

Conversation with the Mayor January 15, 2007

Vicky Daly

Thanks are in order to Leslie Vecchiotti who facilitated the Economic Development meeting for the Town and Village on January 11th, the Palmyra Fire Department and Auxiliary for the use of the hall, and to all those who participated. No action plans were formulated at the meeting. That wasn't the intent or goal. Conversation was and that happened. When you get 50+ Palmyra residents and merchants together to discuss making their community more prosperous, talk - and ideas - happen. It was a good beginning.

FYI -the following is what you would see if you went to www.nycanaltimes.com, clicked on the online newspaper link, and scrolled down, looking for Postcard from Palmyra. I was invited by NY Canal Times newspaper, the complimentary, canal-wide journal, to write about Palmyra and how could I say no? If the opportunity to let people know what a great community this is arises, I am going to grab it. If we who live here are not positive about Palmyra, how can we invite people to come, shop, dine, live and invest in Palmyra? Personally, I see this as a major responsibility, particularly of your elected officials. Keep in mind that the column that follows was written before the weather became all too seasonal.

Postcard from Palmyra - January 2007

Living in an Erie Canal village requires a strong sense of reality. The canal season just past makes that clear. Our incredibly unusual winter, so far anyway, reenforces that fact. For the last several years, Palmyra has hosted an outdoor curling event at the Port of Palmyra. Through the generous sponsorship of the Rochester Curling Club, the sport of curling has been introduced to the people of Palmyra and the region. They could see it played properly and try it themselves. It is clearly not going to happen this January due to our spring time and sometimes early summer temperatures. We'll try again next winter.

So what is happening in Palmyra? Lots. There is, of course, planning for the re-opening of the canal not too many months away. The Celebrations Committee is at work scheduling community events for spring and summer -music and movies in the Village Park; special sales events in village shops; holiday events, perhaps, in collaboration with the Palmyra Community Center and other Palmyra organizations. But right now, residents and visitors can find a variety of own hometown activities to fill their time. The James R. Hickey American Legion Post is holding its monthly Steak Dinners (reserve ahead or be there early or go without), and the Fire Department its 4th Sunday Pancake Breakfasts. The Kings Daughters Library has scheduled its monthly Library Luncheons and Historic Palmyra its monthly presentations. The January 18th offering was particularly appropriate. Charles Girard spoke on Samuel Hopkins Adams' Canal Town at the Alling Coverlet Museum on William Street, just half a block south of Main Street, NYS Route 31. The 7:00 PM meetings are free and open to all comers. Refreshments are served.

The unseasonal weather makes it possible, also, to really see the wide range of nineteenth century residential, commercial, and religious architecture in Palmyra. The signature

image of Palmyra is the intersection of NYS Routes 21 and 31 where you will find four handsome nineteenth century churches, all still active. Reputedly, this is unique. Nowhere else will you find such a magnificent scene. Just a half block to the north and to the south are located two additional nineteenth century churches. (Everything in the Village of Palmyra is within walking distance.) This is a good time, also, to explore the canal artifacts in nearby Aqueduct Park - Lock 29, the Power House, the Aqueduct and the Aldrich Change Bridge, the only change bridge in existence. What is it? The equivalent of a canal era cloverleaf which allowed the draft animals towing the canal boats to change sides when the tow path moved from one side of the canal to the other without undoing the animals' reins. The innovation by Squire Whipple saved time, and therefore money, for the canal boat owners. The reconstruction allows us to step back in time and provides a beautiful view of the park.

This is a good, if off beat, time to explore Palmyra for an afternoon, a day, or several. Shopkeepers have time to chat and answer questions about Palmyra and to brag, just a bit, about our history, our architecture, and all the things you can do in this very unusual winter, besides shop. Check the Palmyra website, www.palmyrany.com for specifics about shops, restaurants, and accommodations, or call (315) 597-4849 or Wayne County Tourism, www.waynecountytourism.com, (800)-527-6510. We'd love to show you around.