

## A History Time Line of Hemlock New York

1779	Sunday, 12 May 1779 the Sullivan - Clinton army crossed the flats at the foot of Hemlock Lake, destroying the crops of the Indians as they proceeded up over the west hill toward Conesus Lake. This action opened up the area for the early settlers.
1796	Philip Short built a cabin about 1/4 mile in the valley north of Hemlock Lake. He was the forerunner of the Short family whose members were numerous in the area for many decades. (Arch Merrill's book "The Lakes Country" states that Roswell Bliss came about 1795 and built a cabin and a saw mill).
1797	At about this time Mr. Higby of Livonia established a saw mill on Hemlock Lake outlet. Logs were coming in large quantities down the lake from Springwater and logging was taking place on the lake shore.
1798	Mr. Seth Simons, from Bristol, came and located a Grist Mill somewhere on the outlet.
1800	A hermit, named Maloy, came and built a cabin on the west shore. He was a hunter and trapper. The story is told that he had a bad encounter with a black bear. Maloy must have survived because he lived to tell about the fight.
1801	From this time on there was rapid change all the way from Hemlock Lake to Big Tree Road. Many new settlers came. The saw mills were producing lumber, slab cabins were built and later on, frame buildings and businesses.
1803	Isaac Bishop opened a store in the area near the foot of the lake which came to be known as Gullburg. The area around the Canadice outlet, where it crosses the main road, became known as Glenville. Sometime later, just east of the road a dam across the outlet was built to back up the water and provide water power for a Gristmill which was built.
1808	The Township of Livonia was formed; the Hemlock area was a part of it.
1829	This was a banner year. A Post Office was established in Hemlock, called the Post Office of Hemlock Lake. Mail came in from Gullburg, Glenville and Holden (later called Jacksonville). The first postmaster was John Van Fossen (17 January 1829 - 18 October 1936). The Post Office became Hemlock, New York on 12 December 1895.
1832	The Archer family was operating a saw mill on the outlet.
1838	The Baptists of the area organized as the First Baptist Church of Hemlock Lake, N.Y. The building was erected in 1844 at a cost of \$1400. It was located near the south end of Hemlock village and still stands (2011).
1843	A Methodist building was built, which was destroyed by fire in 1948 and a new church was erected and still stands (2011).
1845	Jacksonville was probably in its heyday. According to an Historical Marker, which was erected at the site by the Hemlock outlet 1 1/4 miles north - east of Hemlock, there were 130 houses, a brick yard, 10 mills and two distilleries. Almost all of the village was gone by 1850. The marker was installed in 1939 by the efforts of E. Short, Frank Connor and others.
1850	The Plank Road & Company was organized in Rochester, N.Y. Much lumber was available at that time, so they decide to try planks. It is reported that 25 miles were completed and a Toll-Gate erected at the south end (where the 1812 Country Store is located now at the corner of Big Tree Road and State Route 15A). The road worked very well for a few years until the lumber began to warp and twist. If finally got so bad it was abandoned.
1850	The Metropolitan Hotel on South Main Street opened its doors for business after being under construction for about two years. There were three floors. The top floor was used as a ball-room and with a stage, it provided a great place for entertainment. An addition was built on a few years later on the south end.
1851	It was reported that Russell Jacque built a large farm house near the lake on the north end. The house was later (in 1873) made into the famous three story "Jacque House", one of the five hotels that existed on the lake during the steamboat days when excursions were offered on the lake.
1853	Due to the Old Bald Hill Road getting so much traffic, there arose a need for the East Lake Road. Mr. John Hill caused the road to be built at a cost of \$5000. Soon after its completion, a Toll gate was set up at the Hemlock end. The story is told that one day while he was downtown he became involved in an argument over the toll prices and fell dead from a heart attack. He never collected much toll but the road served the public for many years. Just the north end of the road is traveled now.
1860	Mr. George Watson built one of the first steamboats to ply the waters of Hemlock Lake. This became one of the

