

## So, Who Do You Think We Are...?



### Canandaigua Rotary Projects You Should Remember

[Picture: Rotary float in Canandaigua Sesquicentennial parade, Aug. 19, 1951. Image courtesy of Deborah Hopkins.]

So, Who do you think we Canandaigua Rotarians are? Surely, you know we are dedicated to serving our community and the world. But perhaps you haven't thought much about the long-term impact of local Rotary programs.

I hope that this program will inspire you to become rededicated to supporting the programs of our Canandaigua club. We are "standing on the shoulders of giants." Those who founded the Canandaigua club in 1919 began almost immediately finding ways to make our community better. Two of their projects, in particular, had an impact on our community that continues today. I hope you will agree that the projects of our founders, and the extent of their dedication and support for those projects over time, is simply inspiring!

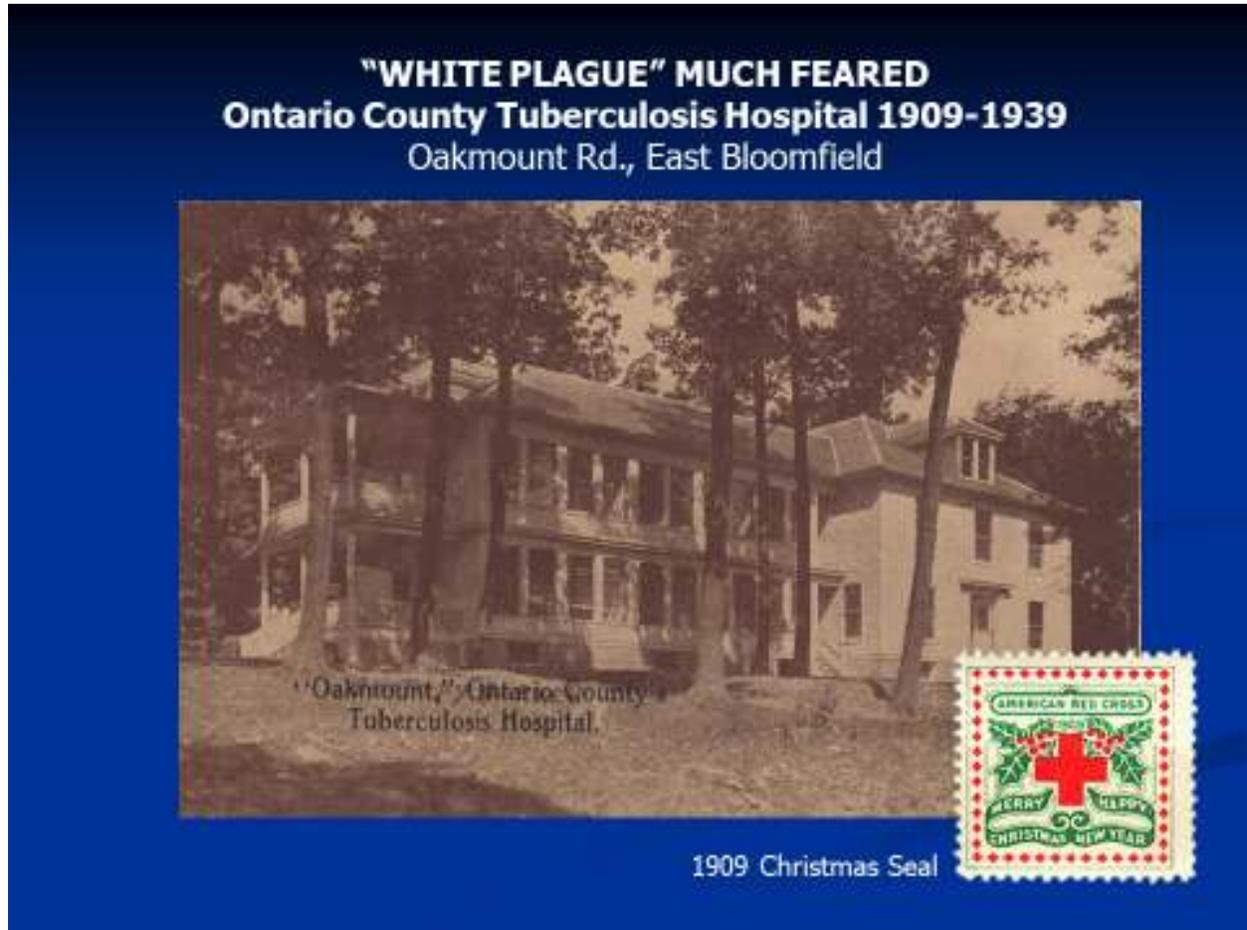
**ONTARIO COUNTY BACTERIOLOGICAL LAB**  
**Gift of Mary Clark Thompson 1906**  
**First County in the State to have a Lab**



*Image from the collection of the Ontario County Historical Society*

At the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, there were many dreaded diseases that could afflict families and communities. One of them was tuberculosis. In 1906, Mrs. Mary Clark Thompson followed up on her gift of F.F. Thompson Memorial Hospital (1904) by providing money for a county bacteriological laboratory. Housed in a small frame building directly behind Thompson hospital, the laboratory provided the services of a professionally trained bacteriologist (paid by the county) who could assist the hospital and community officials in the fight against contagious diseases.

