

Prepared for the  
WILLIAMSVILLE HIGH SCHOOL  
NORTH AND SOUTH  
**Class of 1969**  
**60th Birthday Celebration**  
JULY 16, 2011

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- **Ed Youngs Hardware**, which maintains  
an archive of the history of the Village of Wil-  
lamsville, NY
- **Williamsville Historical Society**
- **A History of the Town of Amherst, New  
York** by Sue Miller Young, 1965
- **Historic Village of Williamsville Website**
- **Williamsville Businessmen's Association**
- **A Brief History of the Town of Amherst**,  
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- **WIKIPEDIA**
- **Google Maps**

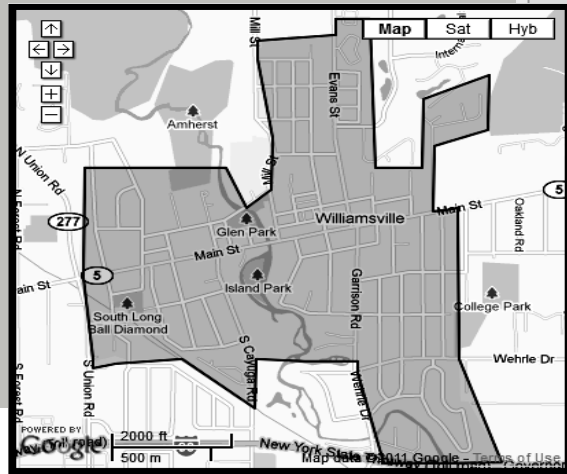
*Historical*  
**WALKABOUT**  
IN THE

*Village*  
OF  
*Williamsville*  
**NEW YORK**

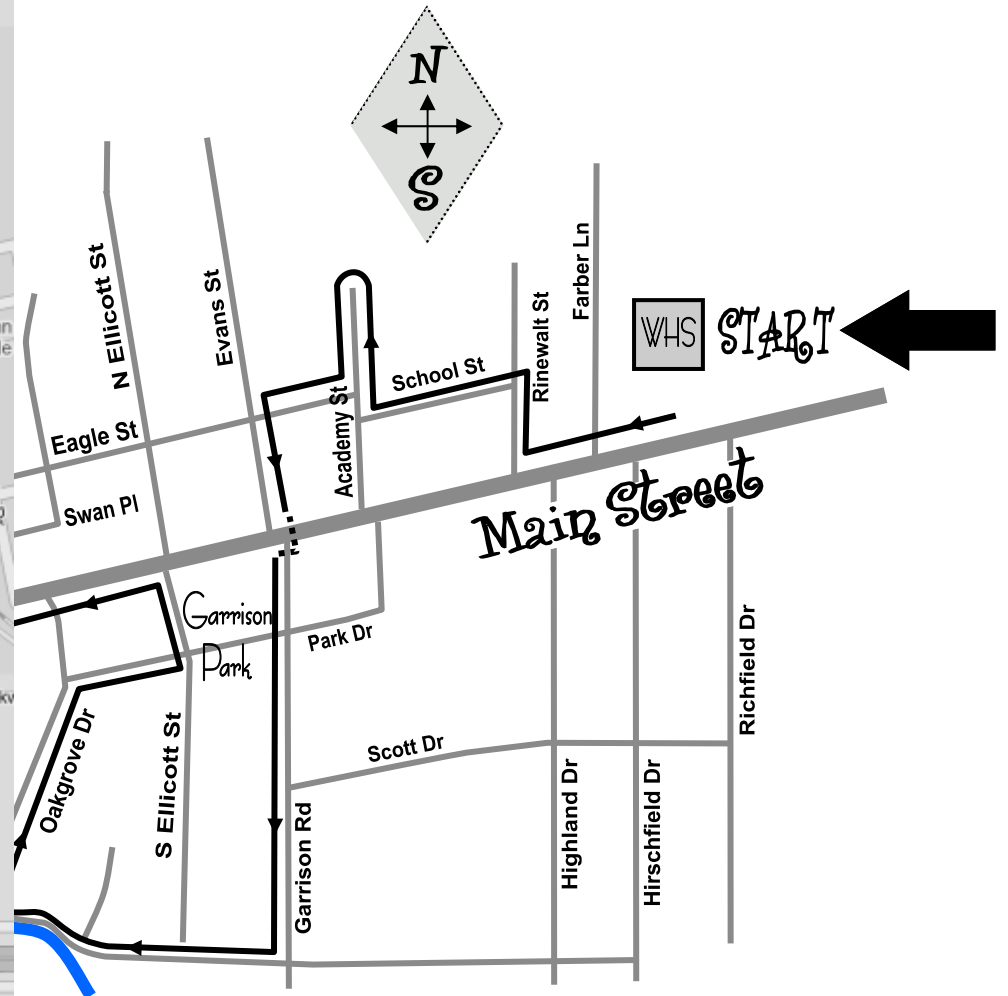


MAIN STREET 1909

# MAP OF THE VILLAGE OF WILLIAMSVILLE, NEW YORK

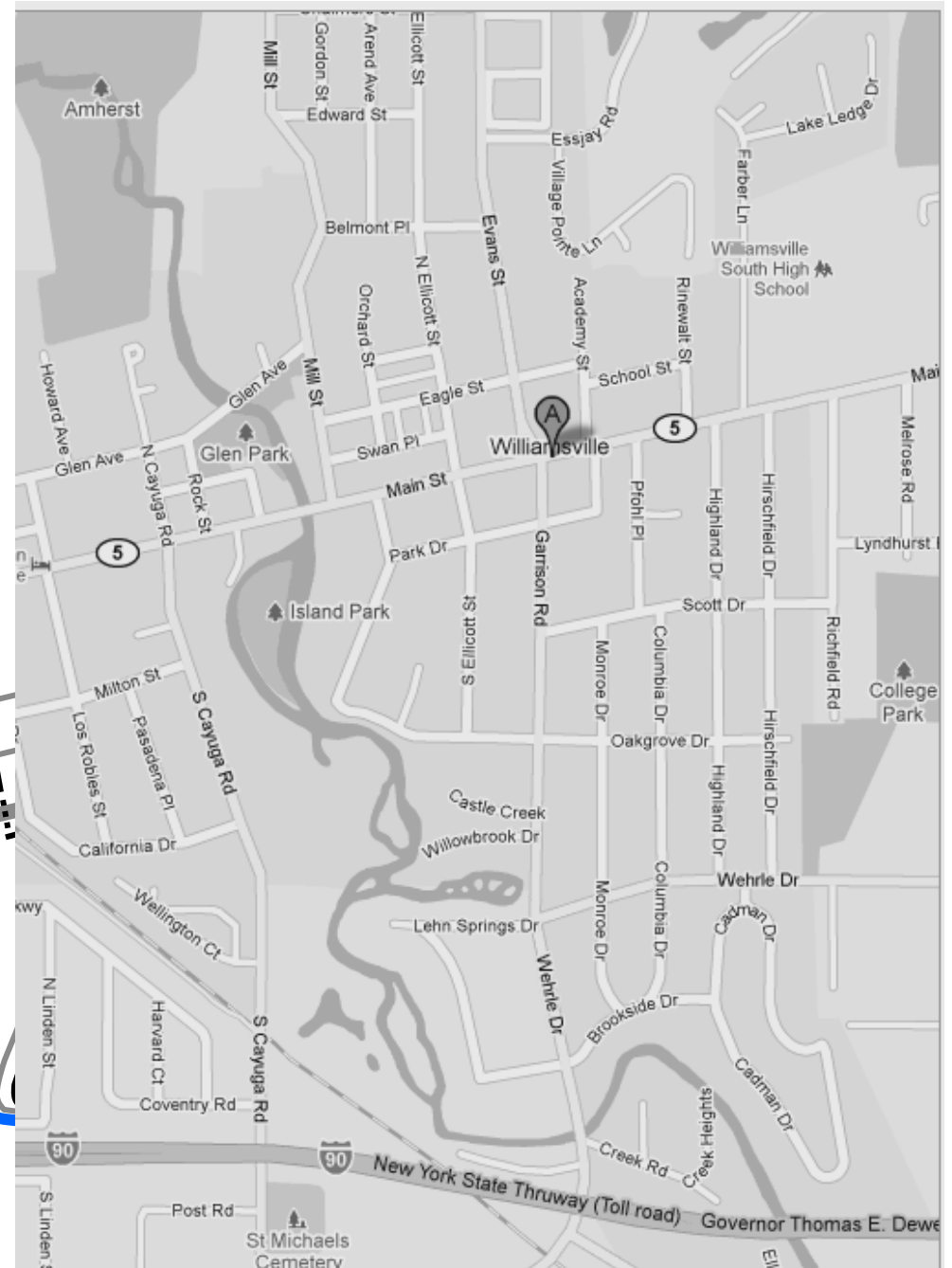
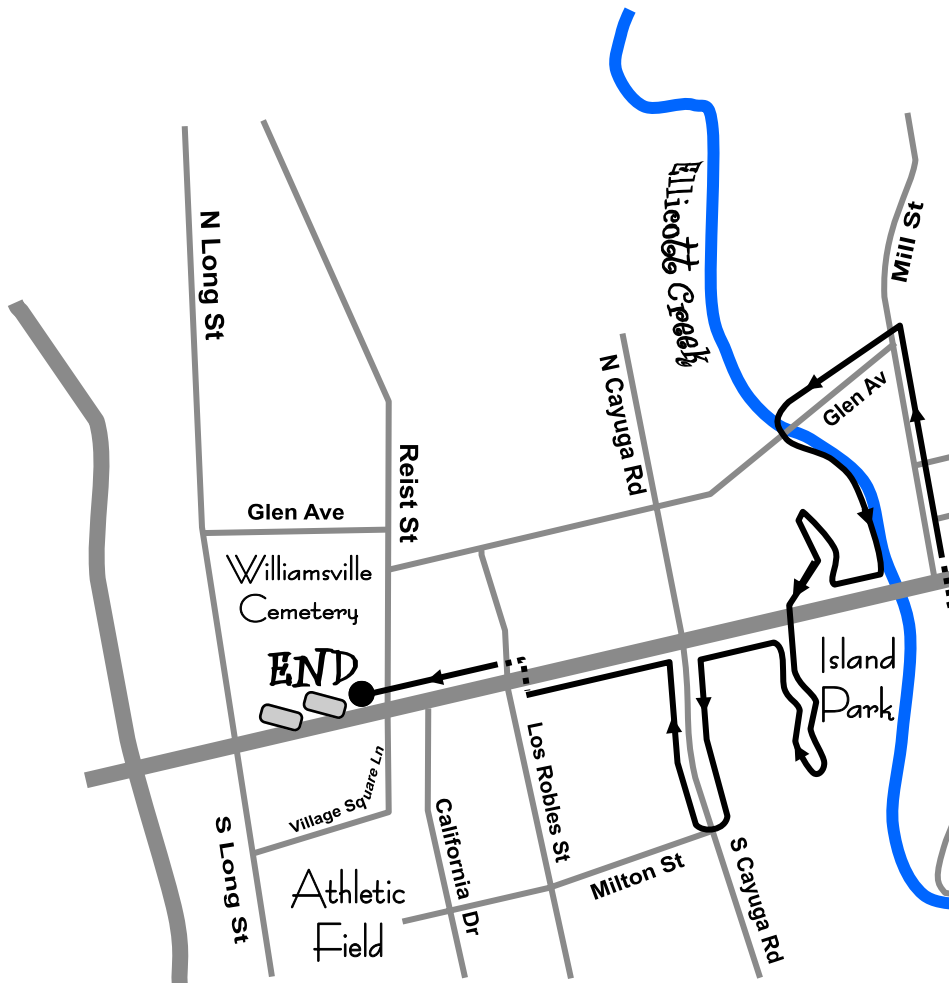


Maps courtesy of Google



