

4-Town Comprehensive Plan



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Acknowledgements

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HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Town of Montague - History

The Town of Montague is well-known today for its recreational opportunities. Mile after mile of beautiful ATV and snowmobile trails wind through desolate, seemingly endless forests. Fishermen and hunters know they'd better come prepared with a GPS or compass to be secure in the wilderness that is Tug Hill. However, Montague wasn't always the wilderness it seems to be today. Montague has gone through many changes since its inception. Ironically, today's Montague would be more recognizable to its earliest settlers than it would be to its residents of 100 years ago!

Montague was created from the larger town of West Turin on November 14, 1850. The town was named for Mary Montague Pierpont, daughter of the former owner of the land. No information has yet come to light regarding how Miss Pierpont felt about this honor. Early settlers included Samuel Holden, who arrived in 1846; Samuel P. Sears, who built a sawmill at the corner of what is now Sears Pond Road and Salmon River Road in 1848; Joseph M. Gardner, who settled on the corner of present-day Sears Pond and Gardner Road in 1848; Alvin Stafford, who built a cabin in the woods on Liberty Road near the town line with Pinckney in 1848, George Moffatt, who started a farm on the Sears Pond Road between Pitcher and Salmon River Roads in 1850; and Norman Howe, who came to what is now the Olin Road to start a farm in 1851.

During its first thirty years, the town grew rapidly. By 1880, there were 975 residents! Some settlers saw the cheap land in Montague as a chance to finally have a homestead all their own. Others saw gold in the virgin stands of spruce and hardwood trees just waiting to be harvested. Montague's peak came in the years between 1880 and 1900. In these two decades, Montague was a bustling, self-sufficient boomtown that would be almost completely unfamiliar to today's inhabitants.

In 1896, there were six sawmills in Montague. Aside from the aforementioned mill at Sears' Pond, there were two sawmills in Hooker, a now-vanished hamlet far down on today's Salmon River Road. Near the corner of what is now Sears Pond Road and Rector Road stood a sawmill that also manufactured cheese boxes. The Marcellus Saw Mill stood on the western side of Liberty Road, about one-half mile north of Sears Pond Road. The biggest of them all was the Parker Saw Mill, at the intersection of what is now Parker Road and Flat Rock Road. According to the Lewis County Directory of 1895-96, this mill, owned by Lester B. Parker, produced between 1 and 2 million board feet of spruce and hardwood a year and supplied employment for 30-50 people. (On a side note- Lester B. Parker also had the first phone in Montague, in 1890.)

The sawmill industry had two great natural enemies. The first was the gradual depletion of mature timber that occurred in and around Montague as a result of the sawmills' constant activity. By 1910, the majority of Montague's land was treeless farm fields. The need to range farther and farther away for worthwhile timber slowly decreased the cost-effectiveness of mill operations. The second great natural enemy was fire. One of the mills at Hooker burnt to the ground on Feb 24, 1891. In July 1898, all of Lester Parker's mills and equipment burned in a devastating fire. He rebuilt, and a year later, his operation was running again. However, in 1906, fire once again destroyed Parker's mills. He rebuilt once more, but the mills never regained complete financial stability, and he ceased operations in 1915. The other mills gradually declined until the 1940's, when the last of them closed its doors.

The second most important industry in Montague during its boom years was the manufacture and sale of cheese. Farmers realized that selling their milk to a cheese factory was the most cost effective way of handling their surplus. Daniel Dening built the first cheese factory on today's Olin Road in 1882. John E. Murphy erected the Forks Cheese Factory on the Factory Road in the mid-

1880's. The Gardner's Corners Cheese Factory and the Rector Cheese Factory were both operating by 1887. These four factories took milk from over 1,000 cows and turned it into cheese.

Aside from sawmills and cheese factories, Montague had 153 farms ranging from 20 to 500 acres during its most prosperous time. It also had nine schools, three blacksmiths, two grocers, six post offices, a Grange Hall, four hotels, and two churches- a Methodist Episcopal Church at the corner of Liberty and Gardner Road, and a Methodist Protestant Church at the corner of Rector and Sears Pond Road.

After 1900, Montague began a long, steady period of decline. There were many reasons for this. The winters in Montague are longer, colder, and snowier than anywhere else in the region. The late spring and early autumn frosts on Tug Hill made many crops impractical for farmers. Sometimes the ground yielded a bigger crop of slate, sandstone, and limestone than anything else. The many random piles of stones that can be found in the woods all over Montague attest to farmers' efforts to keep their fields stone-free. Farmers' children grew up and decided they could have an easier life elsewhere. People were "burned out" of their houses and decided to rebuild in a less remote location. In 1945, the last cheese factory shut down. By 1950, the population had decreased from its high of 975 in 1880 to 139. In 1952, the four Montague schoolhouses still open were closed due to school centralization, and the remaining students began taking the long bus ride to Lowville Academy and Central School each day. Buildings were torn down, burned down, or simply left to rot. The forest gradually reclaimed what had been taken from it.