Ontario County was the first county in the state to have a dedicated bacteriological laboratory. It was particularly important in detecting and treating tuberculosis patients and those who were susceptible.



Known as the “White Plague,” tuberculosis was highly contagious. Unfortunately, like polio, little was known at first about how tuberculosis was transmitted, what caused it, or how it could be cured or prevented. In some forms it was a crippling disease, for children in particular.

A common intervention in the fight against the spread of tuberculosis was to isolate those who had the disease from the rest of the community. Treatment in a sanitarium was a pioneering effort. Ontario County authorized the building of a small sanitarium for the isolation and treatment of tuberculosis patients in 1909. Completed in 1910 and opened in 1911, it was located on Oakmount Road in the Town of East Bloomfield, overlooking the village.

Oakmount Sanitarium burned to the ground in 1939 and was never reopened. By then, much more was known about tuberculosis prevention and treatment and patients received care in local hospitals.

A significant source of funding for tuberculosis treatment, detection, and prevention was the annual sales of Christmas Seals. A tradition begun in Delaware in 1907, it quickly caught on as a program of the American Red Cross. Canandaigua Rotarians played a leadership role in promoting the local sale of seals in the 1920s.

## CHRISTMAS SEALS TO FIGHT TUBERCULOSIS



Seal image from the author's collection.

### ONTARIO ONE OF THE ELEVEN COUNTIES

Miss Louise Strachan, executive secretary of the county tuberculosis committee, summarized the work done by the committee since its active campaign began last September, and paid a tribute to the splendid cooperation of the Rotary Clubs of Geneva and Canandaigua in the 1919 Red Cross Christmas Seal Sale which finances the work of the Committee. Ontario County was one of eleven counties in the State of New York to reach its quota in the campaign.

*Ontario County Times*  
Jun. 9, 1920

Rotary Clubs of Canandaigua and Geneva worked for the 1919 Christmas Seal campaign that financed tuberculosis work. It was one of the first community projects of the new club in Canandaigua.

As a result of the local campaign in 1919, Ontario County was one of only 11 counties to meet its quota of Christmas Seal sales. The money was vital to the work of fighting tuberculosis.

Our Rotary club continued to participate in the local Christmas Seal campaigns until their fund-raising became more centralized.

**ROTARY LENDS A HAND**

**THE NEED OF CARE FOR  
TUBERCULOSIS CHILDREN**

Brought to the Attention of the Board  
of Supervisors.

At the meeting of the Board of Supervisors on Thursday much time was given during the afternoon session to the discussion of the problem of properly caring for the tuberculous children of the county. Dr. John H. Jewett, chairman of the executive committee of the Thompson Memorial hospital, read a resolution passed by his committee, asking that the Board of Supervisors take some definite action regarding the care of the tuberculous children now at the Memorial hospital. Dr. Jewett point-



**Dr. John H. Jewett**  
Image from the Ontario Co. Hist. Soc. collection

*Ontario County Times*  
Feb. 4, 1920

In 1920, Dr. John H. Jewett, a Director of Thompson Hospital since 1904, asked Board of Supervisors to fund a separate facility for children. The hospital was not equipped to work with child suffering from tuberculosis. In any case, the current hospital budget did not permit major renovations. At the time, six children had been tuberculosis patients at the hospital for at least a month.

[Dr. Jewett practiced medicine in Canandaigua for 50 years and served as physician for the Ontario Children's Home, Clark Manor House and as a personal physician for Mary Clark Thompson.]

Dr. M. S. Woodbury spoke of the need for a preventorium, a special place for the treatment of children who were in the early stages of tuberculosis development.

Everyone agreed that early treatment was important and that a preventorium would be an important improvement. However, where would the money come from?



## NATHAN STRAUS Founder of the Children's Preventorium Movement

Privately funded Nathan Straus  
Pasteurized Milk Lab.

Un-pasteurized milk chief cause  
of tuberculosis in children.

Opened first Tuberculosis Preventorium  
for Children in Lakewood, NJ.

Partner in R.H. Macy & Co. and  
Abraham & Straus stores.

Gave away most of his fortune to poor.



Image courtesy Chattahoochee Valley Libraries at  
[http://cvrlsarchives.org/?p=digitalibrary/digitalcontent  
&id=454](http://cvrlsarchives.org/?p=digitalibrary/digitalcontent&id=454)

While the need for a local preventorium was being discussed, and then built, two other national movements were having an impact on public health, and the health of children, in particular.

