ONEONTA DIARY
1908-2025

A chronological record of years to date as a city. The years 1908-1948 were compiled by Fred M.H. Jackson. The period of 1949-58 was compiled by Dr. Albert Fitzelle when he was city historian. The 1959-75 years were compiled by Bill Gates, editor of The Daily Star, and his staff. From 1976-2025 city historian Mark Simonson made compilations, as well as edited previous compilations to make more modern references to former landmarks. Simonson also added news events that were not listed in previous compilations. Last revised in February 2026.

1908

On Jan.10 after a public hearing was held at the old YMCA, then on Broad Street, the village trustees voted to approve a city charter and send it to the state Legislature for approval. Initial discussion had begun in March 1907.

A new high school building was dedicated on Apr. 23, then found on Academy Street. It replaced a Union school building, built on the same site in 1868.

Gov. Charles Evans Hughes signed a bill on May 21 to create the City of Oneonta. A formal celebration was planned for Jan. 1, 1909.

A lodge of the Brotherhood of Railway Carmen was organized in May.

The Oneonta Milling Co., later known as Elmore's, once found on today's Carbon Street, completed a dam for its water supply near the East End.

Village trustees accepted a deed to 75 acres adjoining the Susquehanna River, from Dr. and Mrs. Lewis Rutherford Morris, agreeing to certain provisions. At first it was called Morris Park, but was changed by Common Council to Neahwa Park in 1911.

What was called the Wooden Row Fire took place on Dec. 27, destroying several old buildings on the south side of Main Street, across from the former Bresee's Dept. Store.

1909

Oneonta became the 46th city in New York State at the stroke of midnight, Jan. 1.

The fire commission disbanded the volunteer fire department.

Company G, then found at the armory, today's Asa C. Allison Municipal Building, purchased a fine collection of old firearms. They are now at the NYS Military Museum in Saratoga Springs.

The former volunteer Mechanics Hose Co. building on London Avenue has been sold by the city.

The City Club was organized by members of the D.F. Wilber Hook & Ladder Company. They occupied D.F. Wilber's house, once found where the modern addition of Wilber Nat'l. Bank (now Community Bank) is found at the corner of Main Street and Ford Avenue.

H.G. Bishop sold the Oneonta Press to Chester A. Miller. Miller went on to become a state Assemblyman and Oneonta postmaster.

1910

The Central Hotel block burned, where 189 Main St. is found today. It was replaced by the Hotel Oneonta, which opened in 1911.

A new grandstand with concrete foundations is being placed on the Oneonta Fair grounds. Some of the foundations can still be seen along the hillside near the present Belmont Circle neighborhood.

The Oneonta Promotion Co. has been organized to erect a building for an overall factory here. That was completed in 1911 on Chestnut Street at Fonda Avenue, later a dress factory and now an antique center.

George I. Wilber presented a modern fire engine to the city.

Another big fire took place on Dec. 23 along Market Street, near today's Foothills Performing Arts and Civic Center. A freight station, Morris Bros. Feed (known later as West-Nesbitt) and a few other buildings were destroyed.

1911

The division headquarters of the D&H Railroad was moved to Oneonta. The railroad employed approximately 39% of the city's population during this decade.

The nurses' home next to Fox Hospital was completed. This and the original hospital building were razed for expansion of the hospital in the 1970s.

The Woolworth store opened in Oneonta where 203 Main St. is today.

Water Street has been extended to Chestnut. At the time, this connected Broad Street with today's Chestnut Street Extension.

West End chapel was built, known later (1921) as the River Street Baptist Church.

The first funeral procession entirely formed of automobiles was completed by A.M. Butts.

1912

Charles Smith was elected grand master of Masons in the State of New York, at the meeting of the grand lodge held in New York City.

Fred M. and Lewis C. Baker form hardware firm of Baker Bros., a store that once stood where Clinton Plaza is today, 120 Main St.

Frank M. Gurney has been appointed city engineer.

The Oneonta Sales Co. has taken the agency of Ford cars, which they held until the mid-1970s, then found at 53-57 Market St.

1913

Due to a quickly growing population and expansion of dwellings, the city ordered a re-numbering of buildings on several streets, particularly on Main and Chestnut Streets.

Dr. Norman W. Getman opened an office in the house on Ford Ave. once occupied by his uncle, Dr. A.D. Getman. It was later known as the Community House, razed for expansion of the Dietz Street parking lot in the 1950s.

The Elmore Milling Co. on lower Main Street was destroyed by fire May 7, killing three and causing $250,000 in losses. A brick building replaced it in 1914.

The Burroughs Club was organized, named after famous Roxbury naturalist John Burroughs.

The Oneonta Building and Loan Association has bought the A.S. Miles property. It is now the parking lot across from the NBT Bank on Wall Street.

The city voted to appropriate $3,000 for the purchase of a lot and $17,000 for the erection of a school house in the Fifth Ward, once known as the Chestnut Street School, now a private residence and retreat center.

A wireless receiving station of R.E. Brigham now receives messages twice daily from Arlington, VA.

1914

The Oneonta Country Club opened with a nine-hole golf course in late July. It was on the former farm of J.S. Bull.

The first Dollar Day in the city was held March 27.

The Bauer Chemical Co. located here, on the site of today's Lettis Auction, 23 Reynolds Ave., and manufactured Sanatogen.

