

A WALKING TOUR OF OUR HISTORIC CANANDAIGUA LAKEFRONT CANANDAIGUA, NY

[1.5 miles approximately]



Preston E. Pierce

**Ontario County Historian
Canandaigua City Historian**

Canandaigua, NY

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Waterfront Arts Festival. Kershaw Park. 2015. The Waterfront Arts Festival began on the City Pier in 1974. It moved to Main St. in 1984 when the pier was under construction; and then to Kershaw Park in 1985. The festival returned to Main St. for the 1996 event when the park was closed for reconstruction. A 41-year tradition, the local festival ended with the 2014 season. The next year it was moved to Webster by its organizers. It has been recreated as the Lakefront Art Show which claims its ancestry in the Waterfront festival still in Webster. Image published by Messenger Post Media.

Earlier versions of this publication were originally written for the Ontario County Historical Society.

Front cover image: Looking east on what would become Lakeshore Drive from the "Feeder" bridge about 1890. From the collection of the Ontario County Historical Society.

You are about to take a very pleasant walk along the historic Canandaigua waterfront. Along the way, you will discover that a lot has changed on the waterfront. It bears little resemblance to the road lined by farmland, gas stations, and cabins that it was in 1920.

Start at the Sullivan Campaign monument.



Sullivan-Clinton Campaign monument. Image from the collection of the author.

The land on which the Sullivan monument stands was called “the Triangle” for many years, referring to the shape of the little park formed by Lakeshore Dr. and the road to City Pier. Since 1996, of course there has been a third side to that triangle formed when the road to City Pier was extended.

The monument was erected in 1929 as part of a huge celebration of the 1779 Sullivan-Clinton Campaign against the Iroquois people living in the Finger Lakes area during the American Revolution. Four of the six Iroquois nations sided with the British and Loyalists and carried out devastating raids along the frontiers of New York and Pennsylvania. Look at the map that is part of the bronze tablet.

The center block of granite is similar to Sullivan monuments erected at the same time in other places throughout the region. The incorporation of the benches is unique to the Canandaigua monument and was the design of local landscape architect, John Handrahan. His stonework can be found throughout Canandaigua, especially in Sonnenberg Gardens and Woodlawn Cemetery.

A formal dedication of this monument, with speeches and a parade, was held Sep. 10, 1929. Elsewhere in the region several outdoor pageants were presented. The "scorched earth" campaign against the Iroquois is widely condemned today. Subsequent events proved that it had little military value. However, it was a major factor in promoting settlement of this area after the Revolution.

Walk east along the sidewalk, crossing over the Feeder Canal (More on that later). Walk down into the little park (another triangle, of sorts) and stop at the irregular stone monument standing tall. Read the small bronze tablet embedded in the monument.



Native American burial monument. Image by the author 2005.

This conglomerate rock formation, was reportedly found in Middlesex by city Public Works commissioner, Ray Hurley; landscape architect,

John Handrahan; and monument dealer, William A Salladin. The tablet was placed on the monument in 1919. It marks the site where the remains of sixteen Native-Americans were re-interred after their graves were disturbed on the nearby Garrett farm during the construction of the old Swimming School in 1905-06.¹ Mary Clark Thompson, who took a sincere interest in the lakefront, paid for the monument and landscaping of the little park around it. That small area predates the construction of Kershaw Park but is also largely fill land.

Walk down to the shore beyond the monument. You can still barely see where the walkway to the old Swimming School led out toward the breakwater. You can see that walkway at the left edge of the image of the Swimming School below.



Postcard image of the original Swimming School about 1910. From the collection of the author.

The Swimming School, completed in 1906, was the gift of Mary Clark Thompson. It was used until 1969. Its platform over the lake lasted until 1983. An estimated 2500 loads of dirt were used to fill in the park approach to the original Swimming School. Landscape architect, John Handrahan, was employed by Mrs. Thompson to beautify the

¹ In 1905, it was reported that only four sets of remains were found. A 1922 report states that 18 skeletons were found. The plaque refers only to 16 sets of remains. Much remains to be discovered about this story.

park around the building. Mrs. Thompson also left a perpetual fund for the upkeep of the Swimming School and its programs.

The original Swimming School was a wood-framed structure that was badly deteriorated after a half-century of use. In 1964, the offices and program headquarters were moved to a temporary metal structure built nearby in Kershaw Park. That temporary structure lasted for three decades.



Swim School building built 1964. Image by the author.

Walk along the sidewalk leading east along the lake (toward the gazebo).



Follow this walkway. Image by the author.

The gazebo is a favorite place for ceremonies of many kinds. It is also the scene of many wedding pictures. Concerts are sometimes held

here, as well. In December, the gazebo is adorned with a Christmas tree. On a typical summer day, it is a favorite place for people to gather in the shade by the edge of the lake.



Image by the author. June 2020.

The gazebo was donated to the city by well-known businessman, Bill Rayburn, and his family in memory of Bill's wife, Peg, in 1998. A gazebo had been part of the plans for the rebuilding and renovation of Kershaw park since at least 1996; the Rayburns made it real.

Continue walking down the sidewalk by the lake.

Almost from the time that you left the Native American monument, you have been walking on the fill land that comprises Kershaw Park.

Had you been standing where the gazebo now stands in the 1920s, you would be quite wet. Lakeshore Drive (formerly Lake Street) was built right along the edge of the lake. You can see that in the images

below. On windy days, it was not uncommon for waves to wash up and over the road surface.



Lakeshore Drive. Early 1920s. Collection of the Ontario County Historical Society.

A park along the lakefront had been discussed for a long time by the 1920s. The idea finally started to take form when John Kershaw, a member of the Canandaigua Board of Health, began advocating filling in of eight acres of the lake for park development.

Unfortunately, Mr. Kershaw died in 1923, before park development began. Retired dentist, Dr. Charles F. Booth, became the chief promoter of the park after 1925. However, the city decided to name the park for Mr. Kershaw in honor of his bringing the park from idea to action.



Image showing the sign posted by Dr. Booth, jumpstarting the Kershaw Park project. Image from the author's collection

One day in 1932, Dr. Booth rowed a boat out into the lake and planted a sign that said, "Will Park Here by Christmas."



Lakeshore Drive before the construction of Kershaw Park. Image from the collection of the Ontario County Historical Society.

Dr. Booth was a bit too optimistic in his timetable for park development. It would take another four years to park where that sign was placed.

The park land seen today is the result of filling in the lake between 1932 and 1936. Lovers of old cars often shudder as they think of the many Model T's, and other antiques, which were dumped in the lake here. Such large junk was used to anchor the earth and rocks used to make the park. The article below, published in 1932, tells the story.

Piles of rock, probably never seen here in such quantity, adorn the lake shore, awaiting dumping into the water to form the wall that will act as a breakwater for the filling material. One glance at the job discloses junk that could never be pictured as filling material until a concerted effort was started to do the job right.