# Proposed Route

## WCHS NORTH/SOUTH VILLAGE WALKABOUT

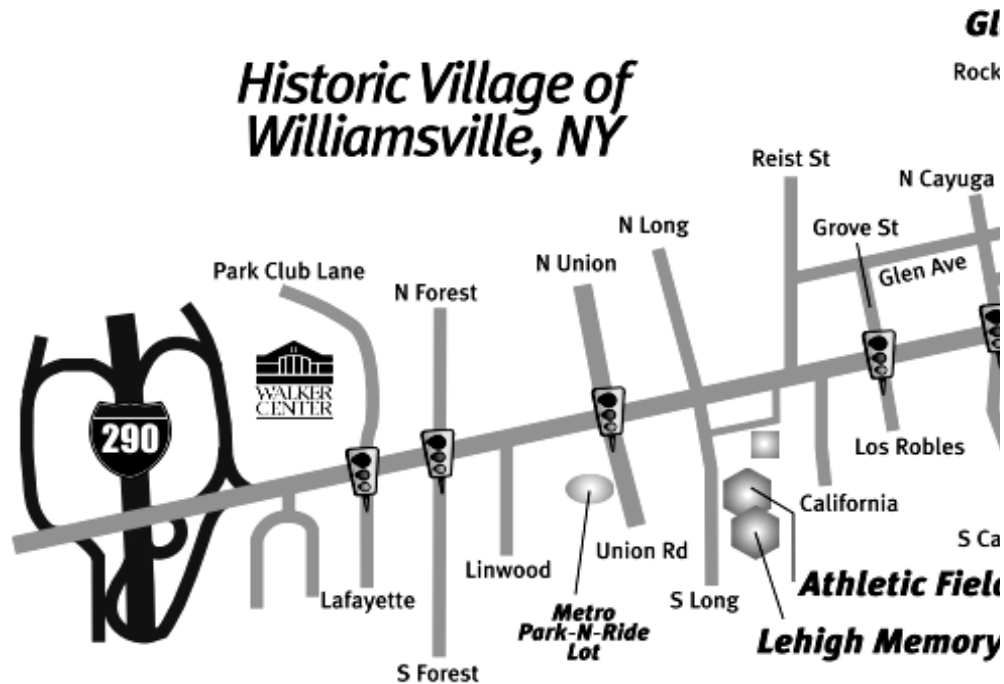


## HISTORY OF THE VILLAGE

**Williamsville** was the first and largest settlement in the **Town of Amherst**. The village was settled first because of its location on the main road to **Buffalo** and because it was next to **Ellicott Creek** (first known as Eleven Mile Creek). The waterfalls on Ellicott Creek were used to power mills for sawing wood into lumber, grinding wheat into flour, and corn into cornmeal. These mills were very important to the early settlers.

The community developed where the major road between Batavia and Buffalo crossed Ellicott Creek just above **Glen Falls**. The water power offered by the waterfall attracted millers. The first mill was built by **Jonas Williams** in 1811, giving the village its first name, "Williams Mills." The **Williamsville Water Mill** still stands today, next to **Glen Park**. In addition to being the source of the Village's name, Jonas Williams also served as Williamsville's first postmaster.

