

CANISTEO VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC. NEWSLETTER ARKPORT, NY

April/May/June 2013 - Vol. 21
Linda Burdett, Publisher

Nancy A. Glover, Editor
Dorothy J. Dunham, Assist. Editor

OUR READERS WRITE US

Marjorie Osborn Wagner emailed: "I enjoy the newsletter so much. Thank you all for your hard work. I know where we were for the '72 flood. We had just moved to West Valley NY and on the 17th of June our first child, William, was born. My parents, Stanley and Louise Osborn, came to see us the next day and then after I got home, the flood arrived. Throughout the week I would try to call my folks at all hours of the day and night. The 607 exchange was always busy even at 4 a.m. when I knew my dad would be getting up to do chores. Finally on Sat. of that week my niece, Rainy Osborn Brewer, asked mom if she could try again and finally we got to talk to them. It seemed like a really long week."

Mark Ludwig wrote: "Hello from Seattle! Thank you so much for all your hard work and dedication in preserving and sharing the history and memories of one of the greatest places in the world to live. I love the newsletter and am always thrilled to receive it. It pains me to say that I no longer have any family living in the Canisteo Valley but Arkport will always be my beloved hometown. Your publication makes me feel as though a part of me still lives there and for that I'm extremely grateful."

Ann Nye emailed: "Another wonderful newsletter! Enjoyed Shirley's information on growing up in Arkport. I know Canaseraga jail very well. Actually was born less than a mile away from it. Am glad they restored it."

Shirley Burdett commented: "I loved the variety of stories in the newsletters. Loved Ernie's story."

Art Olds wrote: "Having health problems and in and out of the hospital. Keep up the outstanding job. I look forward to reading them. Thanks so much!" [Art enclosed these 1948 or 1949 pictures of Arkport's Independent Baseball League sponsored by the Hornell Evening Tribune. They were celebrating at the old Arkport Inn, owned at the time by the Hoyt family, after winning the trophy shown.]



Pic. #1 Seated: ?, Charles Barnes; **Standing:** Hughey Jones; Bob White; Edgar Karns; Orrin Hartwell; **Art Olds;** Leon White; Wally Shroyer.
Pic. #2 Left to Right - ?; Floyd "Slats" Hotchkiss; Edgar Karns; Bob White; ?; Wally Shroyer; Orrin Hartwell

Emma Loree wrote: "Mark and I enjoy reading the newsletter so much. It's very interesting. You all do a good job." Emma included an article about her daughter Mary being inducted in the Genesee Community College Hall of Fame for the years 1977-79. The complete story will be in the Alumni newsletter.

Vivian Vet wrote: "I enjoy reading the CVHS info, thanks for all your work!"

Chuck & Marlene Wellington wrote: "Hello from FL. Enjoy all the newsletters and look forward to our return in the spring. Enclosed are our dues."

Joanne Parson Young wrote: "Your last issue was sent to me by a friend and I thoroughly enjoyed it. I am sending a check for my own membership. Thanks for all your diligent work."

Elaine Acomb wrote: "We really enjoy the newsletter. You do a wonderful job." Elaine also included an article on Buck Newsom written by Dick Peer in the May 13, 1996 issue of the *Corning Leader*. The article states, "Those hills around

Fremont also turned out a champion of another kind. He was Bucky Newsom, the Acomb's neighbor and probably the strongest man in the state at the time. He stood 6' 4", weighted 275 lbs, and was built like an ox. He could crouch down under a 1,500 lb. stallion and then rise up with the horse on his shoulder, all four feet off the ground. One time his old Dodge touring car, in which he was carrying 1,100 lbs. of grain, slid off the slippery dirt road and into the ditch. Frank's [Acomb] dad offered to pull him out when the grader got back from a job. 'Heck, you don't have to do that,' said Bucky. He went to the front of the car, lifted it a bit toward the center of the road, did the same thing in the rear, repeated the process a couple of times, and he was off and running. A picture in his scrapbook showed him driving his horses toward the field with one hand and carrying the plow in the other. Bucky became a pro wrestler in New York City for a time, commuting back and forth as contests demanded, and his biggest prize was \$2,200. That was a lot of money in those days. Despite his strength, Bucky had a weak heart. One morning he was found dead at age 60 in his bed at home on Oak Hill."