Tar barrels, smashed and distorted automobile bodies, broken farm machinery, scrap iron, dump carts, old fenders, tin cans, broken sewer pipe, trunks, bottles, stones, in fact, anything that can be obtained will do.

Daily Messenger. Dec. 20, 1932.

The original boulder wall along the park shoreline was created in 1938. The boulders, as they are seen now, were repositioned in 1997. Many of the larger rocks came from Mendon or the Moore farm on the Geneva Turnpike (Rts. 5 & 20) according to newspaper reports. Up to 90 unemployed men drove truckloads of gravel from the East Lake Road to fill the park in 1934 and 1935.

When the construction of Kershaw Park began, John A. Granger of Chicago, and Gideon Granger of Buffalo, sued the City of Canandaigua for trespass. As descendants of pioneer Gideon Granger, they claimed to own the bottom of Canandaigua Lake.

The court battle continued for 15 years ending with a landmark decision in the New York State Court of Appeals, *Granger v. City of Canandaigua* (1931). The court ruled that the Grangers did, indeed, own the lake bottom.² However, since they had not entered upon their property in more than a century they had forfeited their rights. In any case, the lake was state property since it was a navigable waterway.



Postcard from late 1930s showing Kershaw Park finally completely.
Postcard collection of the author.

Over the years, improvements were made to Kershaw Park. The Canandaigua Rotary Club built a rock garden and water fountain in the park during the 1930's. Later, additional bathhouses were built. In the 1950's, the parking lots in the park were expanded.

For many years, swimming was allowed along the entire length of the park with lifeguards added by the 1960's. Safety and financial concerns forced a restriction of the swimming area by the 1970's.

² The Granger deed to the bottom of Canandaigua Lake, and several other waterways, can be seen at the Ontario County Records Center (RAIMS) at the office campus in Hopewell.

The 1996 park rebuilding, that included the new Swimming Pavilion, expanded the swimming area by 1000 feet.



Kershaw Park beach and typical summer crowd. 1950s-70s. Showing the use of the entire length of the park for swimming. Postcard collection of the author.

By the late 1960's several factors combined to force city officials to consider a six-foot chain link fence along the side of Lakeshore Drive. Health restrictions on Lake Ontario beaches brought thousands of visitors to Kershaw Park on hot summer days. Vandalism in the park became very costly and rowdyism was increasing.

City officials also wanted to charge an entrance fee so that non-residents would pay a share of the costs of maintaining the park. As a result of these factors, a chain-link fence was erected the entire length of Kershaw Park; an entrance fee was authorized by City Council; and city residents were given identification tags that allowed them to use the park without charge. Many people considered the fence unsightly and



This aluminum key tag was issued to a Canandaigua city residents so that they could use Kershaw park without paying a fee.

unwelcoming. However, the controversial fence remained in place from 1967-1996.

Just before you pass the swimming pavilion, you will certainly spot “Hanging Hoof,” the fiberglass sculpture replicating a carousel horse. Take a minute to read the information on the small plaque affixed to the base of the sculpture.



“Hanging Hoof” Image by the author.

“Hanging Hoof” was donated to the city of Canandaigua in 2002. It was the work of local artists, Rosemary Park and Renee Rockmaker-Carver. The sculpture was one of nearly 180 horses produced for “Horses on Parade,” a promotion developed by the Dixon-Schwabl advertising agency and High Falls Brewery. Modeled on similar promotions in Chicago (cows) and Boston (cod), “Horses on Parade” featured the work of local artists, with the horses eventually sold to raise money for local charities. \$650,000 was raised when the horses were auctioned. The plaque on “Hanging Hoof’s” base tells you who

put up the money for his donation. Incidentally, Lauren Dixon is a Canandaigua native.

The horses were placed throughout the greater Rochester area in early 2001, just prior to the terrorist attacks of “9/11.” The promotion was so successful that it inspired several similar promotions over the next decade. Those included Deer on Parade and Benches on Parade, all the work of different artists and agencies. Look for other horses in your travels. There are two in Victor; one in Mead Park in the center of the village; and one in Omnitech Business Park, just off Rt. 96 near Fishers.³

Continue your walk and stop briefly in front of the Swimming Pavilion.



Construction of the new swimming pavilion. 1996. Image by the author.

A new Swimming Pavilion, to replace the old Swimming School, was built in 1996 as part of the major renovation of Kershaw Park. Its design was modeled on the lines on the original building.

³ There is a wonderful little book, published in Rochester in 2001, about the “Horses on Parade” project. Look for it at auction sites and used book stores.



Stone curbing salvaged from entry to original Swimming School (right) back where this tour began. Image by the author. Postcard from author's collection.

In July, 2012, the early construction history of Kershaw Park came back to haunt the community. Right here, at the Swimming Pavilion, patches of oil began to appear in the sand and water.

According to newspapers at the time, more than a dozen drums of a "black, gooey substance" were removed by the state Department of Environmental Conservation at the time the park was re-constructed in 1996. At that time, much of the old fill debris was hauled away and replaced by soil and sand. However, some additional pollution was missed. [Think about that 1932 newspaper article above.]

In 2012, it was reported that additional debris was found at the west end of the park. The result was the closing of the beach for the rest of that season while the area was cleaned and more old fill debris was removed.



This picture appeared in the *Rochester Democrat & Chronicle*, Jul. 12, 2012.

Keep going down the sidewalk past the launch site for small marine craft.

One of the changes evident around Kershaw Park over the past few decades is the increasing popularity of small marine craft like paddleboards, kyaks, and sailboards.

As you probably noticed at the start of this tour, there are several businesses around the park that sell those small watercraft and provide instruction. If you look out on the lake, almost any day, you will see people enjoying those new craft.



For many years, this was the end of Kershaw Park. This scene is about where the launch area for small watercraft is located today. You can see Roseland in the distance just across the outlet bridge. The sign reminded the public that the Canandaigua Rotary and Kiwanis Clubs made many improvements to the park. Postcard collection of the author.

Continue walking along the walkway and cross over the old highway bridge, now part of the park.

Just before you cross the bridge look to your left. The brick house, built in 1937, was the home of William Muar, the owner of Roseland, for many years.

After Roseland closed, the house served as the office for the "Canandaigua Lady." In 1996, Lakefront Park was created, connecting with Kershaw Park, as part of a general "facelift" and improvement. Thirty-three acres of the lagoon to the north was part of the expansion, as well as 3.5 acres of beachfront that included the Muar House. It was the realization of expansion proposals dating back to 1959.

Mr. Muar, a Rochester native born in 1892, was a popular man very involved in community affairs. A member of the Rotary and Elks Clubs, Muar served on City Council from 1943-1953. He was also President of the Chamber of Commerce and was active in the Finger Lakes Association. He sold Roseland in 1961 to Lester Boyce and family and died in 1963.

The two pictures below show how the bridge has changed.