	five boats that carried passengers on the lake from the dock at the foot of the lake to the hotels.
1860	The Baptist Church, which had been established on the Curtis Corners about half way between Hemlock and Honeoye, disbanded and joined with the Hemlock church. The Reverend Ira Justin was pastor at that time.
1866	Frank Connor's history tells us that one day in 1866 a large crowd assembled in front of the Metropolitan Hotel to discuss a Fair. That was the beginning of what later became known as "The Slab City Fair", "The Little World's Fair" and then just the "Hemlock Fair". In 1877, a two-day Fair was held and the Ladies Hall was erected. From then on it grew into what largely became contests of horse racing until the early 1900's.
1876	The gates were opened at Hemlock Lake and Hemlock Lake water rushed down the pipe line toward the city of Rochester. This was the beginning of a gravity flow water system which has supplied the city of Rochester with millions of gallons of water each day. The system always needed improvements and later Canadice Lake water was tunneled into the Hemlock Lake.
1879	The three-story Saint James Hotel was opened on the east side of the lake. In the following years, it was to accommodate many passengers from the steamships that were plying the lake.
1882	The Beam family built their first mill on the Canadice outlet. The dam and mill were just east of the main road. Powered by water power, the mill served the public for many years. Later the Beam family went on to build a mill on the Hemlock outlet in the village of Hemlock just west of the main road. The family also operated a small store near the Canadice outlet.
1888	At this time, there were 112 buildings along the shores of Hemlock Lake, 96 cottages, 5 hotels, 5 permanent residents and 6 cabins.
1890	A while back in our notes, we mentioned the hermit Maloy who came early to the foot of the lake. Around 1890, there came another man named Prinny Chesbro. He had been a sailor and it is said that he was the only man around who could safely splice a rope. He located a cabin somewhere near the half-way house. It is said that he lived to be 100 years old and came to be known as "The Hermit of Hemlock Lake".
1895	The Lehigh Valley Railroad co. line was extended to Hemlock village and Hemlock Lake. Much could be written here about the Lehigh. With the coming of the railroad, Hemlock became alive. Quickly passenger service and the freight service grew until the middle of the 20th century when many trains were in and out every week. Later on, changing times caused the company to quit the runs to Hemlock and the rails were torn up in 1968. Eugene Spencer was one of the last station agents. The last passenger train pulled out of Hemlock in 1937. The "section gang" with their hand-car provided work for local men all those years.
1898	It is known that about this time there was a band in Hemlock. It was known as "The Hemlock Cornet Band". We do know of 3 or 4 of the members: Will Hoppough, Parker Hoppough, Charles Briggs and possibly Will Mallaber. No doubt they played band music at the "Slab City Fair".
1900	Great days ahead for Hemlock, the village of Jacksonville had ceased to exist, Glenville and Gullburg had grown together and joined Hemlock and activity at the lake was lively with new businesses.
1904	The Rebekah Lodge was organized. The I.O.O.F. Order of Odd-Fellows had been established earlier (1898). The I.O.O.F. later went on to build a three-story lodge building south of the outlet on the east side of Main Street. In later years, the building was torn down.
1906	The Wemett Company incorporated. The hardware store, which had been owned and operated by Bacon & Wemett, changed hands due to the death of Mr. Bacon. C. E. Wemett started in the oil business selling Eldred Oil and later became distributor for the Shell Oil Co. 45 stations and about 4,500 customers were served as the oil business prospered.
1906	A fire destroyed what was known as the Woodruff Block on Main street in Hemlock NY. The fire totally destroyed the building which included the Knapp Store, Humphrey's meat market, Naracong's Barber shop, the Odd Fellow and Maccabees lodge rooms, the Wood-Coy hall and the post office. The building was quickly rebuilt.
1911	The old Gullburg school district, which was located just up the Old Bald Hill Road and on the east side of the road, voted to join the Hemlock district. The building was later used as a home and is still standing (1989). The building was demolished circa 2000.
1912	At this time, Mr. V. P. Owen operated a ford automobile agency from a building on the west side of South Main Street. Although it was the Ford agency it also sold Chevrolets.
1912	The first High School was erected on the east side of South Main Street and made ready for use in 1913. It was