Several other mills were built near Glen Falls during the 19th century. In 1841, a raceway was constructed to divert water from Ellicott Creek to the mills, creating an island known today as **Island Park**. A stage coach stop, tavern, and inn were built along the main road near Ellicott Creek by **Oziel Smith** in 1832. Today it is known as the **Eagle House**. The close crossing of the main road and Ellicott Creek's Glen Falls was the initial attraction, around which Williamsville grew. The village was incorporated in 1850.



## The Castle in Williamsville, NY WGRZ.com Channel 2—Buffalo, NY May 11, 2010

AMHERST, NY — Once you step onto the grounds, with the stream gurgling and the birds singing in the background, it's easy to let your mind drift back to another time, when dragons roamed the land and damsels found themselves in need of rescuing from yon tower.

But this isn't medieval Europe, it's Amherst, New York, and the castle isn't imaginary; it's real, and it was built in 1917 by a European immigrant and craftsman. The setting is perfect, on a little island, complete with moat and bridge. The castle was modeled after an existing castle in Germany using stones brought in from Holland, New York.

Mildred O'Rourke has spent half her life in the castle. She's 88 and lives here with her son and her sister. Mildred and her family value their privacy, so we aren't revealing the exact location or shooting inside but they allowed us to show you the beautiful grounds flush with Spring and landscaped with stone steps, arches, and bridges. There's the tower, standing watch over the castle itself, and the bridge house, topped by a room warmed by a big fireplace where Mildred says men in the family gathered to play cards at night.

In 1956, fire gutted the castle in the middle of the night. All of the finely crafted interior collapsed into the basement. Mildred credits her parents with cleaning out the damage and restoring the interior.

So here it is, right in the middle of suburban Buffalo, built on a medieval concept of privacy and security and now a reflection of the best spirit and determination of western New York.



## OESCHNER'S CASTLE —A WILLIAMSVILLE TREASURE

Ignatz Oechsner was a mason from Germany. When he came to Williamsville, he decided to build a castle. Begun in 1917, the castle was built on a one-acre island in Ellicott Creek called "Dream Island," located about four blocks south of Main Street. The castle was built of fossil rock brought in from Holland, New York. Mr. Oechsner worked on the castle for 25 years, but it was still unfinished when he died in the early 1940s. Included in the project were a main building, gatehouse, tower, dungeon, and coach house.

Oechsner's castle is modeled after a castle in Germany and has many special little touches, such as the trademark ox over the door, and lions over the windows. There are downspouts with gargoyles and dragons and statuary all about the property.



### 1956 FIRE AT "DREAM ISLAND"

A village landmark was gutted by a mysterious fire on July 2, 1956. The castle on "Dream Island" off Oakgrove Drive was left a stone shell after the blaze, which was reported at 2:40 a.m. The building was well involved when fire fighters arrived, with flames soon bursting through the thick slate roof. Burning embers landed as far away as Park Drive.

For the first time in [fire] company history, a deluge gun was utilized as pumpers drafted from the waters of Ellicott Creek which surrounded the island. Trucks could not be driven across the narrow bridge and Chief Harold Stisser feared a collapse might occur.

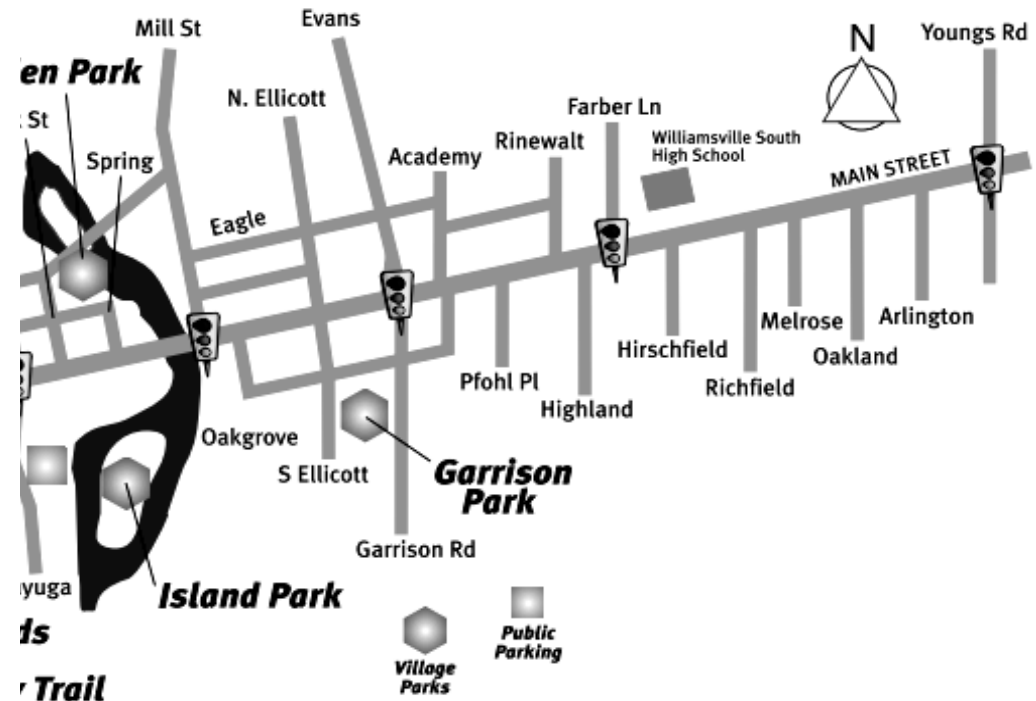
—From the website of Hutchinson  
Hose Company: History

**St. John Neumann** served as founder and first pastor of **SS Peter and Paul Roman Catholic Church** from 1836 to 1840.

During the **War of 1812**, American troops were stationed in Williamsville in the area between **Garrison Road** and Ellicott Creek. American soldiers and British prisoners were treated in a field hospital and log barracks that lined Garrison Road. A small cemetery, located on Aero Drive between **Wehrle** and **Youngs Road**, was used to bury the men who did not survive their wounds or illnesses. **General Winfield Scott** used the **Evans House** as his headquarters in the Spring of 1813 when his entire army of 5,000-6,000 men was stationed in Williamsville. In 1813, when the British burned Buffalo, people fled to the safety of Williamsville and nearby **Harris Hill**.

After the War of 1812, Williamsville had a grist mill, a saw mill, a general store, and a tavern. **Isaac Bowman**, appointed Postmaster of Williamsville in 1813, owned the first store. **Samuel McConnell** kept the tavern, and **Dr. David S. Conkey**, who arrived in 1807, was the first physician in Amherst.

In 1983 Williamsville passed an Historic Preservation Code to conserve its old buildings.



Every summer in Williamsville, the **Old Home Days** celebration is held in Island Park, located on **Main Street** in the Village. The Carnival begins with a parade on the opening Tuesday, and for four days, thousands of people ride the rides, enjoy the food, and see the people of Williamsville. The festival is in remembrance of several women who in the mid-19th century would come to the park once a summer to drink tea and catch up on the years past.

## GEOGRAPHY

Williamsville is located at 42°57'45" N 78°44'33" W (42.962546, -78.742435). It is northeast of Buffalo, New York. According to the United States Census Bureau, the village has a total area of **1.2 square miles**, all of it land. Population density averages **4091 people per square mile**.

Ellicott Creek flows through Williamsville from south to north. The **Onondaga Escarpment** runs east-west across the village, and Glen Falls marks the place where Ellicott Creek falls over the escarpment. An early name for Ellicott Creek was "Eleven Mile Creek."