The outlet. About 1900. Before automobiles arrived in Canandaigua in large numbers bridges like this were only used by horses, buggies, and bicycles. From the collection of the Ontario County Historical Society.



The Outlet bridge as it looked in the 1920s after Lakeshore Dr. was paved. This bridge was built in 1910. Today (rebuilt) it is a pedestrian bridge after Lakeshore Dr. was relocated. This image from the Albert R. Stone Negative Collection, Rochester Museum & Science Center, is dated 1925, the year Roseland was created.

From here on, the land on which the new hotel and the Rosepark development were built, was part of the old Roseland site. If you are visiting on a quiet day, listen for the carousel music; or the screams of delighted riders on any of the special rides—particularly the roller coaster, or the “Gallop in’ Gertie” ride. You can almost hear those sounds, gone now for 35 years.

By 1923, there was already a dancing pavilion on Lakeshore Dr. In addition, Edson and Marion Case were already planning to develop 97 acres of lakefront property into a summer resort. In 1921, news of a possible hotel; a new road to cottage lots; and a golf course had already been published. The following year, the Canandaigua Country Club built its club house and golf course and sold off many of the cottage lots the Case family originally considered. Bill Muar, however, acted faster than other developers.

Roseland opened on nine acres of farmland in 1925. At first there was only an open-air restaurant; a gas station; and an old barn remodeled into dance hall. Very shortly, Muar added a chair-swing, pony rides, and a Ferris wheel. It also included a private beach and a baseball diamond.



Roseland about 1925. Collection of the Ontario County Historical Society.

In 1941, Mr. Muar added his all-time best known, ride—the 1909 carousel.⁴

When Roseland closed in 1985, most of the rides were sold and removed to other parks. The Roseland Carousel was installed in the mall now called Destiny-USA, just off I-690 on the north side of Syracuse. A group of public-spirited Canandaiguans tried to raise enough money to buy the carousel at the auction held after Roseland closed. They could not raise enough money to beat the winning bid of \$397,500.



Roseland Carousel at Destiny-USA in Syracuse. Image by the author. 2004.

By the time it closed, Roseland included dozens of rides. The area of the park, proper, expanded to thirteen acres. By the early 1960s, Muar had also acquired twenty additional acres across the road along the meandering outlet. There, additional rides were planned, but never developed with the exception of a miniature train.

⁴ There had been an earlier, smaller, merry-go-round at Roseland. However, the carousel that is best remembered was built by the Philadelphia Toboggan Co. in 1909 and was brought to Roseland in 1941. Ironically, it had previously been at Long Branch Amusement Park on Onondaga Lake, not far from where it now operates at Carousel Center in Destiny-USA in Syracuse.



The barn that became the dance hall at Roseland. At first, it was the only part of the park to bear the name, borrowed from a famous venue in New York City. Later, the name was applied to the entire park. In the 1950s, the barn became an arcade. Postcard collection of the author.

Look at the east side of the outlet channel where it leaves the lake, by the bridge.

From 1931-1975, that was the location of the “Sky Ride.” For many years, the ride used swinging gondolas that resembled the dirigibles so prominent in the news during the 1920s and 30s.

Built into the base of the “Sky Ride” was a refreshment stand where you could buy a delicacy not widely available in Canandaigua for many years into the future—pizza!



The "Sky Ride" as it looked in the 1960s. Now, the entrance to the "Canandaigua Lady" is located in this area. Image posted to Pinterest on the Internet by Allyson Lane.



Kiddie Rides at Roseland 1950s. Right next to the "Sky Ride." Postcard collection of the author.

As you walk along the pathway now, you are walking along the lake side of the “Kiddie Ride” section of Roseland. Some of the rides for children dated back to the early days of the park. Over the years, additional rides for children were added along with more thrilling rides for adults.



One of the newer “kiddie” rides right along the shore. Note the many willow trees. Image by the author. 1985.

A little further on, you are walking along the lake where the “Board Walk” was located. It was an area with a beer garden, snack bars, and plenty of colorful Adirondack chairs where visitors could slow the pace and spend some time looking out at the lake.

Out in the lake, Bill Muar built a stage. The area between the stage and the shore was eventually filled in. From the 1930s on, the stage was the site of concerts, and a variety of Vaudeville-style “free acts” that attracted people to the park once a week.



Boardwalk scene from the 1930s. Postcard collection of the author.

Muar actively encouraged local and regional organizations to hold meetings, contests, and reunions at Roseland. It was a great way to build community support and encourage paying customers for the rides, games, frozen custard stand, restaurant, and snack bars. Older people sometimes spent the day at Roseland just sitting by the lake engaged in “people watching.”



A little further along, the walkway curves around the lake shore and you come to a small circle that marks the end of the shoreline walk and the new section of Kershaw Park.

You are now near the east end of the “Satellite” chair lift ride. The two concrete bases that supported the ride are still in place out in the water, although one of them supports the walkway out to the “Canandaigua Lady’s” dock. The other one may soon support a sculpture (“Ghose of Roseland Park”) reminding visitors that Roseland



once stood here. A design by local artist, Benji Carr, has been approved and fund-raising has begun.

The stainless steel sculpture will be mounted on the top of the lone, uncovered concrete base. Each of the miniature rides will be able to move.



Roseland "Satellite" chair lift ride installed in 1964. Labor Day 1985. Image by the author.



By the 1960s, Roseland was a busy place on a nice day. Image from the Ontario County Historical Society collection.

You might want to take a break, sit down, and look at the Roseland pictures in this tour booklet while you indulge in a little fantasy from a long time ago.⁵ Think about being a child here half a century ago. Working with the Exchange Club (most of whose members later became the local Kiwanis Club), Mr. Muar established a tradition for local children in 1927. It was called the “Sunshine Special,” and on that special day each year, children were treated to a day of festivities, free rides, and refreshments. That tradition was continued by Kiwanis right to the last season the park was open in 1985.

The former Roseland Park site has changed several times since it was an amusement park. Steamboat Landing, a restaurant and small conference center, stood just to the right of the new hotel. Built in 2000, Steamboat Landing closed, and then was razed in 2014.

The miniature golf course, roller coaster, and other rides were further east (behind you, or to your right) where the Rosepark development stands today. Plans for Rosepark began right after Roseland closed. Groundbreaking took place in 1989. Debate about the character of the development continued for a decade, however. The development eventually expanded across Lakeshore Dr.

⁵ There is a comprehensive and profusely illustrated coffee-table book, *Roseland: Playground of the Finger Lakes, 1925-1985*. If you inquire at the museum, you may find out where you could still obtain a copy.



Roseland Pier. 1950s-60s. Postcard from the author's collection.

Eventually, Roseland's attractions included boat rides of various kinds. Tour boats and speedboat rides were popular and left from the Roseland Pier that jutted into the lake about where you are now (if you're on one of the benches). [Picture above.]