Helen (King) Beveridge emailed, "I received my 2 copies of the [church] windows (and the refund!) yesterday and wanted to thank you and the others at CVHS for a beautiful finished product! All of your collective efforts are very much appreciated, and I am so pleased with the end result. I am sending the second copy to my sister, who has a personal interest in Tiffany, Carder, and Steuben Glass. We plan a 'field trip' in the near future to view what we have in the area. CVHS, being a volunteer organization, I applaud you for all the countless hours devoted to this venture. I was reminded that I am supposed to be researching my mother's papers and files for pictures and information regarding the Arkport Creamery Co. **Shirley Glover's** essay, included in the most recent newsletter, brought back many memories. 'Red' Glover, 'Brick' Sherner, and Lynn Perry are some of the names that came to mind as I read her essay. My dad also worked there so these were people familiar to me when I was young. Could the feed store fire mentioned by **Ernest Dungan** in his memoir have been the old Colgrove Company? *[Yes, it was, I checked with Ernie.]* My dad was their accountant when he first came to Arkport to work in the mid 1920's. Wouldn't it be something if every member of the CVHS would write a short essay with their own memories of the area – history, family, sports genealogy, etc? What great reading that would be!" *[How about it readers? Let's hear some stories!]*

Norma (Kilbury) Jones wrote: "Keep up the great newsletter. Really enjoyed visiting with Dorothy when she did the article on Grandpa Kilbury. Talked with **Paul King** and he also reads the newsletter as soon as he gets it in the mail."

Mary Jane (Kilbury) Jones wrote, "Thanks for all of your hard work and dedication you all have. It was a nice article on the Kilbury typewriter. Enjoyed doing it and contributing."

Alice Harrington sent dues and donation with a note, "Added a little to help wherever. Thank you all! I do enjoy reading the issues."

Barbara Morten wrote: "My Aunt **Ines [Jones]** lived in Arkport most of her married life and enjoys hearing, reading and telling stories of the 'old times'. We often visited the farm her husband Bob Jones oversaw, enjoyed many an afternoon in the barns, fields, streams near the barns."

Joyce Laska wrote: "You folks do a great job on the publications. They bring back many memories. I am 93, live in a retirement apartment in Columbus, GA. I graduated in 1937. We were the first graduating class in the new school, moving at Easter vacation. There are not many of us left. Keep up the good work."

Frieda Steffey sent her dues and a donation to be used where needed plus she wrote: "I look forward to the newsletters which I then pass on to my brothers. Best wishes."

Jenny Morey wrote: "Hi Nancy and Dorothy, I do want to thank you both for your dedication. The newsletters are fantastic. Even though I wasn't born here, I love reading about this little village's history. There must be countless hours of work gathering pictures, etc. I so enjoy each issue."

Frances Dries Pallesen wrote: "Nancy & Dorothy, thanks so much for the extremely interesting newsletter. I am into researching my family history so I know the immeasurable hours you spend doing local history. Keep up the good work as I'm sure your readers appreciate it as much as I do."

STEPHENS MILLS METHODIST CHURCH FOLLOW-UP

In the last issue **Onalee Faulkner** mentioned the Stephens Mills Church being torn down and wondered what happened to the stained glass windows. At our April 2nd meeting I asked that question and heard the story of the church being torn down. The engraved part of the windows with the names of Hendee and Osborn were saved and given to a member of the family. There were other windows that had names on them, apparently bought with donations to the church and it was assumed they were also given to family members if they lived in the area. The 500 lb. bell from the church and the tin roof were donated to



the Big Creek church.

The church was torn down on Easter Sunday in 1966 by **Jack Hendee, Dick Smith**, John Rhone and Ken Griffin. There was quite a crowd of people who came to watch. Jack used his tractor to pull it down. He said the cable was wrapped around the church and it also inadvertently went around the outhouse at the nearby Grange hall. The outhouse came down with the church!

In the cornerstone of the church was a tin box with papers and coins. Jack said the papers inside were no longer legible. Jack received the cornerstone, which is now sitting on a boulder by the driveway to his home. The cornerstone was engraved with "Methodist Church 1873". He put another stone on top of it reading "Hendee Homestead". The coins went to Ken Griffin who was a coin collector and Dick Smith bought the china cabinet for \$5.00. **Jack and Lois Hendee** lived in the church parsonage for four or five years when they were newlyweds.