**Main Street is New York State Route 5** (east-west).

**Joseph Ellicott**, an early surveyor, had improvements made to the "**Great Iroquois Trail**," an ancient path from the **Hudson River** to **Lake Erie**. It was known as the "**Buffalo Road**" and later as Main Street. **North Union Road (NY-277)** is a major north-south road through the west end of the village. **Transit Road**, also surveyed by Joseph Ellicott, was named for an important surveying instrument. Transit Road marks the boundary between townships (**Amherst and Clarence, Cheektowaga and Lancaster**, among others), which explains the need for an especially precise survey.



Joseph Ellicott's surveys of western New York divided the **Holland Purchase\*** land into a grid of more or less square townships with boundaries aligned north-south and east-west, a system related to the Public Land Survey System (PLSS) used in most of the rest of post-colonial America. In western New York, strict accordance to the PLSS was not required or followed, since the land was not federally owned, but rather had passed directly from the **Seneca Indians** to land speculators such as the **Holland Land Company**.

The **New York State Thruway (Interstate 90)** passes through the south part of the village and connects to **Interstate 290**. A Thruway toll plaza located near the village has been a matter of controversy for years and recent proposals suggest it be moved farther east.

\* **THE HOLLAND PURCHASE** | The Holland Land Company was organized by six banking firms in the Netherlands to purchase the unsettled land of western New York State. Their agent, Theophile Cazenove, in 1792-93 bought more than three million acres, known as the Holland Purchase. It included the area west of the "Transit Line," located 13 miles east of here, from Lake Ontario to Pennsylvania. The purchase excluded a strip along the Niagara River and six reservations established for Indians. Joseph Ellicott, the company's agent for more than 20 years, surveyed towns and planned roads and mill sites. He laid out the city of Buffalo, promoted canal construction, and dominated party politics in the area. From its main office at Batavia, the company sold most of the purchase in 360-acre lots, exacting a small down payment. From the Holland Purchase were formed four counties and parts of four others, comprising 129 rural and suburban towns and 11 cities. *[Source: New York State Museum website]*



### 5259 MAIN ST

The **Village Custard Stand** was the only ice cream place in town for many years before it was torn down by the **Santora** family for parking for their pizzeria. Santora's was also torn down to make room for the **Glenwood Village apartments**.



### 5140 MAIN ST

**Glen Campbell Chevrolet** hosting a fleet of new Corvettes.

5336 MAIN ST  
This was Bus Het-  
tig's **Mobil Station**  
at the northwest  
corner of Main  
and Long St.



5329 MAIN STREET  
**Wolf's Blacksmith Shop** in 1858...



...and in the mid-20th century. Building  
housed **Flowers From The Courtyards**, and  
is currently the home of **DiCamillo's Bakery**.



5316 MAIN ST  
**Fred Holtz City Service** was re-  
placed by a **Shell Gas** station and  
finally torn down to make room  
for **McDonald's** and **CVS** parking.



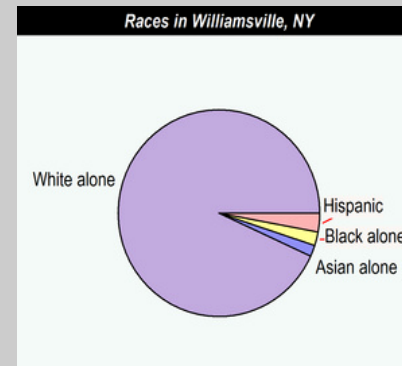
5280 MAIN ST  
*Looking north on N. Union Rd*  
**Schislers Greenhouses** were torn  
down to make room for the **Amherst**  
**Senior Citizens** building. The address  
was on Main St but the business was on  
N. Union Rd.

## NOTABLE WILLIAMSVILLE RESIDENTS

- **Thomas Dao** (1921–2009) | physician who developed breast cancer treatment alternatives.
- **Rob Lalonde** | Professional ice hockey player
- **St. John Neumann** (1811–1860) | Canonized Roman Catholic Priest and Bishop who was the founder and first pastor of SS Peter and Paul Catholic Church in Williamsville.
- **Todd Marchant** | Professional ice hockey player
- **Wendie Malick** | Professional actress

## ANCESTRIES

German 33.3%, Irish 21.7%, Italian 15.0%,  
English 11.5%, Polish 11.0%, French 4.7%.



White alone - 4,856 (93.2%)  
Hispanic - 152 (2.9%)  
Black alone - 111 (2.1%)  
Asian alone - 94 (1.8%)

Major ancestry groups reported  
by Williamsville residents include:

- German - 27%
- Irish - 17%
- Italian - 12%
- English - 9%
- Polish - 9%
- French (except Basque) - 4%
- Scottish - 3%
- Russian - 2%
- Swedish - 1%
- Dutch - 1%
- European - 1%
- Swiss - 1%
- Ukrainian - 1%
- Hungarian - 1%
- Black or African American - 1%
- Scotch-Irish - 1%
- Puerto Rican - 1%

## WILLIAMSVILLE FACTS — HISTORY AND PERSONALITIES

From: *History of Amherst NY—From our County and Its People: A Descriptive Work of Erie County, New York.*

Edited by Truman C. White, The Boston History Company Publishers, 1898

- The village was incorporated **November 4, 1850**, with the following officers: Benjamin Miller, president; John S. King, Henry B. Evans, Philip J. Zent and John Hershey trustees; Dr. William Van Pelt, clerk. The first postmaster was Jonas Williams, from whom the village took its name.
- Demeter Wehrle engaged in the manufacture of furniture in 1850, and since 1874 has carried on a large retail establishment.
- The old grist mill of Jonas Williams was successively operated by Juba Storrs & Co., Oziel Smith, J. Wayne Dodge, and others; it burned in 1895, Henry W. Dodge losing his life in the fire. About 1812 Jonas Williams also built a tannery, which was afterwards conducted by John Hutchinson for fifty years or more; it burned in 1872.
- As early as 1840 John Reist erected a second grist mill, which passed to his sons, Daniel, Elias and Jacob Reist,
- The gelatine factory was started in 1872 by James Chalmers and is now owned by James Chalmers's son (James).
- Caleb Rogers built the first school house in Williamsville in 1812, and a Mr. Johnson was the first teacher.
- In 1898, with a population of about 800, the village of Williamsville contained:
  - 5 general stores
  - 2 hardware stores
  - 2 shoe stores
  - 1 drug store
  - 1 jewelry store
  - 1 furniture and undertaking establishment
  - 1 weekly newspaper and printing office
  - 2 hotels
  - 1 large gelatine manufactory
  - 1 flouring mill, 1 feed mill
  - 1 brewery
  - 1 tinsmith
  - 1 harness shop and feed store
  - 2 meat markets
  - 3 shoe shops
  - 4 blacksmith shops
  - 1 Union High School
  - 6 churches

Recognize names from Village landmarks? For more details about Erie County in 1898, visit <http://history.rays-place.com/ny/amherst-ny.htm>

1956



STREET  
rating, and paint, next to...

5458 MAIN STREET  
...the **Food Shoppe** and **Home Town Cleaners**

**aurie Jewelers**

...and Home Town Cleaners is still there!



5426 MAIN STREET



5410 MAIN ST  
*Northeast corner of Reist*



5409 MAIN ST  
Corner of current **Village Square Lane**



5351 MAIN ST  
**Amherst Recreation Alleys** closed when the **Century House** (pictured to the right) burned in the 70's and was remodeled as office space.



5450 MAIN STREET

THEN... Launderette adjacent to...

5454 MAIN

...Bonds, for art supplies, deco

NOW... **The Spotted Giraffe** adjacent to...