If there is any ride, other than the carousel, that local fans of Roseland remember, it is the roller coaster. Like the carousel, the "Skyliner," the final, and best remembered, roller coaster, was disassembled and moved to an amusement park in Altoona, PA after Roseland closed. You can see an image of the "Skyliner" in the aerial photo below.



Roseland from the air. Early 1960s. Note the miniature golf course at the lower (east) end by the roller coaster. The lakeside stage also shows. Collection of the Ontario County Historical Society.



Entrance to the miniature golf course at Roseland. This postcard is postmarked 1957. The image was taken by Margery Elling, a well-known local postcard photographer in the 1940s-1950s. From the postcard collection of the author.



The Roseland miniature golf course, opened in 1930, was always known for its landscaping. At first it was promoted as a kind of practice course for regular golfers. This postcard was produced in 1949. From the postcard collection of the author.



Roseland. The "Yoyo" ride replaced the Sky Ride in 1975. Labor Day 1985. Image by the author.

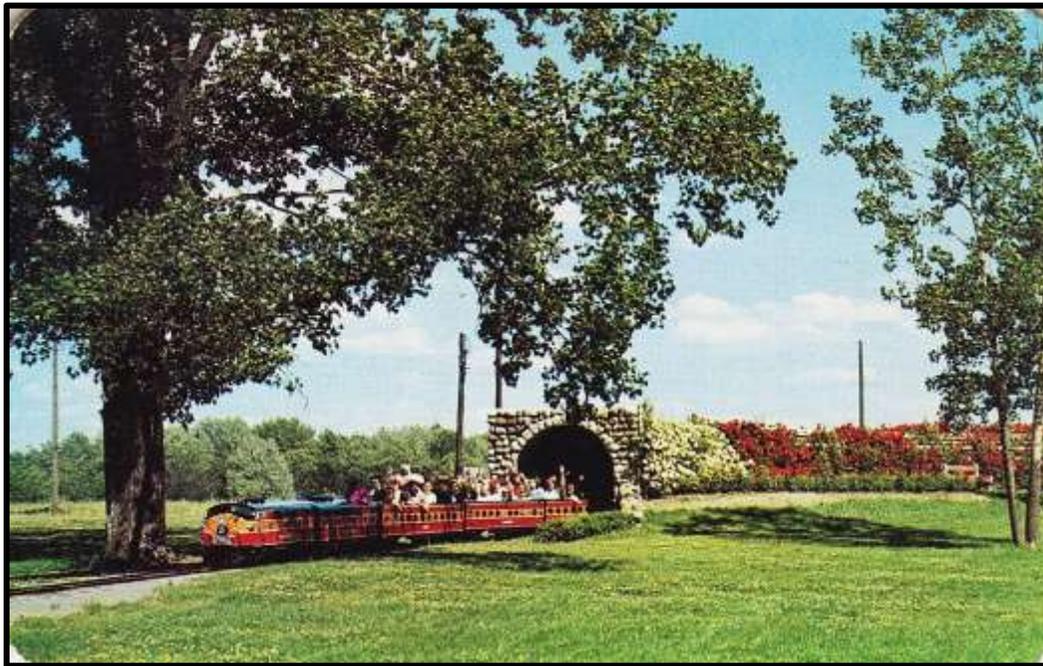
Despite the ever-expanding ideas that Bill Muar had for Roseland Park; and despite its expanding size; there were some attractions that did not last too long. Shuffleboard lasted just one year before it was replaced by the "Sky Ride."

In 1948, Muar announced plans to build a miniature railroad at Roseland. The 1:5 scale train, modeled on the popular "F" series diesel locomotives on real railroads, finally opened to riders at the start of the 1950 season. Located across what is now the new hotel parking lot, in what is now Lagoon Park, the train operated on 3800 feet of track. Near the current back entrance to Wegmans (near the outlet dam), a 100-foot tunnel was built.

The route of the train was changed in 1963; and then completely removed shortly thereafter; to make way for Roseland Bowl. The larger, eastern-most bridge into Lagoon Park, stands almost exactly where the miniature train crossed the outlet.



Boarding the "Roseland Pacemaker." Mid-1950s. At the terminal circle where Roseland Bowl was built. From the author's image collection. Photo by Everett Pierce.



The "Roseland Pacemaker" emerges from its tunnel. Postcard from the author's collection. Image by Margery M. Elling.



Roseland area from the air, showing the Rosepark development, relocated Lakeshore Dr., and Steamboat Landing restaurant. 2005. Before the construction of the hotel and conference center began. Image by the author.

When you are ready, you can begin retracing your steps around the new hotel-conference center.

Changes in plans; financing; and principal developers caused several years of delays in the construction of this new hotel. Its seemingly endless problems caused the frame to stand unfinished for several years; the subject of much local comment. Now, it has far exceeded expectations.

Cross Lakeshore Drive at the crosswalk west of the Muar House, across from the Hess Station.

You will be walking west, back toward City Pier.

The gasoline station-mini-mart complex at the corner of Muar St. and Lakeshore Dr. is only the latest of such tourist facilities to be located in this area.

Muar and Booth Streets were both created in 1957 to provide access to and from the new by-pass from the lakeshore.

For several blocks after you pass the gas station you will follow the sidewalk.

As they were on most streets, sidewalks were generally built long after the need was first recognized and the presence of danger made real. The Editor of the *Ontario County Journal* (May 19, 1911) called attention to the dangers of walking along the side of Lakeshore Dr.

“Sunday’s heavy traffic over the north shore boulevard forcibly revealed the need of a sidewalk...that will take pedestrians out of the highway. Motor vehicles formed an almost continuous procession through Main street and over this road during the afternoon..at which time the roadway was also occupied by hundreds of persons afoot. Many unattended children were among the number...”

A sidewalk on the north side of the road (where you are) would wait decades longer. Such was the speed with which motor vehicles came to dominate the lakeshore.



Land where several motels and restaurants were located in prior decades. Image by the author. June 2021.