In the 1970's, a rebirth of sorts began in Montague. People discovered that the deserted roads in Montague, combined with the extreme snowfall the area receives, were perfect for riding their snowmobiles each winter. Gradually, word spread about this "sledder's paradise." The cheap land available in Montague encouraged snowmobile enthusiasts to buy land and erect camps to pursue their sport. New businesses opened to cater to these consumers. The Montague Inn, located at the corner of Sears Pond Road and Rector Road, opened its doors on October 19, 1972. The Tug Hill Inn on Salmon River Road opened in 1980, and the Spruces Bed and Breakfast on the Sears Pond Road opened in 1991. All-terrain-vehicles ("four wheelers") soon realized that what was good in the winter was good in the summer, and they began frequenting the area as well. Currently the wilds of Montague are a premier destination year-round for off-road vehicles. Montague is the centerpiece of a vast trail system that encompasses 5 counties. In 1996, the National Weather Service installed a Doppler Radar System in Montague to get a better handle on the heavy lake-effect snows. Now anyone can check the weather in Montague via the internet. Montague's population will probably never rebound to previous levels. According to the US Census of 2000, Montague is the second smallest town in the state, population-wise. However, Montague's fame as an outdoor destination continues to spread. Montague's future is looking bright!

-David Andalora

Town of Pinckney - History

By Susan C. Townsend

The Township of Pinckney in Lewis County, New York was formed on February 12, 1808. It was the second town formed, Denmark being the first, after Lewis County was erected. (At the time of its formation, Lewis County consisted of only 5 towns, namely: Leyden, Harrisburgh, Lowville, Martinsburgh, and Turin.) Pinckney was formed from tracts of land taken from the Towns of Harrisburgh and Harrison (now the Town of Rodman) and named by the state legislature in honor of Revolutionary War General and statesman, Thomas Pinckney of South Carolina.

Settlement was mainly by Americans, from the New England states, and began several years before the township was formed. The first known settlers were Samuel and Joseph Clear, who located in the

southwest part of the town in about 1803. They soon left, however, and the next known to settle in were Ethan Russel and J. Greene of Rhode Island in 1804. Then in 1805 Levi and Elisha Barnes, from Middleton, Connecticut settled in what we now know as Barnes Corners, which was named for Elisha. They also later left the area, either just before or after the War of 1812, sources differ. When Elisha left, he apparently sold his property to Eber Lucas, also from Middleton, who had arrived in 1806.

By 1809, John W. Lucas, James and Stephen Hart, James Armstrong, Phineas Woolworth, Joel Webb, Silas Slater, David Canfield and several Stoddard families had come into the town. Mr. Canfield made the first real improvement in the town when he cleared a large area of land in what is now known as New Boston, erected a sawmill and built a bridge over Deer River.

Other early settlers were Richard Dye, Asa Cooley, Elijah Yarrington, Henry Warner, Noah and Jesse Merwin, Reuben Waite, Ira Pollack, Amos Barrett, Mr. Needum, Daniel Hall, Orasmus Streeter, and Ira Odell , who built the first saw mill in Barnes Corners.

As the town grew and changed, so did the families. The first birth occurred in the family of James Hunt or John Stoddard and the first death was Mrs. Elisha Moody.

Schools and churches were built and a Grange Hall were erected. Town government was formed, post offices assigned and businesses created.

The first school in Pinckney was the Dye Schoolhouse which was built near the Richard Dye home. The first church services were also held in this schoolhouse. The first school in Barnes Corners was held in the log cabin built by Elisha Barnes, where the Barnes Corners Hotel now stands. As the years progressed schools were located in several areas of the town. There were schools at New Boston, Cronks Corners, on the 7x9 Road (White School District), Pinckney Corners, the Hardscrabble School located about two miles down the Copenhagen Road from Barnes Corners, the River Road School and one at Barnes Corners.

There were several churches in the town at different times. The First Methodist Episcopal Society formed and erected a meeting house at Boynton's Corners on August 8, 1831. The Pinckney Corners Methodist Episcopal Church was built in 1851. The First Baptist Church of Barnes Corners was built in 1856 and a Methodist church was built in Barnes Corners in 1857. Also started in 1856 and finished in 1860 was the Roman Catholic Church at New Boston. The first building for the Catholic Church was originally 1½ miles from New Boston. At present, only the Methodist and Catholic churches survive to conduct services.