..Adam & M.A. L



5444 MAIN ST

Currently occupied by LeeLee Clothing Store.



5430 MAIN ST

Currently office space.



5429 MAIN ST

Current location of **Starbucks** and **Dublin House**.



5428 MAIN ST *at California Drive*  
**Prosit Restaurant** won the **Williamsville Business Association's** 2008 Holiday Decorating "Best Building" award.



## WILLIAMSVILLE CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

From: ***A History of the Town of Amherst, New York***

By Sue Miller Young, 1965

Where six students graduated from Union Free School District No. 3 high school in 1892, 400 graduated from Williamsville Central High School in 1965. A faculty staff of 6 has grown to a staff of 385.

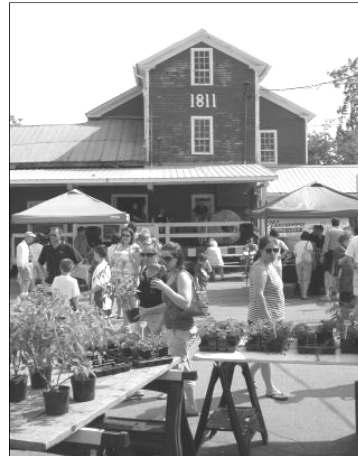
Where the total enrollment in public elementary and high school was less than 100 in a single building in the village of Williamsville in 1892, the school district, now centralized, has expanded to nearly 40 square miles and includes 4 elementary schools, 2 junior high schools, and a senior high school with a total enrollment of 6977. The operating budget for 1965-66 is over \$6,000,000.

The voters of the district have approved the construction of a new high school, two elementary schools and plans are being completed for a referendum for the purchase of 10 additional sites, some to include "campus schools" including elementary, junior, and senior high schools on one location ... to provide for anticipated expansion of school enrollment within the next 10 years.





“EVENING IN THE VILLAGE”



2010 FARMER'S MARKET

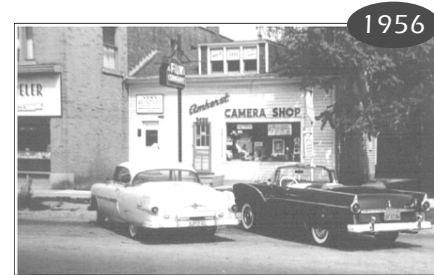
## VILLAGE HISTORIANS

The Village of Williamsville was incorporated in 1850 and is one of over 550 incorporated Villages chartered by the State of New York. It encompasses an irregular square mile, most of which lies within the Town of Amherst with its southeast corner in the Town of Cheektowaga.

On May 9, 1983, the Village of Williamsville Board of Trustees adopted a **Historic Preservation Code**, the purpose of which is to promote the awareness of landmarks of historic, cultural, social and architectural significance in the Village of Williamsville and to safeguard the heritage, character and quality of life unique to the Village through the preservation of these landmarks.

A **Historic Preservation Commission** was created for this purpose. This commission designates the landmark sites after conducting a survey to identify and document the history and/or significance of the landmark and after the Board of Trustees has conducted a public hearing.

To date, eleven sites including the **Village Meeting House** and the **Williamsville Water Mills** have been designated as historical sites.



5498 MAIN ST

**The Amherst Camera Shop** was relocated to Rock Street, where it still stands.



5503 MAIN ST

**Amherst Hardware Store** was affiliated with **Bonds** and closed due to competition from the **Miller Brothers**, Ben and Barney. Torn down for construction of Williamsville Executive Center.

5480 MAIN STREET

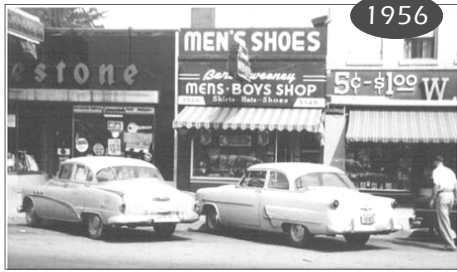
## SS PETER AND PAUL ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

In 1836, Rev. John N. Neumann founded a Roman Catholic mission at Main and Grove Streets that eventually became SS. Peter and Paul Church, which was built in 1863. Remains of the original 1866 stained glass windows, which were replaced in the early 1900's, may still be seen in the sacristy.

St. John Neumann, consecrated fourth Bishop of Philadelphia in 1852 and canonized a saint by the Roman Catholic Church in 1977, served the young parish which stretched from Kenmore to Batavia.

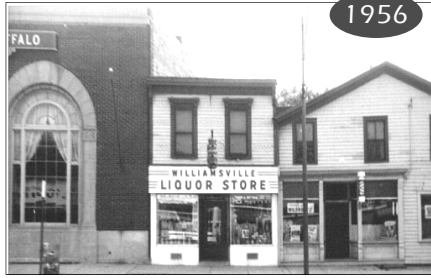
SS. Peter and Paul has the distinction of serving as the second oldest parish in the Diocese of Buffalo.





5520 MAIN ST

**Bert Sweeney Mens Wear** was one of the longest established businesses in the village. They eventually closed their doors in 1999. Currently this area includes clothing stores, spa, and pizzeria.



5519 MAIN ST

This is now the **Bank of America** parking lot; the liquor store moved down the street, and still uses the same neon sign pictured here.



5511 MAIN ST

**The Savoy Shop** is now home to **Williamsville Liquor Store** and **Stitch Witchery**.



5510 MAIN ST

**H.J. Klube Pharmacy** was closed to make room for the **Center of Williamsville**.



5507 MAIN ST

**Amherst Distributing** operated their beer distributing business from the rear building. **The Red Carpet** was a former tenant, and currently the **Glen Park Tavern** occupies the building.

## GLEN PARK

Located near picturesque Glen Falls, **Glen Park** is jointly owned by the Village of Williamsville and the Town of Amherst. It was built in 1976 with funds obtained from a federal grant and includes many interconnecting ponds which are now home for many ducks. Popular activities in this walking park include taking wedding pictures, fishing, and nature walks. With its rugged stone walls, it is the setting from which to view the spectacular water falls, the envy of all parks. Formerly the site of the famous **Harry Altman's Glen Park Casino and Amusement Park**, Glen Park is now a splendid place to enjoy the scenic views of nature.



## ISLAND PARK

Located behind Town Hall, this park is the scene of many Village functions including **Old Home Days**, the **Savor-the-Flavor/Taste of Williamsville Food Festival**, **Music in the Park Series**, and **Christmas Caroling in the Pines**. It contains swings, slides, climbing apparatus, barbecue grills, and two-foot wading pools. There are two picnic shelters (the large pavilion and small picnic gazebo) which may be rented by area residents with preference being given to those residents residing in the Village of Williamsville.

## LEHIGH MEMORY TRAIL

Running from S. Cayuga Road to S. Long Street in the Southwest section of the Village, this is the Village of Williamsville's newest park. It was purchased from the **Lehigh Railroad** and converted into a park in 1990.



## GARRISON PARK

Located at Garrison Road, S. Ellicott Street and Park Drive, **Garrison Park** is equipped with an 18"-deep wading pool, swings, slides, and a climbing apparatus. There is a small gazebo located in the park which can be enjoyed by Village residents.

## WILLIAMSVILLE CLASSICAL INSTITUTE

[ Academy Street School ]  
[ 2011—Christian Central Academy ]

The property on **Academy Street** was purchased for the Williamsville Classical Institute for \$700, and a warranty deed was issued to the following trustees:

David Greibiel, John Frick, Isaac Hershey, George Cross, Christian Rutt, John Hershey, Timothy A. Hopkins, Samuel L. Bestow, Benjamin Miller, John Witmer, Alexander Gotwalt, Arthur H. Mouton, John Gotwalt, John B. Campbell and James Stevens.