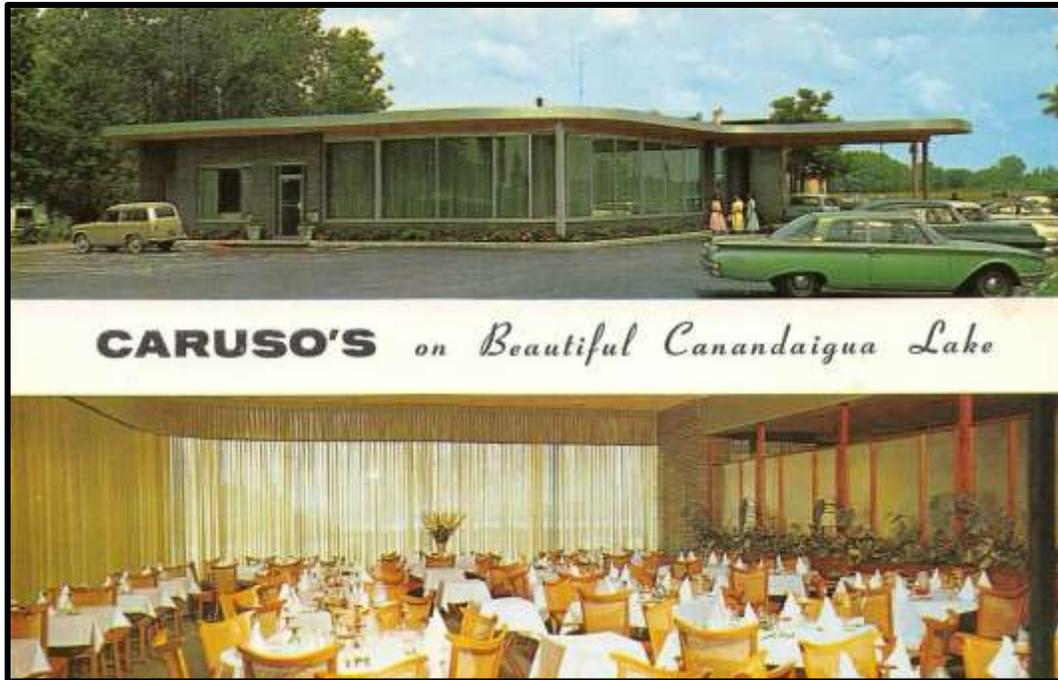
The cleared land to your right was formerly the location of several motels and restaurants at one time. As you walk along, let your imagination take you back to the period from the 1920s to the 1990s. Here are the stories of some of the businesses that were once located on that land.



Tourist cabins were popular into the 1950s and several groups of them were located along Lakeshore Dr. in the 1920s. These were near what became Muar St. Postcard collection of the author.



Lakeshore Dr. in the 1960s. Still no sidewalk. Image from the Ontario County Historical Society collection.



In later years, Caruso's Restaurant was called the Lakeshore House. This scene appears to be after the 1962 expansion. Image from the author's postcard collection.

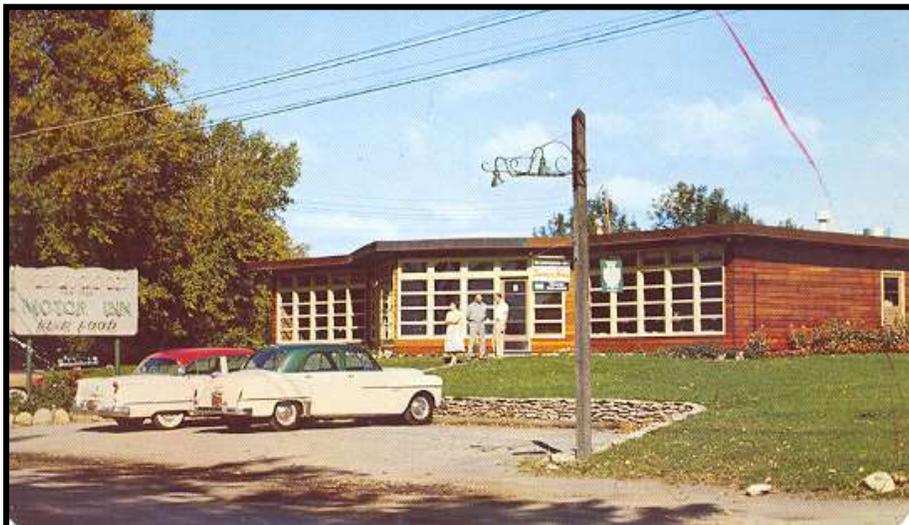
Caruso's Restaurant, established in Rochester in 1930, quickly became one of Canandaigua's best known eateries when it opened here in 1951. Established by the Cusimano family in the former Chase bakery building, built in 1948, it was located second from the current Muar St. intersection. Caruso's expanded over the years and could serve up to 500 people after 1962. Unlike many businesses along the lakeshore, Caruso's was open year-around.

In 1979, Lester Boyce, by then owner of Roseland, purchased the restaurant. Shortly after that, Caruso's was rebranded as the Lakeshore House. In 2005, the restaurant was purchased by David Genecco and rebranded again as Bella Lago.

The storied restaurant was put on the market in 2004 and closed for good on New Year's Eve, 2008. It wasn't razed, however, until November, 2012, reflecting the fluid nature of lakeshore development plans.



Sisson's cabins, motel, and restaurant were located next west of Caruso's. Postcard collection of the author.



Kellogg's restaurant and motor inn. Late 1950s. Postcard collection of the author.

A restaurant and motor lodge that thrived in this area of Lakeshore Dr. for more than sixty years was Kellogg's Restaurant and Motor Inn. The "Pan Tree" Motor Restaurant actually began on Main St. before World War II. James and Juanita Kellogg also operated a restaurant on the East Lake Rd. in the late 1930s. They moved here in 1948.



Kellogg's from the air. Late 1950s. Postcard collection of the author.

Kellogg's was noted for their comfort food, so popular at that time. They were also known for their home-baked rolls and desserts. Most everyone who visited Kellogg's went home with a bag of their sticky buns. The Kellogg's earlier establishment was one of the first in the area to be recommended by the Duncan-Hines guide.⁶

The Kellogg's new inn replaced two taverns. One of them was owned by Clark Holcomb who actually moved most of his building to a site near the intersection with East Lake Rd. That building today is Three Huskies Brewing.

The Lakeside Motor Lodge, next west, was opened in 1962. Morton Borisoff, a Rochester native, planned the 1960s modern motel with local architect, Robert Jones, in 1961. It was built with ornamental stone and boasted its own swimming pool and tennis courts.

In 1973, Borisoff sold the Motor Lodge and its associated restaurant and hamburger stand to a group of investors headed by Lester Boyce.

⁶ Mrs. Juanita Kellogg was a dietitian and a graduate of Mechanic's Institute (now RIT) who was also the first manager of the Canandaigua Academy cafeteria.



Lakeside Motor Lodge as it looked when it opened. It was razed at the time Lakeshore Dr. was rebuilt. Detail of postcard from the author's collection.

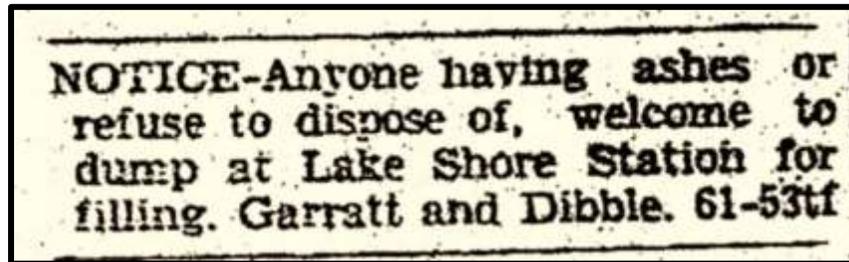
The Borisoff property had previously been the site of a small restaurant and "resort cabins" owned by the Dibble family since 1929. They closed their restaurant, filling station, and cabins in 1955.