When the town government was formed in 1808, the first town meeting was held at the home of Stephen Hart, where Ethan Green was elected the first supervisor. An interesting note; although there had been a town clerk for many years, the first marriage license wasn't issued until 1908. It was issued by Charles D. Lucas for the marriage of Hattie Edwards to Harry Larkin.

Post offices were first located at Boynton's Corners, Cronks Corners and Barnes Corners, which was the last to close; the residents now receiving their mail rural route from Copenhagen.

As in any period of history, the first settlers in an area are often farmers. So it was in Pinckney. The economy was agriculturally based (as much of it is also today) and most everything for a family's use was produced at home. Before businesses were developed and built within the town, most

people had to travel to Watertown, Copenhagen or Lowville for the things they couldn't provide for themselves. By 1840, though, businesses had started to spring up.

The first Tavern and Hotel was built by Horace Lucas in 1846. It was located in Barnes Corners on South Main St. (7x9 Road) just south of Elisha Barnes' log cabin on the corner. The first building used as a store in Barnes Corners was built in the 1840's by a Mr. Delano. It was located where the cheese factory now stands, but was bought, moved and turned into a store by Joseph Davis. William Mahar built and conducted, for many years, a store at New Boston and Amos Stoddard was engaged for many years in the mercantile business in a store located about 3 ½ miles from Barnes Corners on the Copenhagen Road.

Many more stores, shops and businesses opened and closed over the years. There were general mercantile stores, feed stores, harness shops, blacksmith shops, a carriage shop, two more hotels (the Savell House, built in 1887, and later called the Hotel Curtis, now Barnes Corner's Hotel, and the Central House built in New Boston in 1888, which operated as a hotel until September 1, 1917 when it was turned into a store.) Also there were a drug store, barber shops, weavers, dressmakers, milliners (hat makers), grocery stores, a meat store, cheese factories, a creamery (where the Grange Hall in Barnes Corners now stands), saw mills, a manufactory of agricultural implements, a furniture factory (made and repaired furniture, also made sleighs and skis), a hoop factory, a printing press, a shingle mill, a grist mill (the grist mill was later changed into a potash and cooper factory), a gun shop, an opera house and poolroom, and even a 10 Cent store. At different times, there were four doctors who practiced in the town, a watch repair shop, and (for when the doctors could do no more and your time had run out) undertakers.

The residents of Pinckney were not without amusements and pleasures. The Grange at one time had a ball club that played at several surrounding communities. Plays, dances and programs of interest were put on by the Grange. The Churches and Ladies Aid Society held dinners, socials and bazaars. The schools held field days and dances were held at nearly all the hotels in town on a weekly basis. Then, for ten years, 1933-1943, Barnes Corners held a community Old Home Days that was sponsored by both the Grange and the Methodist Church.

History, they say, repeats itself. The Town of Pinckney was settled and then nearly abandoned. Many businesses that prospered no longer exist. Today there are few commercial businesses in the town outside of Barnes Corners. Although these businesses are concentrated in a small area, they serve all the residents and also a fluctuating but growing population of campers, hunters and tourists. Perhaps Pinckney is again being slowly settled; for oft times they come for the weekend and stay a lifetime.

Sources:History of Lewis County by Franklin B. Hough
History of Lewis County 1880-1965,Edited by G. Byron Bowen
Tyler Notebooks by Ella O. Tyler
Gazetteer & Business Directory of Lewis Co., N.Y. 1872-1873 by Child Hamilton
Business Directory of Lewis Co., N.Y. 1895-1896 by William Adams
History of the North County, Vol. 1 by Henry F. Landon

Town of Lloyd Comp Plan

7.6 CULTURAL RESOURCES

Historic structures greatly contribute to the visual appearance and quality of life in Lloyd. The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) maintains a

database of historic properties and cultural resources in the Town. The *Comprehensive Plan* recommends that OPRHP's inventory be verified and supplemented, if necessary. Some of these sites may be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. All of them have been identified as having historic value.

Structures built prior to 1850 that are of historic significance, as identified by the Town Historian, the Beautification Committee and OPRHP, should also be inventoried. To encourage historically sensitive rehabilitation of these properties, the Town should establish an Historic Preservation Committee to review development proposals that involve these structures. In addition, the *Comprehensive Plan* recommends that identified historic properties be eligible for expanded uses. Revising the Zoning to allow a wider range of uses might help to preserve historic structures and the Town's cultural heritage. These uses might include:

- Multi-family housing within an historic structure.
- Art and craft studios, art galleries, antique shops, rare book and coin or stamp shops.
- A bed-and-breakfast or a tourist guesthouse operation that would encourage protection of the structure as well as help the tourist industry.