At the formative meeting, members pledged from \$100 to \$300, but the cumulative total was insufficient to develop the school.

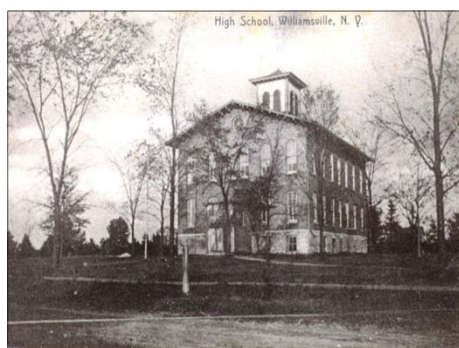
**Benjamin Miller** then pledged \$1,500 besides contributing chairs, desks, and benches from his factory, and the brick building was planned.

In 1857 the first catalog was issued, containing the names of the officers, teachers and students, some of whom came from as far away as the Canadian Northwest

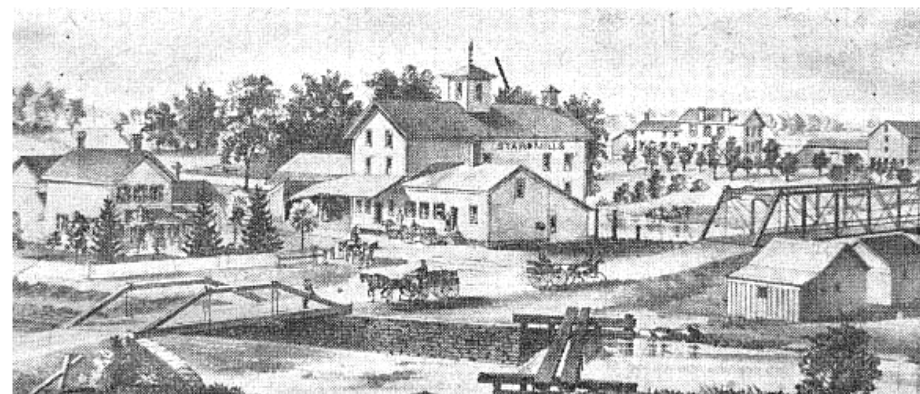
Territories, Washington, D.C., and Michigan. (Traveling preachers of the Christian Church publicized the school.)

Annual tuition was charged at fees such as \$12 for English, \$15 for Math. Study was divided into three years of trimesters, and included philosophy, astronomy, theology, trigonometry, botany, rhetoric, political economy, moral science, geology, chemistry, and Greek, Latin, French and German.

Each student was expected to attend some place of worship every Lord's Day and to join one of the two literary societies—one for men and one for women. The "Academy" closed in 1869. In 1874, after use by a congregation for worship, it reopened as Union Free School No. 3. Regents Exams were held in 1892, and graduates in its first class of 1895 included Gertrude Metz, Mary Long, Harriet Dodge, Lena Snyder, and Grace Beach, who won the first Chalmers Gold Medal for scholarship.



## WILLIAMSVILLE WATER MILL



Jonas Williams, an early area settler in 1805 and the man for whom Williamsville is named, owned two mills on opposite banks of Ellicott Creek. In 1811, Jonas Williams purchased the mill on Spring Street which today is known as the WILLIAMSVILLE WATER MILL.

In 1908 the mill was modernized. A 100 hp water turbine replaced the large wooden water wheel as the driving mechanism for newly installed "two run of 54-inch French bury stones." A cider press was installed.

In 1919, Messrs. Jacobi and Klein were listed as the owners, when litigation with the Village of Williamsville was necessary to establish their rights to the water in Ellicott Creek. In 1947 they sold the property and all water rights to Daniel B. and Grace Miller Niederlander.



The bright red mill, reconditioned, can be seen from Main Street. The Mill is the backdrop for summer's Saturday Farmer's Market. The cider mill and gift shop closed in 2003, and in 2005 the Village of Williamsville purchased the mill from the Miller/Neiderlander family. In 2010, the town received bids and awarded development rights. Suggested future uses include office space, a retail boutique shop, or café-style restaurant.

One of the early saw mills was located on the north side of Main Street near Union Road. It was built by John Long in 1808 and used water from Long's Spring Brook, which originated in springs on the south side of Main Street on the present site of a large supermarket, and ran north through the Long farm. The brook still flows, paralleling Union Road, passing through the Forest Stream development and adjoining the Park Country Club where it meets Ellicott Creek.



5538 MAIN ST

Corner of N. Cayuga

**Glen Pharmacy** withstood the big chains coming into town until the early '80s. **Vic Spoth Electric** moved their business to a bigger location and the business is still run by the Spoth family. Currently the building houses a tennis supply store.



5529 MAIN ST

Pictured above is the southwest corner of **Main and S. Cayuga**.

This was Matt Horey's Tavern, which was torn down in 1923 to make room for the **Williamsville Post Office**, and the space was later occupied by a string of banks, currently **Bank of America**.



5528 MAIN ST

The NW corner of Main and Cayuga was home to **Eggert's Bakery**. The space was later occupied by **Mr Donut** until the early '90s and is currently the home of **Coldwell Banker Real Estate**.



5522 MAIN ST

**Black's 5c-\$1.00** stocked everything under 1 dollar. This building was torn down (with many other buildings—**Olson's Music Store**, for example) to make room for the **Center of Williamsville**.



The original building was demolished, condemned by the State Department of Education as antiquated and unsanitary, and a new school was built on the site in 1921 for \$122,000. Board of Education members were Dr. William Biker, Ernest Walker, Howard Britting, George Measer Sr., George Walters, and Henry Longnecker. Opened in 1924, its first principal was Burt Brennan, followed in 1924 by Walter J. "Cap" Harrington. Twenty-five years later, Cap Harrington handed out 66 diplomas.

The high school was turned into Academy Elementary School, and in September 1951 the new High School (South) opened.

**Ellicott Creek** was once called the **Eleven Mile Creek**. At one time it was a narrow raceway serving the many mills on the creek. In the **1930's** it was made larger and a dam was built to help control flooding.

### 5893 MAIN ST

*Corner of Hirschfield Dr. and Mrs. Lester (Marguerite) Lapp residence.* He was a dentist; she was head of the School Board for years. The location is now **Parings Wine Bar**.



### 5874 MAIN ST

**Riley's Food Shoppe** and the **Liquor Store**. This was **Downes Food Shop**, and the Liquor Store went by several names—**Bono's, Erie, Bouchard**. Currently unoccupied.



### 5871 MAIN ST

Shows Herbert Perney's real estate office. Was also used as a bed and breakfast for tourists. Building was torn down in the 60's to make way for the **Little White House Restaurant** parking lot.



### 5870 MAIN ST

*Corner of Rinewalt*  
**Maier's Garage**, now **Century Printing**.



### 5788 MAIN ST

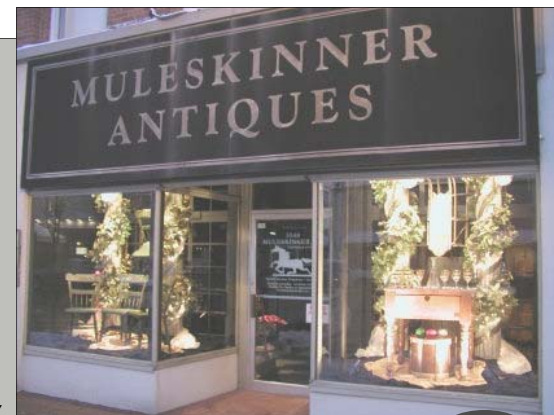
Building was restored by John Scheffer in the 80s. Currently occupied by lawyers.