Oliver M. Dibble's restaurant and filling station. Lakeshore Drive near the intersection of Booth St. Circa 1925. This filling station, itself, burned in 1930. Postcard collection of the author.

The Garrett farmland immediately north of Lakeshore Dr. was low and wet for much of the year. That was one reason that little development took place along the lakefront until the Twentieth Century. Dumping

ashes, refuse, and other unwanted material was a common way of building up such land.



Advertisement. *Daily Messenger*. Mar. 14, 1931.

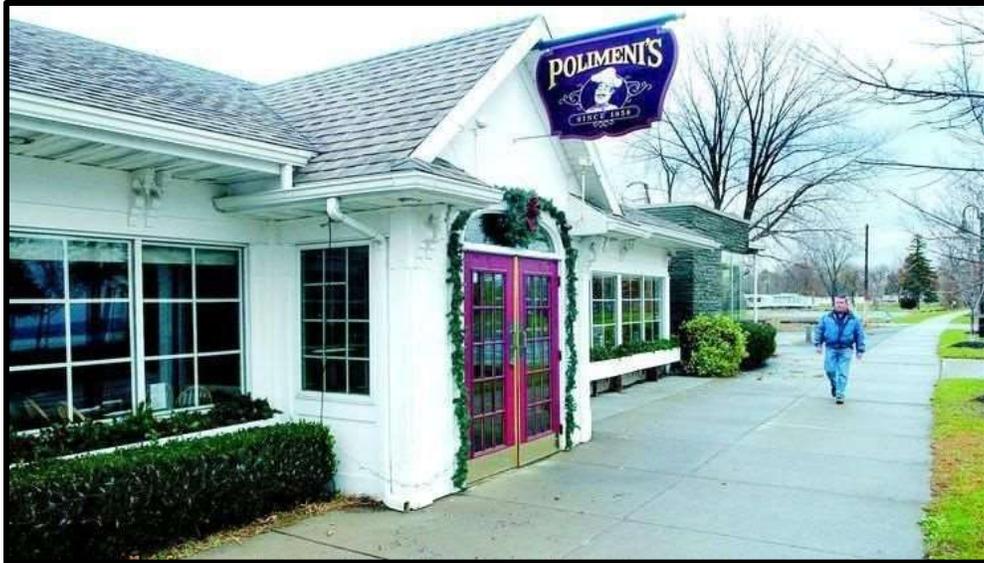
It was that same common practice that once allowed a city dump in the area of Parkway Plaza. It was that common practice that helped create of Kershaw Park, with serious consequences half-a-century later.

The Treasure Chest Restaurant was another of Mr. Borisoff's businesses and was next to the Lake Side Motor Lodge. In 1971, it became Uncle John's Pancake House. The building was razed in 1976 and was never replaced. The site became a parking lot.



Image from the Ontario County Historical Society collection.

Next along this walkway, several decades ago, you would have found a hamburger stand; another group of tourist cabins; and then Polimeni's motel and restaurant. Polimeni's was finally razed as part of the Pinnacle North development in January, 2013.



Polimeni's Restaurant and Motel. Image posted to Pinterest.com by Allyson Lane.

Next west of Polimeni's restaurant stood an ice cream stand. A Carvel franchise at first, it became an independent local business in later years, after the Polimeni family owned it.



In this picture, you can see Polimeni's and the Carvel stand. Taken in June, 1972, this image shows the flooding of the lakeshore after Hurricane Agnes. Image from the collection of the Ontario County Historical Society.

The Rocco Polimeni family, proprietors of the Niagara Restaurant, established the businesses here in 1959. It was always managed, and then owned, by John A. and Shirley Polimeni. A popular Italian-American and seafood restaurant, it remained a thriving business until shortly before its demise. The Polimeni's also owned the Red Jacket Mobile Home park directly behind their restaurant and motel. All were cleared to make way for the Pinnacle North development.

Prior to the opening of Polimeni's Restaurant, another well-known lakefront restaurant and filling station had occupied that property. Boyle's station and restaurant had been serving the public there since about 1923.

When Edward L. Boyle died in 1937, the *Daily Messenger* reported that his "hot dog stand" was one of the first along a federal highway. It was "known from coast to coast" according to the paper.

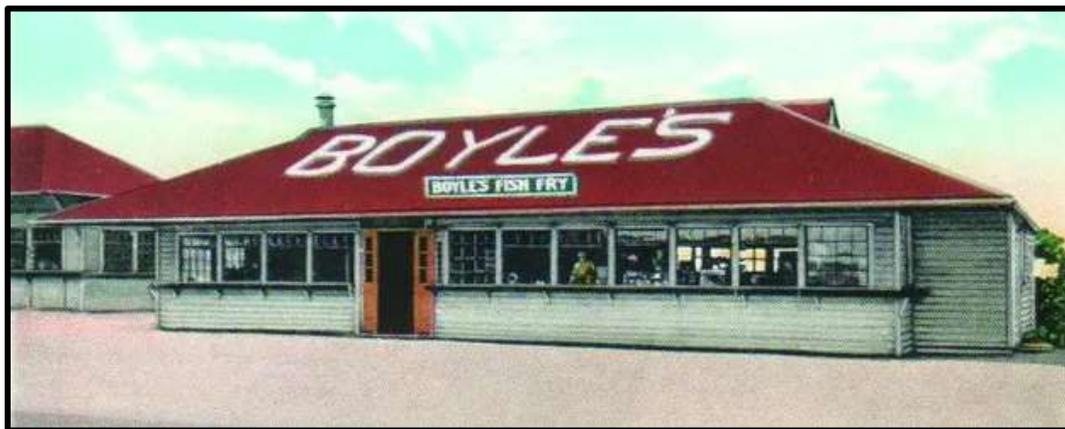


Image from the collection of the Ontario County Historical Society.

The Boyle's Restaurant site has a special niche in the history of the lakeshore. It was here, on Aug. 11, 1936, that a celebration dinner was held for the Works Progress Administration officials and workers responsible for completing Kershaw Park. Unfortunately, identifying that site today would be very difficult.

All of the properties cleared along the north side of Lakeshore Dr. since 2013 are included in the 21-acre development known as Pinnacle

North. For many years, particularly since the closing of Roseland, various investors and developers have tried to put together a plan for lakefront development. Various problems of environmental impact; political disagreements; public ambivalence; and financing always stood in the way of local efforts. In 2013 Morgan-LeChase Development unveiled the Pinnacle North proposal to cost \$120 million.

Phase I of the project required “brownfield” [pollution] cleanup, the result of the misguided early Twentieth Century land use described earlier in this tour. Ground was finally broken for two residential, and two commercial, buildings (a restaurant and a brewery) in 2015. The first occupants arrived in 2017.

Phase II of Pinnacle North was to be built in the cleared area you have just walked past. That would have been another mixed use development bringing the total of residential units to 400 with 10,000 square feet of commercial space.