Louis Pasteur conducted the first experiments in what became known as "pasteurization" in 1862. It became widely accepted as a means of processing milk, a major vector for tuberculosis infection, and making it safer. However, the process only slowly achieved public acceptance in the 1890s. In the 1920s, many people continued to consume "raw" (unpasteurized) milk. That was determined to be a major factor in the spread of disease, especially tuberculosis, in children.

Nathan Straus, a New York department store magnate and philanthropist, devoted much of his fortune to assisting the poor. He established milk stations where children and families could obtain fresh, pasteurized milk and a very minimal price (He also established a program to provide coal to heat the homes of the destitute.)

Straus also believed that isolating those in the early stages of tuberculosis development would benefit their families and communities at large. He established the first children's preventorium for that purpose in New Jersey. The concept quickly caught on and spread quickly around the nation.

**THE ROTARIAN LAUDS THE "PREVENTORIUM"**  
Behind Old Thompson Hospital, Wilcox Lane  
"Fiske Bldg."--1922



Image obtained with the assistance of the Finger Lakes Community College library.

The efforts of the Canandaigua Rotarians were detailed in a three-page article in the November, 1923 issue of *The Rotarian* magazine.

Dr. H. DeLamater, Director of Hygiene in St. Louis, Mo., lauded the Canandaigua preventorium and its Rotary sponsors in a paper he read before the Public Health Administration Section of the American Public Health Assn. meeting in that city, Oct. 21, 1925.

**CANANDAIGUA ROTARIANS WORKING  
ON THE PREVENTORIUM 1923**



Image from the collection of the Ontario County Historical Society.

Building the “Preventorium” was an “all hands” project that began in June, 1922. Here you can see the entire club applying some finishing touches to the exterior walls in 1923

## ROTARIANS CONTRIBUTED AGAIN AND AGAIN The Preventorium in 1923



The above picture shows the "Preventorium" built and equipped by the Rotary Club of Canandaigua, New York, as an adjunct to the Frederick Ferris Thompson Hospital. The "Preventorium" is devoted to the care and aid and schooling of crippled children. Winter and summer sports are equally enjoyed by the small patients—those unable to participate thoroughly enjoy the role of spectators.

Image obtained with the assistance of the Finger Lakes Community College library.

Again, and again, over the years, the Canandaigua Rotary Club provided financial support to the preventorium as well as Oakmount Sanitarium. They also provided furniture, floor covering, holiday gifts, special treats, and dinners for the children who lived there for some time. In 1935, the children at the preventorium were the guests of Canandaigua Rotarians at a dinner at the Canandaigua Hotel.