### 5548 MAIN ST

This three-story red brick building was erected in 1854, shortly after purchase of the lot by Timothy A. Hopkins.

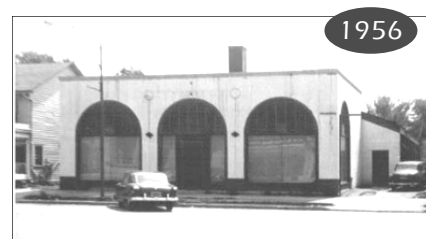
The **HOPKINS BLOCK**, or "Brick Building" as it was called, was for many years the tallest commercial building in Amherst.

Originally a carriage shop, it has subsequently housed a school room; E.H. Smith's general store; Bill Measer's grocery store; Howard G. Britting's general store specializing in jewelry, school supplies, cigars and candy; Clara Walter's Village Shoppe, later Bancroft's Village Shop; and more recently, haberdashers Roneker's Mens and Boys Wear, R.J. Wells Co., and Marty's Formal Wear. Early in the last century the telephone switchboard for Amherst's 40 telephones and the Village Post Office were also located in the building.



2008

**Muleskinner Antiques** won the "Most Original" Holiday window decorating contest.



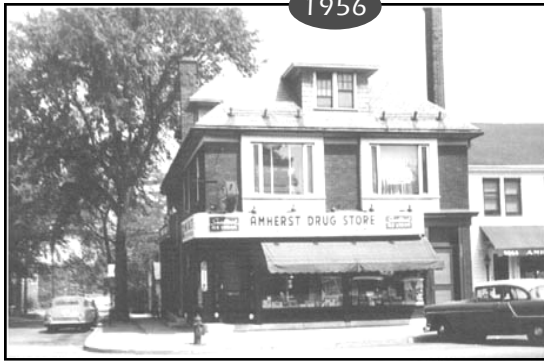
### 5547 MAIN ST

**Gerald Swartz Building**. Currently the home of **Grabstetter Wellness** and **Assemblyman James P. Hayes** offices.



### 5541 MAIN ST

*Corner of S. Cayuga*  
**Beach-Tuyn Funeral Home**  
The present building was built in 1888 as an undertaking business by **John Wehrle, Edward Tuyn and Albert Beach**.



1956

5560 MAIN ST  
**"Ted Dungey's" Rexall Pharmacy, aka Amherst Drug Store.** The Amherst Drug Store Building is still standing on the NE corner of Main and Rock St. Ted Dungey always had the best ice cream and soda fountain in town. Currently a local artisanal gift shop, **Village Artisans**.



1956

5774 MAIN ST  
*NE corner of Main and Evans*  
 This was home to many of the Chalmers family. Current occupants are lawyers Grashow & Long.

5553 MAIN ST  
**Smith's Music Shop**, which was torn down to make room for the **Police Station/Village Hall/Hutchinson Hose Fire Department**.



1956



1956

5759 MAIN ST  
*Main and Garrison SW corner.* Note the old **Garrison Park** water tower behind the structure. Currently a multipurpose building including Great Northern Pizza Kitchen.



1956

5754 MAIN ST  
 Currently law offices of Eugene Burke.

The colorful history of the HUTCHINSON HOSE COMPANY, a Village institution, is traced back to **1856** when citizens organized the

community's bucket brigade-style volunteer effort under the banner "The Rough and Ready Fire Company #1." Using water from Ellicott Creek, the "smoke eaters" fought major fires in the stone schoolhouse on Cayuga Road and the Dodge Mill. In the late 1890s the Rough and Ready Company, established some 40 years earlier, was reorganized as the Hutchinson Hose Company.



5747 MAIN ST  
 This was **Carmer's Auto Parts** until 1968. Currently is **Vern Stein Fine Art**.



1970



**5735 MAIN ST**  
**Bihr's Food Shop** was open until the '70s, when the owners moved to Orchard Park, where Bihr's remains open to this day. Now the building houses the **Vacuum Store, Scanlon Jewelers** and the **Golden Parachute**.



**5728 MAIN ST**  
 This was **Fritz Barndollar's Sunoco Station**, torn down in the '70s. Currently empty, its most recent occupant was Pitt Petri.



**5725 MAIN ST**  
*Corner of Main and S. Ellicott*  
**Dr. Pratt's house and office.** One of the first houses on Main St that was used as a business. Now it is **Excuria Salon**.

**5698 MAIN ST**  
 One of the buildings on the **Miller Homestead**. Sue Miller Young, the village historian, lived in this home until 1964. This building still stands and is the offices of **Franz Manno Service Corp.**



**5564 MAIN ST**  
 This building was originally owned by **Adam Rinewalt** who ran the **Amherst Bee** before the **Measer** family continued to run the business in the same location today.

## THE AMHERST BEE

No tour would be complete without mention of the AMHERST BEE, a Village institution nearly as old as the community itself. The weekly Amherst Bee, in continuous publication since its first four-page issue left the hand press **March 27, 1879**, has long been regarded as the official newspaper for both the Village of Williamsville and the Town of Amherst. For more than a century, its pages have recorded a colorful account of the people, places, and events which define our local history.

Early Bees, displaying a masthead picturing bees swarming around a beehive and the motto, "So doth the busy bee improve each golden hour," featured stories, national and local news, a railroad guide and timetable, Buffalo market reports for area farmers, and auction bills in both German and English. The first offices of the newspaper were located on the south side of Main Street near Cayuga Road, close to the home of its first publisher, **Adam Rinewalt**.

Increasing circulation and the addition of a horse-drawn press prompted a move to new quarters at the corner of Main and North Cayuga. The offices and press were relocated twice more before being moved to the present location in 1941. Since acquiring the business in 1907, the Measer family and the Bee have been synonymous. **Publishers George Measer, his son Trey, and Trey's son Michael**—now the fourth generation of the family—continue to carry on the long-standing Village tradition. A complete record of the paper, which has received much acclaim for its service to the community and pioneering efforts in the trade, is on microfilm at the Williamsville branch library.



5576 MAIN ST  
Building housing the  
**Howard G. Britting**  
**Insurance** company.  
Currently occupied by  
a clay crafts store.



5687 MAIN ST  
Home to **Gene's**  
**Tailoring**, the  
**Village Thrift Shop**,  
**Bud Zimmerman's**  
**Mr. T.V.**, and the  
original home of  
**Stereo Advantage**.



MAIN ST & ROCK ST  
Looking west

The WILLIAMSVILLE METHODIST CHURCH was first a schoolhouse built in 1821, on the Iroquois Trail (Main Street). In 1821 the first Methodist group met in homes and in General Hopkins' barn. In 1834 the "First Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church" was organized.



5686 MAIN ST  
The first home of Glen Campbell  
Chevrolet...



...and later the Ford Service Training  
School, then Shirley Manson Interiors.  
Currently occupied by D.K. Benson  
Interiors.



5678 MAIN ST  
Building currently home to Kelly &  
Swetz, Attorneys



5672 MAIN ST  
Building currently occupied by Robshaw &  
Assoc. Attorneys



5662 MAIN ST

Building still stands. Has been refurbished and is currently occupied by lawyers.



5661 MAIN ST

**Read Motor Company**, a Ford Dealership in 1932, when this photo was taken. Now home to **Read's Laundry**.

## WILLIAMSVILLE MEETING HOUSE 5658 MAIN STREET

The Disciples of Jesus Christ trace their Williamsville history to 1835, the movement seeking to restore primitive Christianity by reproducing the church of the apostles.



