you noticed the programs at the library where kids can learn the value of book reading? Back packs are provided with learning material for the young ones. Reading groups benefit those who are anxious to learn along with contests to encourage learning and many more programs benefiting the young people in their quest for knowledge. All the programs are manned by volunteers.

Who are these 'Angels of Mercy'? They are your friends and neighbors trying to make a difference in the world and are ready willing and able to serve you in time of need. Did you ever stop and think about the amount of time put into training, that goes along with serving as an emergency technician, a fire fighter, red cross worker and other ventures in the world of volunteering? These people have given up their free time to train so they can provide services to the friends and neighbors of their community. Their reward? No money, but the great feeling that comes from knowing you have made a difference and maybe helped change the world just a little bit by serving your fellow man in their time of need. .

April 21 thru April 27 is National Volunteer Week. A tradition started in 1974 providing recognition to those who serve their communities. When you see one of these life improving and life saving volunteers, take the time to stop and say thank you. You might be the next one in need of their services. We never know what tomorrow might bring. Better yet, become a volunteer. Your help is needed in many places. The hospitals, nursing homes, fire department, ambulance squad and others. Give back to the community that has supported you. Become a volunteer. You will enjoy it and feel good about yourself. The impersonal hand of government, can never replace the helping hand of a neighbor. Volunteer today. You and the community will be better for it.

5/4/13

GRAND PARENTS MEMORIES

by Dick Anderson

I have often heard people say, "If I had known how wonderful grand kids are, I would have had them first." An interesting statement, but one I must say I somewhat agree with. Grand kids are fun. You can spoil them, indulge them and then send them home to mom, for the discipline.

We enjoyed raising our own kids too. I sometimes think my kids turned out well in spite of me, not because of me. But they had a wonderful mother, and I have often said she was the epitome of motherhood. All went to college and are all doing well today. They were not angels growing up, but who was. Sometimes we were required to discipline them for breaking the rules. Probably the same rules we broke when we were young. My mother's favorite tool for instilling discipline, was a switch from the lilac bush in the back yard. You had to go and get it, and it better be a good one, or she would lay that one across the back of your legs and make you go get a better one and use that too. It hurt a little, but you remembered it the next time you thought about breaking the rules..

I often think we tend to try and give our grand kids those things we could not afford to give our own when they were young. We had a family to support, bills to pay, funds to be put away for their education, medical care and many more responsibilities that took our time and money. As grand parents, we are retired, no longer have a large family to support and enjoy spoiling the grandkids.

We enjoyed helping to raise my grand kids, or should I say we enjoyed spoiling them, Maybe we did tend to spoil them, but they all turned out well. Not perfect, but I have never met a person who was. We enjoyed those years when they were young and in school. We never missed a game of any sport my kids played in, nor did we miss any our grandkids were in, often traveling to Syracuse, to watch the ones who lived up there. One granddaughter was a cheer leader from age eight until she graduated. So we know the feeling when some one says how much they enjoy their grand kids.

It is never easy when your own children grow and leave your home, but when the grand kids do the same, it seems like it is the end of an era. One of my hobbies is writing poetry. Maybe it is not good, but it expresses how I feel. I wrote this one when my last grand child left school and home.