Lorraine Glidden wondered if the stained glass window that her daughter has in her home might have come from the Stephens Mills Methodist church but on investigating it further, found that it came from the Advent Church in Stephens Mills. The church was bought by Ray Wise who was going to use the church as an antique store and wanted to put in regular windows. He offered the stained glass window to Ed Phelps, who turned it down at first. It was Ed's Aunt **Irene Floyd** who mentioned to him that he should rescue the colored window and he went back to pick it up. The church building is still standing and is now used as a storage building by the owner, Ray Shinebarger.

[Photos courtesy of Town of Fremont archives.]

DONATIONS

Marjorie Doan Wyant donated four Arkport yearbooks, 1945-1948. She also donated a picture of her late husband, Robert (Mickey) Wyant being inducted as an Eagle Scout and his certificate; an *Evening Tribune* picture and clipping of Mickey and Marge's 1947 class; a Naval picture of Mickey with two of his buddies plus a 1997 picture of the 10 Wyant children and spouses.

Arlene Clark donated several pictures of the Almond Dam.

ARKPORT MEMORIES

Edith Congdon wrote: "Things I remember about living in Arkport: My 6 sisters and I had to go with Mother to pick up potatoes. My mother could pick up more than anyone else. I remember a Mrs. *[Miss]* Hazel Newsom. One day she was walking and my mommy and I were walking too. She stopped us and wanted to know what my name is. My mother said, 'Edith'. Mrs. Newsom said, 'Why did you name such a pretty little girl Edith?' My mother replied, 'Should I wait and name her when she is 18 years old?' I was a cute little blonde. My grandmother, Carrie Thomas lived across from the stores and gave us pennies to buy candy."

[Dorothy Dunham remembers Miss Hazel Newsom, sister of the legendary Buck Newsom. Dorothy said, "It is not surprising that Edith and her mother met Miss Newsom while walking. My memory is that she walked everywhere, even when she lived up on Oak Hill. She walked all over the village and often down to our farm to sell her greeting cards to my mother. We still have some of them and they are now vintage. Hazel's picture was in newsletter #5 with the Newsom wedding party because she stood up with them."]

[On Facebook, Amy Wellington Hunt started a "You Know Your from Arkport, NY, When You Remember" site. Many of the Arkport graduates write things they remember]. Chuck Simmons wrote: "Our playground at school had a merry-go-round. Not sure that's the real name but it's what we called it. Bare ground and gravel around it. You could get about 8-10 kids on it. Sometimes we'd run and push it. Other times we'd use the 'pump' handles to get it going. Kids from grades 2-4 were just the right size to really get some leverage going using their entire body. Sometimes it was 'All the girls get off and push'. That could get the thing moving pretty fast. Then they got liberated and began 'All the boys get off and push'. Well, watching the merry-go-round from the outside wasn't all that much fun but the screams and shrieks of the girls on it who realized that the boys could make the thing go much faster were entertaining."

OUR CONDOLENCES to the families of members who recently passed away.

John Teeft, 95, passed away on March 31, 2013 in Danville, IL. He was the oldest living graduate of the Arkport Union High School, graduating in 1935. John served with the Army Air Corps during WWII. He loved airplanes and flying was his hobby. He was employed as an engineer in several businesses. John is survived by three children and his sister **Carolyn Kerr** in Canisteo.

STEBEN COUNTY HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Much to our disappointment, Dr. Wolfgruber will not be a 2013 inductee into the Hall of Fame. Winners

were Joseph J. Meade, Archie Peck and George Peck.

MEMBERSHIP AND GIFT GIVING

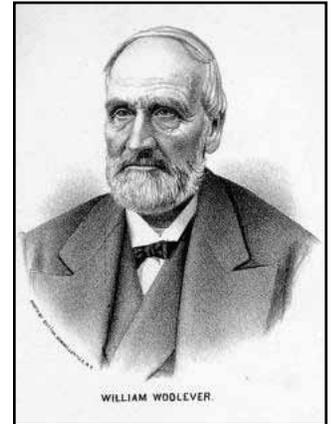
We currently have 317 members. If you'd like to give a gift membership to the historical society, the cost is \$10 for a single membership and \$15 for a married couple. Please send a check made payable and addressed to the Canisteo Valley Historical Society, P.O. Box 123, Arkport, NY 14807.