As discussed previously, the Tax Act of 1986 provides incentives for the rehabilitation and restoration of old or historic buildings. To qualify for the historic tax credit, properties must be listed on the National Register for Historic Places or be a contributing element in a Historic District. While only one property is currently listed on the Register in Lloyd, several others are likely to be eligible. Making owners of historic properties aware of the tax credit may encourage them to list their properties and avail themselves of this program.

To preserve archaeological resources, information on potential archaeological sites in the Town should be carefully considered during SEQR reviews of proposed developments. Newly discovered archaeological sites should be filed with the State archaeological survey for inclusion in their database.

Town of Amboy Comp Plan

APPENDIX A – HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY

(EXCERPTED FROM "ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY OF OSWEGO COUNTY", Heritage Foundation of Oswego, Inc.)

The property types sought for this reconnaissance survey were determined by an examination of the History of the Town of Amboy and selected from the list of Contexts and Study Units prepared by the State Historic Preservation Office. Of the properties considered, only those with significance in town or county history and with acceptable levels of integrity based on configuration and period architectural detail are listed below. Other property types, once significant but now lacking integrity, are briefly noted. All buildings and sites included in the annotated list have been assigned an approximate date based largely on architectural character visible on the exterior of the building.

Numbers included in parentheses refer to the 1976 survey.

1) 1991. **Carterville dam**, at intersection of Co. Rt. 17 & Co. Rt. 56. The Little River flows east into Oneida County. In the 19th century there was a sawmill, a grist mill, and a large tannery at Carterville. The mill ruins could not be found, and were presumed to be destroyed when the new dam was built. (2.0.9.1)

- 2) c1900. **Frank Moteyunas Farm Barn**, Foil Road. Large dairy barn, perpendicular siding; covered entrance to hayloft, its foundation of red sandstone, although foundation is not solid against the wall of the barn.
- 3) c1920. **Kenneth Drought Farm Barn**, NYS Rt. 69. Large dairy barn, wooden clapboards, gambrel roof, covered entrance to the hayloft, seamed tin roof; silo; interesting pictures of Holstein dairy cows painted on side of front of barn.
- 4) c1900. **Richard Bryant Farm Barn**, SW corner of Frank Bryant Road & Co. Rt. 17A. A rectangular barn, gable roof, perpendicular siding. The structure stands so high on the size of the base that one wonders if the building could have been used for hops or tobacco.
- 5) c1860. **THE BARN**, owned by John & Mary Monkman, Foil Road. A large dairy barn, gable roof, perpendicular siding; 122 feet long, 32 feet wide, and 35 feet from ground to roof peak. The barn has been adapted for use as a dinnertheater (used about four times a year).
- 6) 1829. **Williams-Goly Farm**, owned by Steven & Diane Goly, Co. Rt. 17, R.D. 2, Box 234, Camden, NY 13316, south of Jamison Corner. Two-story, 4-bay, Federal style house, gable roof, wooden clapboards. Large dairy barn (early 1900s); horse barn, gambrel roof, shed on either side (early 1900s); hop barn & carriage house, board & batten siding (1870); ice house, gable roof, horizontal boards, tall entrance way with wood squares to fill in space as ice blocks are added (c1900s). (2.0.10)

2006 Community Survey - Summary

Towns of Harrisburg, Martinsburg, Montague & Pinckney

14. Which areas of the Town do you think are worthy of special protection for the future? (Please check () all that apply.)

79% <i>Streams</i>	60% <i>Cemeteries</i>	46% <i>Wetlands</i>
70% <i>Forests</i>	56% <i>Good farm land</i>	39% <i>Open space</i>
67% <i>Gorges and waterfalls</i>	53% <i>Historic buildings & sites</i>	

Overall and for each of the four towns, survey respondents think the following areas of their town are worthy of special protection for the future:

	Overall	Harrisburg	Martinsburg	Montague	Pinckney
Streams	79%	73%	76%	83%	84%
Forests	70%	62%	64%	79%	78%
Gorges and waterfalls	67%	63%	66%	66%	71%
Cemeteries	60%	54%	67%	50%	62%
Good farm land	56%	60%	63%	40%	56%
Historic buildings & sites	53%	40%	66%	42%	51%
Wetlands	46%	43%	37%	54%	55%
Open space	39%	33%	32%	48%	48%