## LAB AND PREVENTORIUM BEHIND OLD THOMPSON HOSPITAL

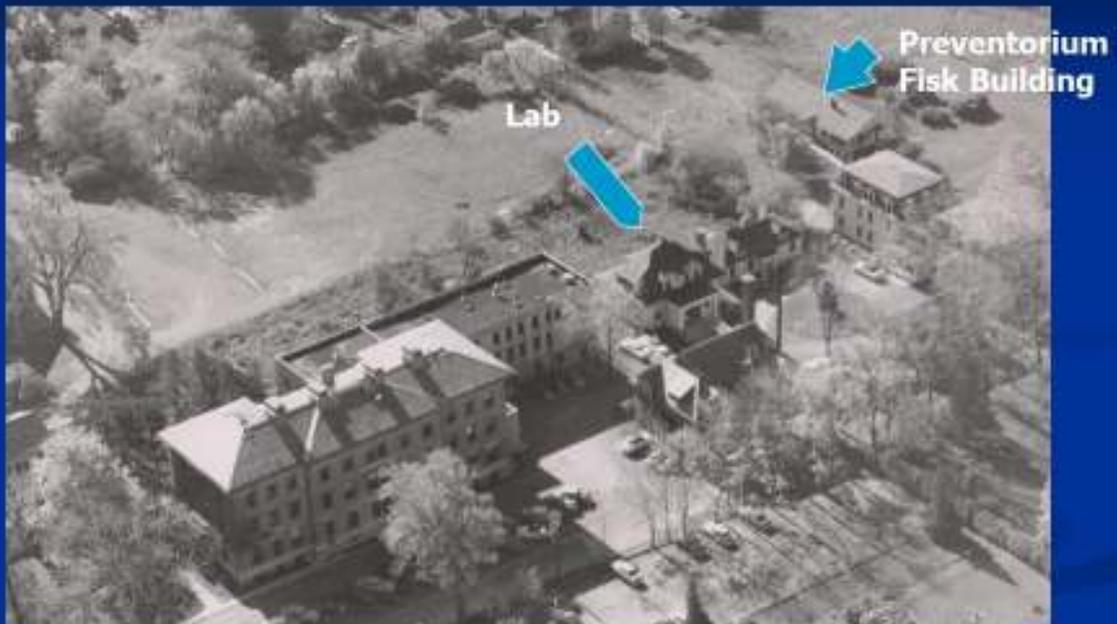
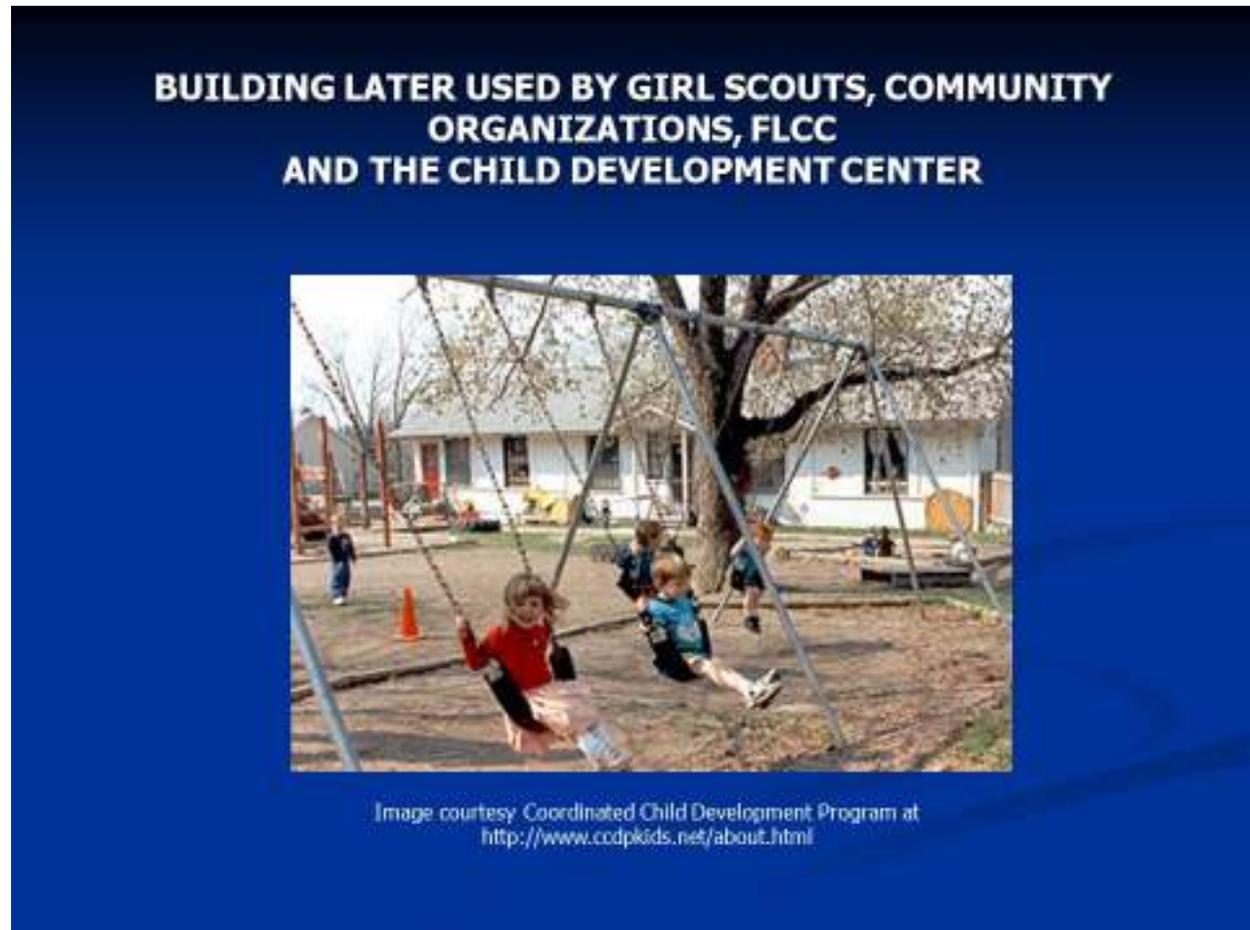


Image from the collection of the Ontario County Historical Society.