EARLY ARKPORT: THE WOOLEVER FAMILY

by Dorothy J. Dunham

When this portrait of William Woolever was printed in *History of Steuben County, New York* in 1879, he was still living. He is one of five Arkport residents who "rated" an entire page consisting of a biographical sketch and portrait.

William Woolever (1807-1893) was the first of the Pennsylvania family to come to Arkport in the 1820s. He was the eldest son of parents who died young. William came to the area very young and "penniless", and began working by the month for Christopher Cary, son of Nathan Cary, the second settler of Arkport. Another son of Nathan Cary, William, died and left a young widow, Peninah, whom William married. At first, they lived in a log house near the Hyde grist mill on the road to Dansville. He rented farm land from Ira Davenport for ten years, and through hard work and industry, in the 1840s, eventually purchased two prosperous farms belonging to the Hyde family. In 1852, he bought the farm which had been originally the successful Nathan Cary farm. It bordered what would become the railroad on the west and to the east what is now the Methodist Church site, which was originally the site of the Cary Farm homestead, and later was the site of the Arkport Hotel. In an 1868-69 Steuben County Directory, William was listed as the proprietor of the Hotel. His land also included a "hill" farm, which was lumbered, and laid east of the road to Dansville. At the peak of his agricultural business, he owned several hundred acres of fine productive land, and was an admired citizen of the valley. The 1879 biographical sketch stated: "His life has been one of industry, economy, and care, and it is to such men as Mr. Woolever that the rising generation will ever owe a debt of gratitude for their enterprise, privation, and resolution in building schools, churches, clearing off forests, and establishing law and order in society."



It might seem puzzling in the 21st century that farms would operate within the village limits. However, this was common throughout America. Agriculture was the "business" of early America, farms were small, and developed wherever the land allowed; farms within the villages were not unusual.

In 1851, Woolever was named as an original Trustee of the Arkport Presbyterian Society, among whose responsibilities were to determine rents for "slips" (pews) which would pay the minister's salary. In 1871, he gave land at the western edge of his farm for the Arkport Erie Railroad Station so that the Erie trains could stop in Arkport. This led to the building of the depot and numerous business enterprises (especially shipping) at that end of the village. During the Civil War, he was the first citizen to pledge a sum of money to care for the wives and families of soldiers at battle.

There was a meeting of village leaders in 1877 (including some Woolever men) about the purchase of land to be used exclusively for a cemetery. Later that year, William Woolever sold two acres at the lower edge of his "hill" farm for "one hundred and fifty dollars and five cemetery lots." There are several stones for the Woolever family in the oldest section of the cemetery. Two more acres were sold by him in 1910 for \$550 and this is the "new" part of the cemetery.

William Woolever had seven children, and it appears that he outlived at least five of them, possibly six. His son James Mc Woolever had purchased agricultural land of his own, and upon the death of William, was willed a portion of William's land, keeping it in the Woolever name. Samuel, another son, was a blacksmith by trade and owned a shop at the end of Oak Hill Street. Samuel died young (1891) and left a young widow, Jennie, and two little sons, William and Lynn. At that time, the senior William wrote a will which was generously defined to care for Jennie, and for the care and education of the two young grandsons.

After his wife Peninah died, William married Mary, a widow whose father was a Prior, of Arkport.

An early Woolever house was at 4 East Avenue, and it became the Hosley house. However, the house most associated with the Woolever family (12 West Avenue) was built by Samuel after he and Jennie had lived at the

Arkport Hotel, which was then sold. He had built the large and stately brick house on his land, and moved into it with Jennie and his sons, William and Lynn. After the deaths of Samuel and Jennie, their son, Lynn, Grandfather of **Kathleen Linzy Miottke**, lived there with his wife Ethel and two daughters, Pearl and Nina. Nina (Linzy) was a long time teacher at Arkport Central School, and her husband, Paul, was a farmer.

Lynn Woolever was a dairy and crop farmer. His impact on the village was noteworthy. When baseball was a major social activity in Arkport in the early 1900s, it was problematic that a suitable ball field was not available. Lynn sold the land at the western edge of his farm for the ball field, and a grandstand was built. Hundreds of people came to the village to watch the games. It is now the Fred Kemp Memorial Field.

