

Interesting Facts:

THE TOWN OF PEMBROKE was once mostly a rural farming area. It now includes many small businesses, churches, fire districts and a progressive school district. It is a good place to live, raise a family or enjoy retirement. The Town of Pembroke has great potential for industrial development and has many opportunities for all to enjoy.

Pembroke is host, the first Saturday after Labor Day, each year, to the BRICK HOUSE CORNERS FAIR held at the Town Hall grounds where residents and visitors enjoy the entertainment and history of the town.

ELY SAMUEL PARKER (Do-Ne-Ho-Ga-Wa) Grand Sachem Chief--"Keeper of the Western Door of the Long House of the Iroquois"--one of the Town of Pembroke's most famous citizens.

1828-1897

Ely Parker was born in a log cabin over-looking the waterfalls, at Indian Falls, NY, then a part of the Tonawanda Indian Reservation. He volunteered into the Army and became General Grant's Military Secretary. He was instrumental in drafting the final terms of the Confederate surrender at Appomattox Court House at the end of the Civil War. He was appointed the first Indian Commissioner of Indian Affairs. His remains lie at rest in Forest Lawn Cemetery, Buffalo. A Historical Marker designates his birthplace and is located on the Arkon Road near Route 77 in Pembroke.

Hamlets and the Village of Corfu

BRICK HOUSE CORNERS

Brick House Corners is so named because in the early 1800's John and James Richardson settled at the crossroads of two Indian trails. Old Buffalo road and Indian road or Allegheny Trail (now Routes 5 & 77). At the southeast corner they built a log structure to be used as a tavern. The people fleeing from the burning of Buffalo in 1813 took refuge here. DeWitt Clinton and his party reportedly stayed here in 1815 on their way to Batavia to discuss plans for the Canal. The original tavern burned and a new tavern of brick was built about 1831. It was a successful stage stop for many years and later had many other uses before it was demolished. The Pembroke High School is located near this site.

THE VILLAGE OF CORFU

Long's Corners was named for Dr. David Long and his son, John who came from Massachusetts in 1807. The name was changed to Corfu (after the Greek Island) when residents applied for a post office. The center of the village is located at the intersections of routes 33 and 77. Corfu became known for its many greenhouses and took on new life with the building of the railroad. The village was incorporated on May 1, 1868. today Corfu is the site of the postoffice which serves most of the Town of Pembroke. Many businesses thrive there and it is also the location of the Intermediate School and two churches.

EAST PEMBROKE

East Pembroke is located on Route 5 and shared equally by the Towns of Batavia and Pembroke with Read road as the dividing line. It was first called Ellicott Mills after the Ellicott Family (Joseph Ellicott was the local land agent for the Holland Land Company). Today the Town of Pembroke part includes two churches, the Pembroke Primary School, a pioneer cemetery and several businesses.

INDIAN FALLS

Indian Falls was the site of an Indian Village until 1857 when the Tonawanda Indian Reservation was reduced to its present size and the area was opened up to settlers. In 1842 an agreement was made between the Ogden and Fellows Land Company and the Indians. Jerome Corey then began surveying for the City of Tonawanda Falls. No prettier spot for founding a village could be found in Western New York. By 1843 Corey had a vision for a thriving city when he made this detailed map. It was to be powered by the 30 foot waterfall on the Tonawanda Creek, The name was changed to Indian Falls when an application was made in 1862 for a Post Office. Officials in Washington thought the name to be undesirable because of the proximity of another post office named Tonawanda, which would result in confusion in the mails. Around the turn of the century Indian Falls was a busy village with many businesses and much social life. Today it is primarily a residential area that contains a church, restaurant and construction company. It remains one of the beauty spots of the Town of Pembroke with its cascading waterfall.

NORTH PEMBROKE

North Pembroke or Mogadore as it is also referred to is located in the northeast part of the Town of Pembroke along the banks of the Tonawanda Creek, on the North Pembroke road. It is said that at one time it was one of the larger population centers in the area. It most likely lost its residents and businesses to towns located along the railroad routes. The North Pembroke Hotel and the local church are probably among the oldest buildings left. The old mill is still standing but has not operated for the past 50 or more years. North Pembroke, today, is a community of about thirty homes whose residents earn their livings in nearby cities.

PEMBROKE

Pembroke was called Richville in its early days in honor of Charles B. Rich, a prominent businessman, who established a store in 1812. Robert Millar filed a survey map in 1838, which laid out a village of 150 lots. It shows a wooden horse-drawn railway built in 1835 with hopes of providing an economical method of transporting goods from Medina to Richville via Akron but which never was completed. At one time there were many thriving businesses but today it is mostly a residential area with one church and the Pembroke Fire Company.

PEMBROKE CENTER

Pembroke Center, also called Frog Hollow is located on Route 5 about midway between Pembroke and East Pembroke near the Boyce Road. This is where the first settler, David Goss, brought his family from Massachusetts in 1904 and built the Old White Tavern.

PROSPECT HILL

Prospect Hill or Papermill is located along the west and east banks of the Tonawanda Creek on the Indian Falls and Pratt Roads. This is another of the small communities whose businesses have been eliminated because of improved transportation. Only the residential part of a once thriving hamlet remains.

Lois Brockway, Town of Pembroke Co-Historian