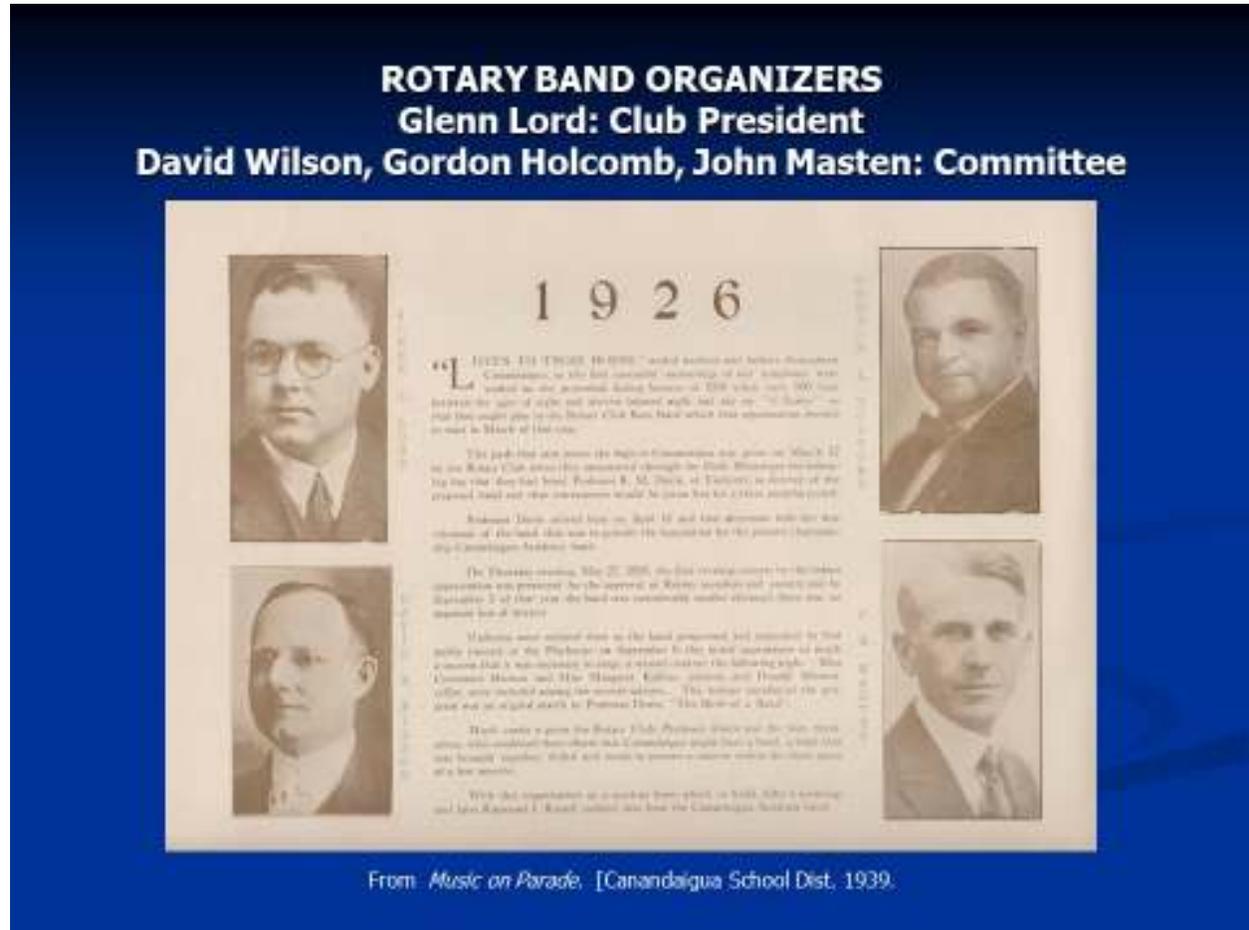
The 1906 bacteriological laboratory was used for many years, until its work became part of the hospital and public health services. The work of the preventorium was gradually made part of Thompson Hospital proper. Both buildings are visible in this photograph taken in the 1950s.



In the 1943, with the so-called “Fisk Building” no longer needed as a preventorium, it was used for other community programs. The Girl Scouts met there for many years, and it was known as the “Brownie House” for many years after World War II. By the 1960s, the building was serving programs of the Heart Association, the Cancer Society and the Tuberculosis and Respiratory Disease Association (American Lung Assn.) It was owned by Ontario County when the old hospital complex was converted to county office buildings (1972), and used by Finger Lakes Community College in its early years. The “Fisk Building” became a child development center in 1975 after the college campus was constructed off Lincoln Hill Road.

In 2011, the building was demolished. After four lives, and 75 years of use, that back street reminder of Rotary service vanished from the local scene.

The impact of its work is reflected in the fact that tuberculosis, though still a serious illness, is no longer considered a “white plague.” While this one project cannot be given all the credit, the tuberculosis infection rate for Ontario County had fallen from 62 per 100 thousand in 1919 to 5 per 100,000 by 1958. Rotary’s focus on the treatment and prevention of polio is a fitting modern successor to its support of the old preventorium.



There had been a Canandaigua Band composed of adults and supported by city funding for several years. However, interest in that band was waning by them mid-1920s. The city budget was tight and adult volunteers were dwindling. The stage was set for a new civic project.

By 1926, a love for band music had swept the nation. With high schools expanding in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, and more young people looking for community activities, there was a notable increase in the formation of school and community bands.

Canandaigua Academy already had a small orchestra. Penn Yan, and other nearby towns had formed community bands for young men. Canandaigua Rotarians took an interest in those developments and began to formulate a plan for a local band.

Our very own “music man,” professor R. M. Dorin of Endicott, had already been organizing a band in Penn Yan. The Canandaigua Rotary Club voted to engage him to form and train a Rotary Boy’s Band here. A club committee was formed to make that dream real. Its members were John E. Masten, David Wilson, and Gordon Holcomb.