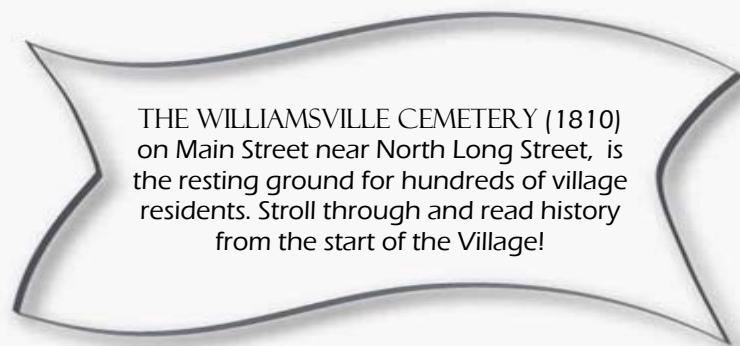
Baptism was a very important ceremony, and many a sinner was led to the waters of Ellicott Creek and immersed as a welcoming into the fold. Originally located at the Northwest corners of Eagle and North Ellicott Streets, by 1870 their congregation had grown to almost 200 members. The small church was then sold for \$1000 to the Lutherans, and new property on Main Street was acquired from Christian Rutt in 1871. The building was

completed in the same year, and along the way many improvements were made, including the unique baptistery still located in the elevated "stage."

This period of time around 1871 appears to be the high water mark for the Disciples of Jesus Christ, and their history suggests that the loss of local manufacturing and exodus to Buffalo gradually shrank their numbers until by 1894, only 116 remained.

By 1948, the years had caught up to the structure, and weakened beams forced removal of the bell tower. Finally, by 1976, the congregation lost membership to the point that it was disbanded, and the church sold to the village for \$1. Subsequently, the Village of Williamsville Historical Society came to its rescue, and major renovations were completed, allowing the building to function as a museum and gathering place for concerts, weddings, and meetings.

For many years, it had been the hope of Village officials and the Historical Society that the bell tower be replaced, giving the Meeting House eligibility for a place on the National Registry of Historic Sites. The funding, however, was too great for the Village to bear alone. Through the help of several local politicians, a new bell tower was completed and dedicated in March 1997. Having returned the church to its historical past, the Society applied for and received status on the National Registry of Historic Sites.



THE WILLIAMSVILLE CEMETERY (1810) on Main Street near North Long Street, is the resting ground for hundreds of village residents. Stroll through and read history from the start of the Village!

5578 MAIN STREET

## EAGLE HOUSE RESTAURANT (1827)

Built by pioneer Oziel Smith, the Eagle House has been in continuous service for over 175 years as an inn, stage coach stop, and tavern, and boasts of holding the oldest hotel license in the state. The Eagle House is one of the most celebrated landmarks in the area. There is a cellar and passageway leading from the back of the building under the driveway to Glen Park which may have been part of the Underground Railroad.



Oziel Smith is noted as purchasing "by Sheriff's sale" the grist mill on the East side of Ellicott Creek, the saw mill on the West side of the creek, and about 100 acres of land throughout the Village. This acreage included the property where he built The Eagle House Tavern.

In addition, he acquired the water lime works and all water power within the Village limits. Legend has it that Smith was an experienced builder who used his quarry to provide the two-foot-thick limestone foundation that the Eagle House sits on today. He is also credited with designing the curved ceiling and ballroom with a "spring floor" on the second story of The Eagle House. When the original grand opening of the Eagle House was delayed and the original structure burned to the ground, Smith immediately began construction on the building that now exists.



1963

### THE OLD VILLAGE HALL

Originally built with limestone mined from the Young's limestone quarry which occupied what is now the **Buffalo Country Club**, the hall housed all functions of the town, including the jail. It was torn down in 1963, and replaced with the new hall.



1957



1948



1956

### 5651 MAIN ST

This building is no longer standing, having been torn down for parking adjacent to **Read's Laundry**.



1956

### 5650 MAIN ST

What was **Fran's Subs** is now the **Village Grille** and **Village Coin & Jewelry**.



1956

### 5641 MAIN ST

The new **A&P Supermarket**. This was later **Dial Drugs**, the **Billiard Hall**, and now **Ed Young's True Value Hardware**.

The **EVANS HOUSE** was located in front of Ed Young's Hardware store. All that remains of the first home built in Williamsville is the marker placed here.

A log house built in 1799 by John Thomson, a partner of Benjamin Ellicott, this was the first structure in what is now the village of Williamsville. It was located at Main Street and Oakgrove Drive.



Later known as the **SCOTT-EVANS HOUSE**, it functioned as a tavern and inn as well as the local Holland Land Company office. It was also the site of the first recorded marriage in Erie County when Timothy S. Hopkins married Nancy Ann Kerr on April 28, 1804.

Consisting of seven rooms, two fireplaces, and a large garret, it served later as a residence and military headquarters during the War of 1812. The house got its name from the Evans family, relatives of Joseph Ellicott, Holland Company land sales resident agent. It was owned by the Evans family until 1925 and in 1955 it was demolished.



1956

5640 MAIN ST

**Rogers Market** burned in the 1970's. In its place sprang up **Pizza by DiRose**, which has now become **Sorrentino's Spaghetti House**.



1956

5630 MAIN ST

**Matt Grunthaler's Garage**, which is now **The Touch of Brass Gift Shop**.



1956

5601 MAIN ST

This **Sinclair** gas station was razed to make room for the **Arco Station**, which is now **The Irishman Pub**.



1951

5596 MAIN ST

**Barney Miller's Hardware Store** near Main and Spring Streets.



1956

5629 MAIN ST

**The Sportsman Lodge**, which is now the **Creekview Restaurant** on the east bank of Ellicott Creek.



1956

5618 MAIN ST

This building stood on the west bank of Ellicott Creek and is now the Main Entrance to **Glen Park**.



1900

5590 MAIN ST

**Randall Baptist Church** was built with the same limestone as the old Village Hall. It stood on the NW corner of Main and Spring Streets. Lucille Cordi's stood at this spot, currently occupied by Cof-fee Culture Coffee Shop.



1956

5584 MAIN ST

**Amherst Appliances** used this building until the Hanny family refurbished it to look like the original **Eagle House** of 1890.



1956

5613 MAIN ST

The **Club Diner** was operated by George Batt and later the Lowther family. The building was later used by Ed Hengerer as a gift shop. It was torn down in the early '70s.



1956

5611 MAIN ST

This building, remodeled of course, is currently being used by plastic surgeons.



5606 MAIN ST

This is a picture of the **Glen Art Theatre** (aka "The Pit") scanned from a decoupage.

5604 MAIN ST

Niagara Permanent Savings & Loan building is still

standing. At right is the **Glen Art Theatre**.



## 72 CAYUGA ROAD

Home of the third school building in Williamsville. The "old stone schoolhouse," as it is affectionately known, was built in 1840 on land donated by one of the area's earliest and most prominent residents, Timothy S. Hopkins. The one-room school educated children from all around. Constructed in 1840 for a cost of \$1,000, its first teacher was a Mr. Johnson, but it came to be known as Miss Spaulding's School, for "Little Miss Bertha" Spaulding who taught in its one classroom for 25 years.

During recess and before school, the girls played on one side of the walk leading to the building and the boys played on the other. On stormy days, the pupils were sent home early, the older children being held responsible for the safety of the younger. Some years later the single room was partitioned to make two class rooms, and a second teacher was hired to accommodate the school's 40 pupils.