Lynn was also a charter member of the Arkport Fire Department in 1915, and served as fire chief 1922-23. He died young at the age of 60, and his wife Ethel lived at the beautiful brick house until her death at age 90. His granddaughter, **Kathleen**, recently donated a collection arrowheads from Lynn and Ethel's land. *[When the arrowhead collection was viewed at our April meeting, James Robords advised that the oldest pieces with a more defined notch at the base were Iroquois. The other larger implement pieces were from the Seneca's, who succeeded the Iroquois in the Canisteo Valley.]*

After Lynn's death, the land was farmed by Lynn's son-in-law, Paul Linzy, who had farmed on Latimer Hill since the early 1940s. Linzy had crops and dairy at both farms. Eventually, the Linzy's built a modern ranch at 10 West Avenue.

Back to the 1880s: Jacob Woolever, a brother of William, also came to the area as a very young man, took up the blacksmith trade, and had a shop. He also owned a farm west of the village. Jacob married a woman from the Stephen Webb family which had settled in the early 1800s. Like the Woolever's and many early settlers, the Webb family was from Pennsylvania. Two other brothers of William and Jacob, named John and Abram, came to the area and lived for several years before moving to the West.

Sources used: Archive clippings, family records, cemetery records. Canisteo Valley Historical Society. Early Arkport, 1797-1830, 1981; From Arks to Celery, 1982. Clayton. W.W. History of Steuben County, New York, 1879.



The Woolever House, 12 West Avenue, built around 1878.



The Woolever barn with the foot bridge over the Marsh Ditch; the bridge connected to the house property. The barn, which was south of where the rerouted SR 36 now meets up with old Main Street, was demolished at the time of the SR36 highway project.



*A farm crop; Lynn Woolever on far right. [photos courtesy of **Kathleen Linzy Miottke**]*

SUNNYDALE MARKET

by Madeline Downey Drabkowski

The Sunnydale Market was founded in 1957 by Franklin and Madeline Downey. It started with a card table with a canvas tarp as a roof in front of their mobile home located on Route 36 where the Hornell-Arkport exit is today.

Madeline's parents, Placidus and Ida Monn, joined them in 1958 helping to build the first building. Ida grew up farming and assisted them in raising fresh fruits and vegetables. Placidus was the carpenter and the electrician helping to build an addition to the original small building, adding a large refrigerated storage area to store the produce.

What they did not raise came from local farms and orchards. Their business grew quickly having an outstanding reputation for top quality produce, flowers, groceries and services.

In 1965 NYS D.O.T. brought their mobile home, new house and business to build State Route 17. Their new home was moved 3 miles up Rt. 36 outside the Village of Arkport where it sits today.

My Memories of Sunnydale Market

by Diane Downey Ells

I was about one year old when my parents started selling my grandmother Ida Monn's fresh vegetables and flowers outside their mobile home. Over the next nine years the business grew quickly and I have some vivid memories from a child's viewpoint.

I remember my grandfather being retired from the Erie and being a very handy person, he spent a lot of time helping to build a permanent store structure. My brothers and I spent a lot of time with our grandmother



Ida in her large gardens. Most of her produce and flowers were sold in the store. In a large aerial photo of Sunnydale, you can see our neighbor Mrs. Strobel's house. She supplied our store with fresh bread and cinnamon rolls. We were all big fans of her baked goods! I also remember my dad buying a big green truck to go to the local orchards and markets to add to their stock. My parents were always busy with keeping up with their growing family and the business.

My grandfather also helped to build the new house for our family of seven children that sat next to the store. I marked the changes of the seasons by the fresh produce grown in the summer months and sold in the store. There were huge pumpkin piles, stacks of fresh apples and fall fruits in crates

as fall arrived. It was fun to take the empty crates and build forts with my brothers. There were long lines of Christmas trees and wreaths that marked the arrival of the Christmas season. All of us loved it when my mom brought huge blocks of cheese from Cuba to be cut into smaller portions for the store. She called us "little mice" waiting for the crumbs to fall.

It was sad to leave our store and all the people that came to shop when the state bought out the property to build Rt. 17. We were amazed to see our house being put on big wheels and pulled down the road to where it sits today.