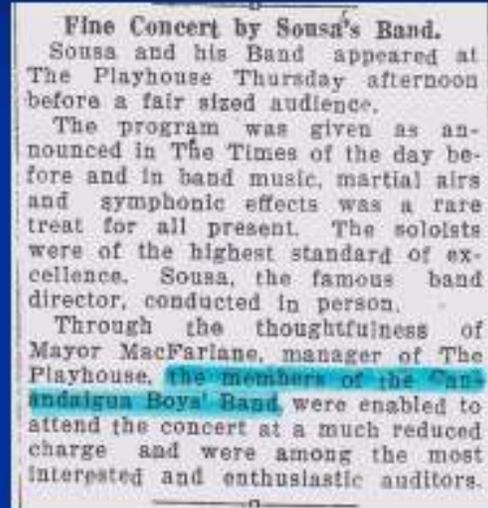
Professor Dorin arrived in Canandaigua on April 14 and conducted his first concert on May 27, 1926!



## JOHN PHILIP SOUSA The March King Spoke to Canandaigua Rotary 1922 Visited Again 1926



Image courtesy Wikipedia at  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John\\_Philip\\_Sousa](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Philip_Sousa)



*Ontario County Times*  
Jul. 14, 1926

Rotarians and the boys considering membership in a band had some exciting musical experiences. The "March King," John Philip Sousa had previously visited Canandaigua and entertained the community.

The March King spoke to the Canandaigua Rotary Club as their luncheon guest on August 2, 1922. The club received a letter from Rotary International asking how they arranged for that favor!

Sousa's band visited again in the summer of 1926. Members of the newly organized Boy's Band received a special invitation to enjoy Sousa's concert at the Playhouse Theatre, then newly opened. Those famous musicians, no doubt, were a great influence on the Rotary band members.

**ROTARY BOY'S BAND**  
**Nov. 1926**



Image from author's collection.

By the fall of 1926, the Rotary Boy's Band had been uniformed and equipped with instruments at a reduced price subsidized by Rotary. More than 100 boys expressed initial interest in the band, and quite a few followed through with practices. In November, they posed for this picture in front of the Town Hall (City Hall now).

The band performed in concerts throughout the region, especially at Rotary events. Much of the money needed to support of the band was raised through donations or small admission fees. In the depths of the Great Depression, when the band was completely disbanded in 1932, the balance of the band fund was disbursed to the boys in proportion to their participation.

## MUSIC EXPERIENCE A LIFE-LONG INFLUENCE



Image from the collection of the Ontario County Historical Society.

The Rotary Boy's Band provided an early opportunity for several young men to develop a long-term interest in music. A few of them found a way to develop a career in the musical world.

Burton Stanley (1913-2009), National Champion band director at Georgetown and Cortland; and professor of music at SUNY Potsdam; was in this band. Today, there is a Burton Stanley endowed scholarship in music at Ithaca College. Stanley wrote a book on instrument repair still considered a classic by music teachers.

Others in the band included Raymond Howard (a future music teacher); Emory McKerr (a future music teacher at the Academy); and Henry Miller (owner of a well-known appliance and music store in Canandaigua).

Most other members went on to other careers, and most of them made music an integral part of their lives, passing it on to their children.

**ACADEMY ORCHESTRA 1929  
John Cummings center**



Image courtesy Ontario County Historical Society.

The success of the Boy's Band, and the growing popularity of band music in the schools, resulted in the Rotary Club's proposal to transfer responsibility for all band instruction to the Canandaigua schools in 1929. Two sets of uniforms and instruments purchased by Rotary were donated to the school district.

John Cummings (center of this image), Rochester native and graduate of the Eastman School of Music, had already been hired as a part-time instrumental music instructor in 1927. He became the first director of the Academy band.

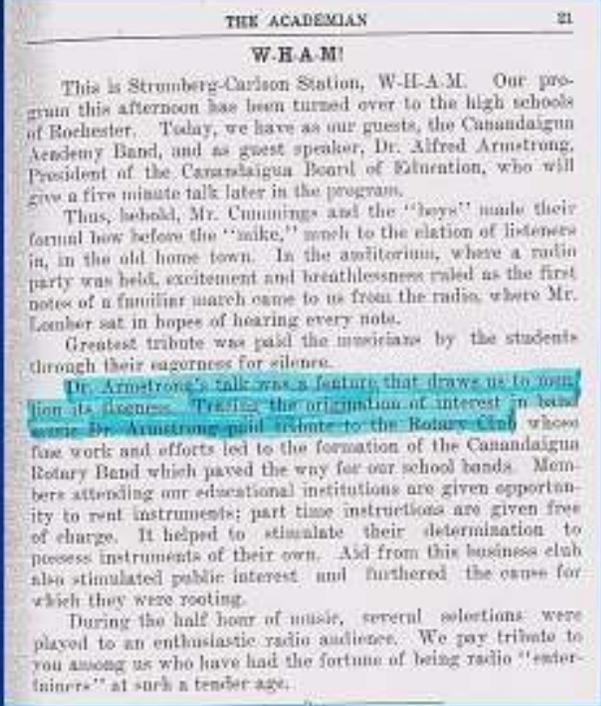
This picture of the Academy orchestra in the fall of 1929. A year later, a distinctive Canandaigua Academy band was formed. Most of its members got their start in this orchestra.