The project was paused indefinitely in 2018 after legal entanglements posed problems for the developer and partners. The remaining undeveloped area was “restored” at the request of the city since it was a state designated “brownfield” (polluted by previous users).



Pinnacle North mixed use development (Phase I). Image by the author. June 2020.

Walk past the real estate office and restaurant. The real estate office was once the center of Gene W. Fisher's homebuilding business. Fisher was largely responsible for bringing the post-World War II building boom to Canandaigua. GWF Homes was one of the largest real estate agencies and builders in Ontario County starting in 1950. Mr. Fisher died in 2001, having long since passed on his business. Prior to the restaurant and real estate office, this was also the site of an auto dealer and another gas station.

Pause at the intersection with Booth St. It is named for Dr. Charles Booth, a public spirited dentist and promoter of Kershaw Park development. Look over at the two-story building by the "feeder" bridge.

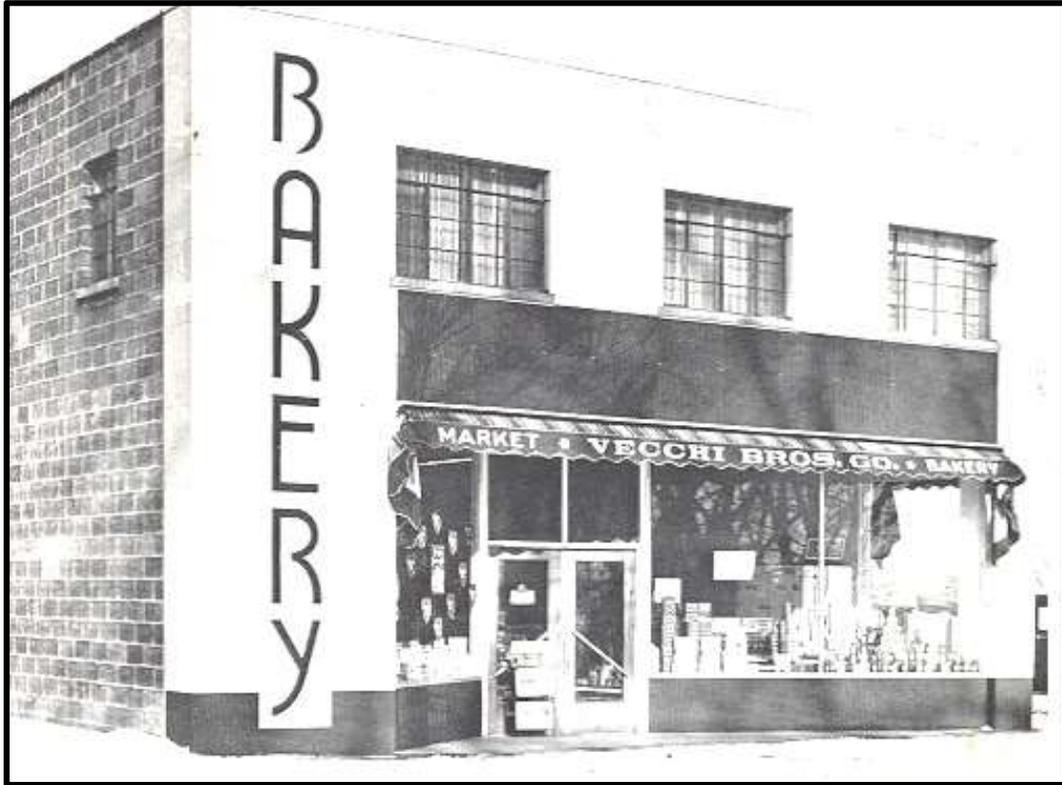
In the Fall of 1946, Louis Vecchi and his son, Renato (known as Ray), moved their bakery business from Mill Street to a newly constructed building by the "feeder" bridge. On land purchased from William Muar, the Vecchi's built a business that prospered until the younger partner "retired" to the position of County Clerk in 1981. All together, the Vecchis were in the bakery business for 68 years.

A World War II veteran, Ray Vecchi moved his family into the new two-story tile and glass building that was designed to be a modern bakery as well as a home. News reports of the time told of an "up-to-the-minute revolving tray oven capable of baking 144 loaves of bread every 45 minutes."

The property has had several owners since 1981. It is now the location of Park West Salon.



Park West hair salon. June 2020. Image by the author.



Newspaper image of the Vecchi Bros. Bakery. Published in an RG&E newsletter, "Along Our Lines," 1948.

Walk down the street just far enough to stand on the “feeder” bridge.

Actually, this stream was dug to provide water for mills in the early 1800s. A dam and gates were installed in 1907 to regulate the flow of water and keep the lake level high for the steamboats. Authority to regulate the lake level had been given to the City of Canandaigua by a state law passed in 1869. Downstream the feeder canal eventually joins the natural outlet of the lake.

Where the Vecchi Bakery was located (now Park West) an early sawmill was established. A steam mill and a windmill were also located along what was then just the lakeshore road in this area.

Down the “feeder,” past Eastern Boulevard, is the Canandaigua sewage plant. After running water and sewers became possible in Canandaigua, sewage was simply emptied into the “feeder.” Downstream communities found that practice increasingly unbearable and finally, the State investigated in 1916 and labeled the Canandaigua sewer a public nuisance. Eventually, the city was forced to build a sewage disposal plant that opened in 1923 after nearly two years of work. For many years, the “feeder” continued to be the means of washing away the problem, much reduced, however.

The dam and gates you can see here are only the latest in a series installed over the years to regulate the lake level and water flow in the “feeder” and the outlet downstream.

Several businesses once stood along the west side of the “feeder.” The processing plant of the Canandaigua Dairy and a florist and garden shop were once located here.

Another business was the Brady icehouse. Large chunks of ice weighing up to 100 tons, harvested by hundreds of men with saws, were floated down to the Brady icehouse where an elevator loaded them into the huge building. During the warmer months, ice was delivered to residents by wagon. The McKechnie Brewery, at the

north end of town, was the biggest user of lake ice using thousands of tons each year. It was one of the few ways refrigeration was possible prior to the spread of electric power and the invention of the powered refrigerator.



Brady icehouse with ice blocks being floated in on the Feeder Canal. Collection of the Ontario County Historical Society.

In 1887, the Northern Central RR, a subsidiary of the Pennsylvania RR, created a spur line to connect the railroad yard along Ontario Street

with the village pier. It's primary focus was quickly and efficiently collecting fruit and other freight from the steamboats and lakefront businesses.

The tracks remained in place into the 1960s, but freight shipments dropped off sharply with the end of the steamboat era and the rise of tourism. The increase in traffic on Lakeshore Dr. and the building of Eastern Boulevard made the tracks to the pier unworkable.⁷



Railroad crossing Lakeshore Dr. 1964. The rails are still in place, but they have been paved over. No train had been on the pier for several years. Image by the author.

At this point, our walking **tour turns back north toward the business district**. This has been an area known for food and refreshment for a century and a half, however. You might want to take a break here!