	destroyed by fire in 1928.
1915	A little after this date some local people were busy. A few of the older people remember that the Nelson Cary family made baskets in their home on Clay Street. The Bates family lived near the entrance to the fair grounds. Thomas and Harry had a blacksmith and woodworking shop. Also, they made fine quality cutlery. Some of their knives are in the museum at the Livonia Library.
1919	This year the first hand-drawn chemical fire truck was purchased for the local firemen and a cider mill was established on Clay Street by Mr. Olin Mather. The building that housed the mill was torn down in Dixon Hollow and hauled to Hemlock. At the present time (1989), it is an apartment house. It is believed that Olin Mather was the first man in the area to own and operate a self-propelled grain combine.
1920	There were three grocery and dry goods stores operating on the South Main Street. They were Beckers, Knapps and La Monts. Later Beckers was torn down to make room for a house, Knapps is now an apartment house and Earl Collins bought the La Mont property. There were two blacksmith shops on South Main; B. Naracong and Lewis Schneck, owners. By 1920, the Livingston County Canning Co. was in full operation on Railroad Avenue north side of the Lehigh Valley depot. Many local people were employed canning sweet corn, peas, and string beans. Many cases of canned vegetables were shipped out on the Lehigh Railroad. The plant was destroyed by fire the fall of 1931. The Osborne brothers were the owners.
1925	This year brought electricity to Hemlock which made it possible for the town to have "movies". The first shows were in the Odd Fellows Hall and managed by Otto Westbrook. Later on he opened his theater across the main street from the hall in what became later the Collins block.
1925	The Sullivan-Clinton Memorial marker was dedicated at the entrance of Hemlock Lake Park. It was made partly of mill stones and inlaid with Indian arrowheads. It was a beautiful reminder of the past. The Honorable James W. Wadsworth was the guest speaker. Vandals have caused destruction to the monument in past years.
1929	The newly built High School was completed and made ready for use.
1930	This year marked the end of an era. For 75 years, the Scott family had been coming every summer to their cottage and property on the west side of Hemlock Lake. They were, at last, forced to sell their property to the City of Rochester, which consisted of 175 acres of side hill land. Some of the land had been converted to grape vineyards several years earlier. There were also 1 1/2 acres and 175 feet of lake frontage. According to the records they were paid \$55,000 for the property they had enjoyed for so long. They were just about the last people to sell out. Note: Grapes from their vineyard were at one time picked, packed and sold from a small building by the side of the road near the foot of the lake.
1930	There was a Museum established in a room in the basement of the High School. Frank Connor, John Coykendall, Ernest Short and several others collected many pictures, old papers, relics, etc. The museum articles were dispersed when the Honeoye School district rented and used the building.
1935	At this time, there was a drug store in Hemlock. The druggist name was H. W. Thurston.
1937 - 1941	A weekly paper was published in Hemlock. It was called the "Hemlock Courier". It was published by Mr. William Fletcher at his home on Clay Street.
1941 - 1946	There was no Hemlock Fair due to the scarcity of gas and tires and the war effort of World War II.
1942	The Hemlock Church Club was organized. The first meeting was held at the home of Lee and Mabel Coykendall on Main Street. The Club met once a month and they had planned and promoted religious services as well as helping the two local churches financially. The Club is still active (1989).
1943	This year the Hemlock High School boy's basketball team won the Class C Sectional championship.
1943	A Service Man's plaque was dedicated. There were 34 names listed of men of the area. The stone plaque is located on the lawn of the High School and it is dated 1941 - 1945.
1944	The Hemlock Baptist Church celebrated the 100th Anniversary of the erection of the church building. It was a two- day affair held on August 5th and 6th.
1947	At this time, we mention "The Roadside Craftsmen". In a new building across the main road from the 1812 Country Store, the Iron Works were operating. Clarence Curtis of Lakeville, New York and his workmen were turning out useful and ornamental iron articles. Roadside Craftsmen, Inc. went on to establish units in Avon and East Bloomfield.

1949	Kidnapped and murdered, the 11-year old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Reggie Lynn was walking to school from their home in Gullburg to Hemlock. She was picked up somewhere between there and town. Two days later, her body was found in a ravine south of Lima. She had been shot to death. Her killer has never been found.
1950	"Echo Rock" - It was about this time that Arch Merrill tried to locate the "Rock" on the west shore of Hemlock Lake. Echo Rock once was a noted landmark on Hemlock's shores. The ancient boulder, a child of the glacial age, was venerated by the superstitious Indians who knew nothing of the principle of sound waves, and believed the answering voices at Echo Rock were those of kindred in the Spirit Land, when in reality they were only echoes across the lake. When the City of Rochester raised the level of Hemlock Lake by building dikes to increase their water supply, the rock disappeared under water.
1950	At this time Frank Connor, Historian, was writing 24 installments of history for "The Livonia Gazette". Much of our material has come from these writings.
1958	June 16th, Hemlock voted to centralize with Livonia school. Ted Henry, of Hemlock, was elected to the School Board.
1961	Mark Wemett purchased the Hemlock hardware store from Hugh Drain. The store was destroyed by fire in 1977.
1965	"Livingston Leasing" was established by Mark Wemett for making and selling ice cubes.
1972	The new fire house was completed on Al Sharpe Avenue (Old Railroad Street). It replaced the old one on North Main Street, which had, for a long time, been too small.
1976	The Bicentennial of 1976 was celebrated along with the Village of Livonia, where there was a parade and other activities. Hemlock had a special program at the fire house on May 8, 1976.
1977	The Metropolitan Hotel burned to the ground. It had first opened for business in 1850. The hardware store, to the north, burned at the same time.
1982	Dick and Donna Jopson bought the old Shell Station at the intersection of 15A and 20A and remodeled it into a grocery store, service station and an upstairs apartment. In 1985, Doug and Bonnie Rumpfelt bought the business from the Jopsons and continued to run it as a convenient store and gas station for the hamlet.
1984	Mr. Jack Evans, former resident and student of Hemlock and owner of Velmex, Inc. East Bloomfield, N.Y. purchased the school building. Jim Sutton used some rooms for his youth work. There continues to be some light manufacturing there in recent years (2011).
1984	The Hemlock Methodist Church celebrated their bicentennial with a special program at the church on April 29th.
1984	The Hemlock Red & White Store closed after being operated by the Collins family since the 1920's.
1985	A few acres of the old canning factory property were purchased by the Hemlock Firemen and leveled off for a park. A pavilion was built and a playground.
1985	The 1812 Country Store was sold to the Rapelje family. The store had been operated by Ruth Woodruff since 1951.
1989	The 160th anniversary of the Hemlock Post Office was celebrated along with the 25th year of service by the Postmaster, Shirley Marshall.

**Livonia History 1989**

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