## ROLE OF ROTARY ON THE AIR! *Academian* Easter issue 1931



**WHAM broadcast tower  
Victor (Fishers)**

Image courtesy "Rochester Images"  
Collection, Local History Div.,  
Rochester-Monroe County Public Lib.



By 1931, the quality of music and reputation of the Academy band was so well-known that its members were invited to perform live on Rochester radio station, WHAM .

School board president, Dr. A. W. Armstrong, took the opportunity to tell the wide listening audience about the support Rotarians had given to the formation of the Academy band.

The half-hour on-air performance had an “enthusiastic audience,” according to the 1931 *Academian*. Academy Principal, Edward Lomber, joined students in the old Annex auditorium for an informal assembly styled as a “radio party.”

Just a year before, on February 6, 1930, the Board of Education authorized Superintendent Fisk to purchase a “Victor radio-electrola” for school use.

**1933 CANANDAIGUA ACADEMY BAND**  
**Class B NYS Champions**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Division, National Competition, Evanston, IL**  
**Supported by Canandaigua Rotary Club**



Raymond J. Russell  
Canandaigua  
teacher:  
1931-1947  
1959-1970

Image courtesy Ontario County Historical Society

Raymond J. Russell came to Canandaigua to teach music and conduct the Academy band in the fall of 1931 [After a brief hiatus after 1947, he would return for a second career 1959-1970.] In the spring of 1933, the band won accolades at regional and state competitions. Immediately, there was talk of a national competition. It was enthusiastically supported by the Canandaigua Rotary Club.

A few years earlier, a system of national band competitions was created in the mid-west. Ray Russell had heard about them and entered the Academy band in the competition. At the same time, the Penn Yan Academy band, developed in a similar way, also entered the national competition.

**A FANTASTIC TRIP FOR CHAMPIONS**



<http://www.flickr.com/photos/vista-dome/6057352072/>

Rotarians led the fund-raising effort.  
Train shared by Penn Yan band.

**CANANDAIGUA IS  
ALL EARS FOR NEWS OF  
SCHOOL BAND CONTEST**

Special Train Conveys Academy Band, Pride of Canandaigua, to Scene of National Competition—Many Relatives and Friends Go Along.

*Ontario County Times*  
Jun. 9, 1933

Sending a band to Chicago and Evanston, Illinois was a pricey proposition in the depths of the Great Depression. Rotarians raised most of the travel fund.

A special six-car train took both the Penn Yan and Canandaigua bands to Chicago. Pulling out of the Canandaigua station at 6:45 AM, the bands received a “rousing send-off,” according to a newspaper article later written by Emory McKerr. The Penn Yan and Canandaigua Academy bands each occupied two cars. There was one car for baggage and another for parents and other adults who traveled with the band.

According to McKerr’s article, “At about 11:00 the first section of the band had lunch on the diner. Our diner meals were excellent all the way through the trip. Special menus were printed for the bands and everything was as well arranged as the railroads could make it.”

The train arrived in Chicago at 7:15 PM. There they boarded busses for Evanston and Northwestern University, scene of the band competition.



**CHICAGO  
WORLD'S FAIR**  
MAY 27<sup>th</sup> NOV. 1<sup>st</sup>

1833 A CENTURY OF PROGRESS 1933

**Member Of Academy Band Writes  
Of Contest Trip and Experiences  
For Times-Journal Readers**

Despite the Heat, Musicians and Their Escort Had a Wonderful Time—Poor Rehearsal Heralds Splendid Performance in Contest—Massed Band Concert Gives an Unforgettable Thrill—Band Rated as “Superior” by Judges.

Written Especially for the Ontario County Times-Journal by  
Emory McKerr, Souaphone Societ

*Ontario County Times-Journal*  
Jun. 16, 1933

Northwestern University and a visit to the World’s Fair were highlights of the 1933 trip.



Poster and Fair Images courtesy Wikipedia at: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Century\\_of\\_Progress](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Century_of_Progress)

Emory McKerr’s first-person account of the 1933 band trip to Evanston and Chicago was published in the Ontario County Times provided a the details of the band competition and the visit to the World’s Fair. A member of the original Rotary Boy’s Band, McKerr later became a music teacher and band director at Canandaigua Academy.

After participation in the first competition events, the band boarded busses that took them to through Evanston and Chicago. “On this trip we saw many things of interest,” McKerr wrote, “such as a large rum-runner which had been captured, many famous bu8ildings, Chicago’s Chinatown, etc.”

Returning to Evanston, the band entered more competitions. On Friday, the band members were treated to a guided tour of the World’s Fair and its fantastic exhibits.

Returning to campus at Midnight, the band had a short night the band prepared for a final parade. It was two and a half miles over hot, soft pavement. “The hottest sun I’ve ever known,” according to McKerr.