⁷ A small section of track is still visible across from the Hurley Building on Saltonstall St. in Canandaigua. The Hurley Building sits right astride the old roadbed.

Scoops ice cream was once located down Lakeshore Drive where new construction is now underway. It was the successor to the Carvel franchise owned by the late John and Shirley Polimeni for many years. Scoops re-opened here, in a nearly identical building, in 2015. You might want to try it out.

The old inn, now called Murphy's Law, is the oldest continuous business still on the lake front. It has changed very little. A succession of owners have owned the building variously called the "Steamboat Hotel," "Lake Breeze House," the "Lake Park Hotel," "Meyer's Hotel," "Traveler's Home," the "Colonial Inn," and "MacGregor's."



The "Colonial Inn" about 1970. (Wegman's is visible next door, left.)
Image from the collection of the Ontario County Historical Society.

The inn was reportedly built around 1838-39 by William Taylor, a "retired general of the War of 1812" as a local paper recounted a century later.

Henry Richardson's family operated the inn for two generations starting in 1880. For much of the 20th Century, the "Colonial Inn" was owned by two well-known restaurateurs; Noble Miller and Harlan Fisher. Miller restored the hotel function with overnight lodging. The restaurant closed in 1993. The owner cited lack of business as the reason for closure and asked the City for permission to demolish the historic structure. It stood vacant until Richard Carvotta bought the building 1999, renamed it "MacGregor's," and gave it new life.

In 1900, the *Ontario County Chronicle* reported that the new owner of the “Lake Breeze House” had a “superior line of wet goods,” a “first-class gymnasium attached,” and had “the largest collection of pugilists’ pictures in the state.” Apparently, boxing matches were held at the lake.

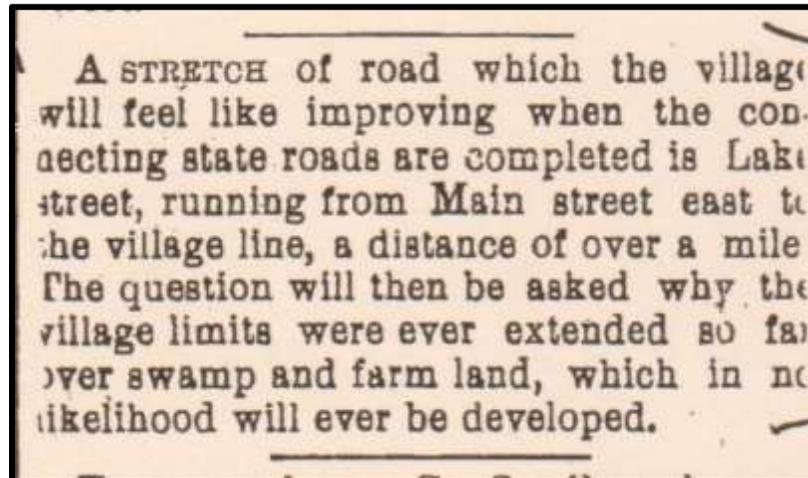


Murphy's Law in its earlier life as the Lake Breeze Hotel. The dirt street and wooden crosswalk are certainly different from today. The basic inn has not changed, however. Image from the collection of the Ontario County Historical Society.

Here is where our tour ends. There are several other driving and walking tours available at the museum and from the City Historian. Sign up for a tour at the Ontario County Historical Society. For a copy of this, or other published tours, contact the City/County Historian at the Ontario County Dept. of Records, Archives, and Information Services (RAIMS).

Have you ever wondered what it is like to be on “the wrong side of history?”

The editor of the *Ontario County Journal* surely was in that position on Aug. 11, 1905. However, no one knew it for many years.



In fairness to the editor, the first automobile came to Canandaigua in 1900. Five years later, when this opinion was published, there were still only a handful of “horseless carriages” in town.

Little more than a century ago, many people in Canandaigua believed that the lakeshore would continue to be farmland, wet land, and largely devoted to industries related to the lake. Four generations have seen enormous changes in the area you just walked. A 2009 traffic report found that 13,500 cars **per day** used Lakeshore Dr!

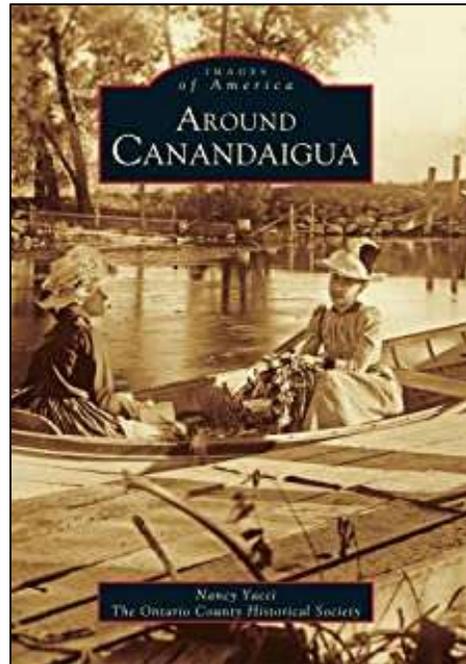
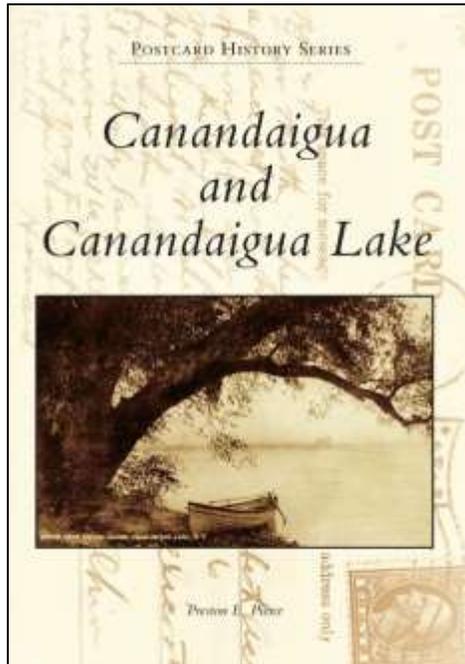


Roseland Park. 1930. Photo from the collection of the Ontario County Historical Society.



Roseland Park. 1964. Notice the impact of the automobile and the number of attractions. Photo from the collection of the Ontario County Historical Society.

If you would like to learn more about the lakeshore and the communities that surround Canandaigua Lake, look for these books. They are certainly available on-line, if not in local stores or museums you visit.





Change is inevitable! Sometimes unfortunate. For several generations, since the 1930s, Kershaw Park and Roseland have been known for the willow trees that grew along the shore. (See the Roseland Kiddie Rides picture earlier in this tour.) Over the years, many have succumbed to disease. Some of the last were severely damaged by a tornado that hit the lakeshore on Jul. 15, 2024.



Old Swimming School dock and platform. 1982. Image by the author.