[Pictures courtesy of Bonnie (Downey) Hahn]



TOWN OF HORNELLSVILLE APPOINTS NEW HISTORIAN

Marcia Everett is now the Historian for the Town of Hornellsville. Marcia is a native of the Potsdam, N.Y.

area and has lived in the Hornell area since 1972. She has worked at several establishments in the area, most notably as a radio personality at WLEA and WCKR. She has a desk at the Town Hall.

WHEN THE PREACHERS AND TEACHERS CAME TO TOWN, late 1800s - early 1900s:

Revival tabernacles in the area; the Redpath Circuit in Arkport

by Dorothy J. Dunham

At the turn of the century, it was common for the residents of the valley, whether city dwellers or rural folk, to anticipate traveling and temporary religious revival meetings. The evangelistic campaigns were sometimes sponsored by Protestant churches in the area.

When the revival was planned, tabernacles would be constructed in one or two days by local volunteers from lumber loaned by a local lumber yard. The floor was usually of sawdust. Most were built to accommodate about 1,800 people, plus a choir loft for about 200. It was common for flags and bunting to be used as decoration. When the campaign was finished, the tabernacle would be quickly dismantled, and the lumber sold. In Sue and **John Babbitt's** publication *Postcard History Series: Steuben County*, there are photos of such tabernacles in Canisteo, Avoca, and Wayland. According to Kirk House, Steuben County Historical Society Director, the revival gatherings and meetings were expected and supported by both rural and metropolitan populations at the turn of the century. Though some were spontaneous, most were well planned events. American Revivalism was influenced by the revival preaching career of Dwight Moody, who was a pioneer in modern marketing and advertising of his ideas. Other influences were the evangelist Billy Sunday, the YMCA, and William Booth, founder of the Salvation Army. In addition, the Chautauqua Circuit promoted traveling religious lectures and presentations.

In Arkport, the residents took advantage of The Redpath Bureau, which was a rather sophisticated circuit of prominent speakers, lecturers, and performers. Its broader purpose was to promote arts and culture. The Bureau was organized by James Redpath, a journalist, front-line war correspondent during the Civil War, and Abolitionist. From 1868 to 1924, the Bureau played a significant role in the cultural awareness of America. In *From Arks to Celery*, it was noted that the programs would be held for seven days, and everything related to the series would arrive by train. A responsible local citizen would be recruited to sell season tickets prior to the series to raise money for the performers. Often, a circus tent was brought and was at times erected on Hurlbut land behind what is now the Village Park. Some performers and speakers stayed with families in town. Eventually, performances and presentations were held in Odeon Hall, and were no longer a seven day event. In *From Arks to Celery*, Ruth Huntley Pierce wrote of attending Odeon Hall events with her parents and that as a child, she saw and heard a harp concert for the first time and loved harp music for the rest of her life. She also noted that her mother, Fannie Hurlbut Huntley, wrote in her diary that she saw the drama "Uncle Tom's Cabin" in 1888.

This photo was taken at a revival meeting in Hornell. Though undated, the 48 star flag would indicate that the revival was 1912 or after.



Kirk House advises that this would have been an evangelistic campaign involving Protestant churches in Hornell and Canisteo with an outside speaker and that the structure is quite possibly a purpose-built temporary tabernacle. The tabernacle was electrified and there are two fire extinguishers at the front aisles. The platform seems temporary; the benches are unfinished raw pine; there seems to be a grass or earthen

Canisteo Valley Historical Society, Inc.

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Continued from caption for Revival Tabernacles

*floor. At the front center is a Grand Piano, and at the rear is a sign advertising the establishment that loaned the piano. A small band is set up to play, possibly 8 pieces. The front box to the left was for the chief usher. On the right front, the sign reads: "Have you a personal workers book?" Personal workers would have been the local folks who actually dealt with those who came forward for salvation or other commitments, following the message. Besides the revival officials, speakers, ushers, and the band, the other people on the platform were choir members. Photo courtesy of **John Dromazos.**]*

Arkport Hotel - Known as the The Arkport Hotel or the Hawkins House



*The hotel at the four corners in Arkport (now the Methodist Church) was on land owned by William Woolever, who bought the land from what was the original homestead of Nathan Cary, second settler of Arkport. The hotel was known as the Arkport Hotel, and the Hawkins House. It was owned by Cal Hawkins from 1880-1904, and this fine photograph was from that time period. It burned in 1909. Photo courtesy of **Kathleen Linzy Miottke.***