**Emory McKerr became director of the CA band in 1947  
after Navy service in World War II.  
He served 17 years on the faculty of his *alma mater*.**



Image above from author's collection.

Image right courtesy Ontario County Historical Society.



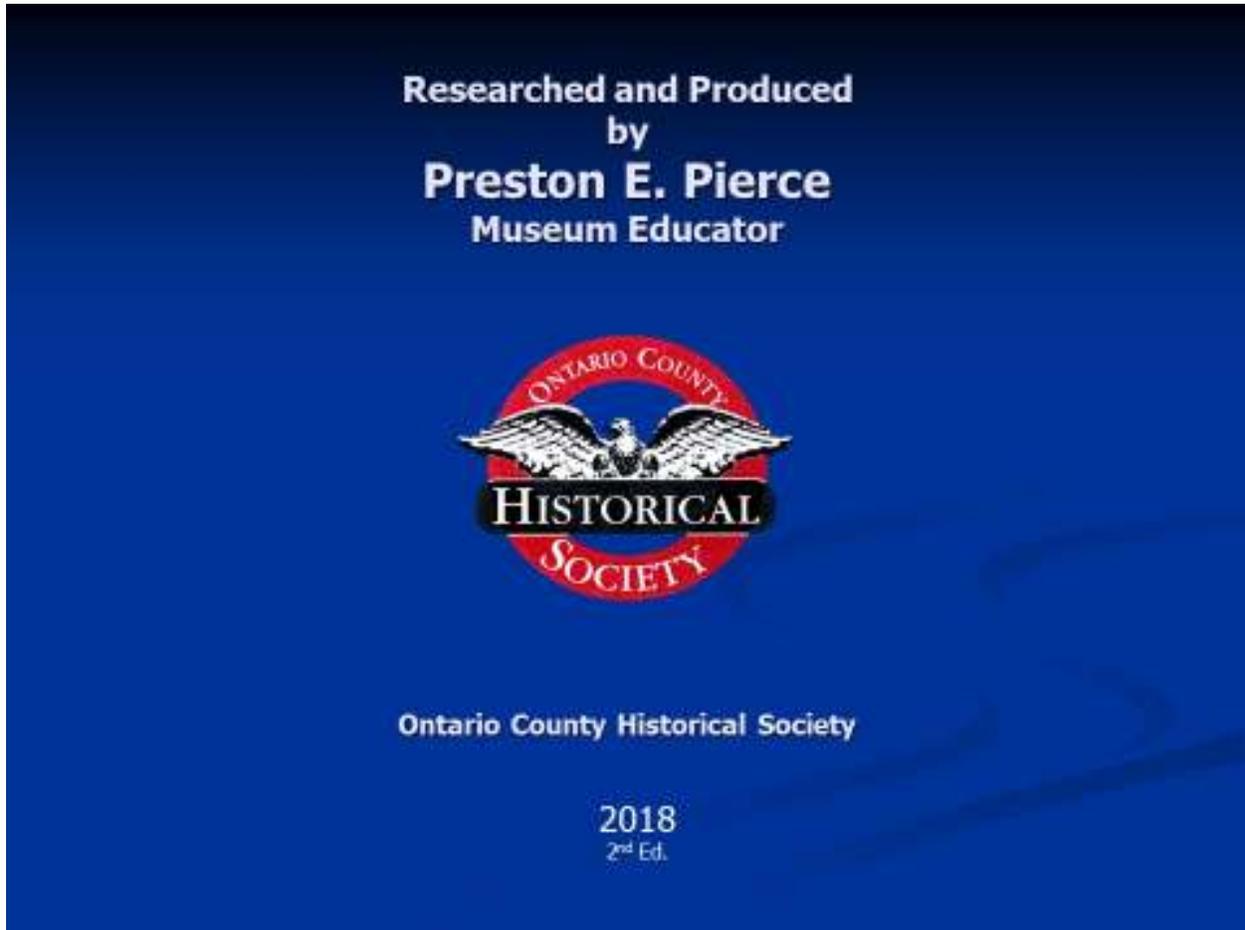
CA band on Main St. during the American Legion parade in 1948. Mr. McKerr is marching with the band wearing his Navy uniform.

Emory McKerr eventually majored in music at Ithaca College. His five years' work in the old Shortsville High School brought them a national band championship in 1939 and other state honors. After Navy service in World War II, McKerr succeeded Ray Russell, teaching music at Canandaigua Academy from 1947-1964 and completing his career at Honeoye Falls-Lima Central School in 1973.

Mr. McKerr's first major post-war showings of the CA band were in an American Legion 7<sup>th</sup> District parade (1948), and in the 1951 Canandaigua Sesquicentennial dedication parade.



At its start, our Canandaigua Rotary Club set in motion two significant projects. They both had long-term impact on the community. The club, and those it has assisted and influenced since 1919, have multiplied the initial impact many times. It remains for us to carry on!



I hope that you have enjoyed this look at two past Rotary projects and feel inspired to continue serving the community.