Centennial Lodge of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows (I.O.O.F.), bought the former Morris Bros. Building on Chestnut Street, now home to the Town Square Media group.

The new lodge of Elks bought the double house at 99 Main St., the former residence of Timothy Sabin and home today to the Silver Bullet Grill.

Wall Street opened Sept. 26, connecting Chestnut and Dietz Streets.

Ex-President Theodore Roosevelt spoke here Oct. 13.

1915

Use of boulevard lights commenced April 9.

River Street is being paved.

The new post office building was formally opened June 14. It is now home to Oneonta City Hall.

The city has a population of 10,496.

Willard V. Huntington was killed in an automobile accident on Sept. 13.

A Chamber of Commerce banquet at the Hotel Oneonta on Nov. 24 was site of a transcontinental telephone call with San Francisco, with receivers at each table. 400 attended. A few hours later the Liberty Bell was on display at the D&H Depot (today's Stella Luna Ristorante), and was viewed by 3,000 people.

Fonda Avenue is closed for crossing the D&H Tracks. An overhead bridge was built for pedestrians. It was razed in 1990.

1916

The public library was moved from near the Oneonta Theater on Chestnut Street to the former Getman house on Ford Avenue.

The Kiosk lunchroom of Higgins Bros. will move from Dietz Street to West Broadway, to be replaced with a brick building, today's 3-5 Dietz St., home to Teleky Jewelers and Dr. Polgar's offices.

The mausoleum in the Plains Cemetery was dedicated on Decoration (Memorial) Day.

The city came into possession of the Walling plot, through the generosity of George I. Wilber. The city named it Wilber Park, once known as Walling's Grove, and dedicated it July 4. New city streets were gradually formed on another part of the property, including Walling Boulevard, Roosevelt Avenue, Wilson Avenue and Taft Avenue.

A new Catholic cemetery, Mt. Calvary, has been laid out in Emmons. The first burial was made in July.

The pavilion in Neahwa Park has been completed.

The Franklin tollgate, once located on the Franklin Mountain Road, today's state Route 28, is to disappear.

1917

With World War I in full swing, Company G left on Feb. 4 for duty to guard the New York City aqueduct. On Aug. 18 they moved on to Camp Wadsworth in South Carolina, for several months of training.

Common Council elected A.E. Ceperley as mayor to succeed Joseph S. Lunn, who recently died.

Quality Silk had a mill on the former Windsor Avenue. Today this is an alley off of Dietz Street behind the Historical Society building ending at the back of the former Bresee's Dept. Store.

Supt. J.G. Hoyt of the water works is overseeing the planting of 20,000 Scotch pine trees on the Gifford farm, near today's Lower Reservoir Road.

The D&H roundhouse is being repaired. Seven modern stalls are to be added each year for seven years.

1918

Henry E. Huntington deeded the Huntington property to the city for use as a library and park. The library opened in July 1920.

The division offices of the Susquehanna division of the D&H are to be moved to the top of the Oneonta Hotel building after relocating from several sites on Main Street in recent years.

The D&H and the Ulster & Delaware railroads are now both using the D&H depot.

The city voted "bone dry" at the election held April 16 and 17. The city will be "dry" Oct. 1.

1919

The Bauer Chemical Co. capital stock has been sold by a custodian. The manager of the company was a major in the Imperial German Army and a paymaster of all saboteurs across the region, a great concern during World War I.

J.G. Laskaris has bought the corner brick block of Walter L. Brown, today's 183 Main St., moving from 190 Main St. It was a popular restaurant for several decades, and now home to the Greater Oneonta Historical Society's History Center.

Oneonta provided dinner, entertainment and dance to returning soldiers on Apr. 24. Only 150 were present.

A post of the American Legion was organized Aug. 27.

Ralph S. Wyckoff has purchased the greenhouses of Carr W. Peck on Grove Street. The greenhouses were established by Mrs. Seymour Scott in 1881.

The name of the Free Baptist Church has been changed to the Main Street Baptist Church.

1920

The Oneonta Ice Co. has bought the coal business of L.B. Green.

The population of the city is 11,582.

The Coy livery stables at 8-12 Dietz St. have been torn down and a brick block erected by F.L. and S.R. Dibble. The N.Y. State Dept. of Labor is found there today.

The Oneonta Sales Co. took possession of their new building at the corner of Market and Chestnut Street Extension, 27-33 Market St.

1921

Oneida Street has been so named by vote of Plains (West End) residents.

The city will pave Chestnut Street to the city line.

Company G, 10th Infantry was federalized Apr. 8. It is now part of the New York National Guard.

Brown Park was presented to the city. It was at the corner of Main and Market streets, now part of the extension buildings of Clinton Plaza.
The former home of the public library on Ford Avenue is to be reopened as the Community House.
While the City Band disbanded after 25 years in existence, Keeton's Band was organized.
The new Chestnut Street School was gutted by fire, following an explosion.

1922

The new Plains School opened Jan. 9. It was located where the West Gate Plaza is found today, at the corner of Chestnut Street and Winney Hill Road.
The D.F. Wilber house at the corner of Main and Ford is being demolished in preparation of a theater. First known as the Maxey Theater, which opened Dec. 7, was later called The Palace until torn down in 1966, for expansion of Wilber Nat'l Bank (Community Bank).
The Rotary Club was chartered Apr. 20.
Stop-go traffic signals at the corner of Main and Broad streets and Main and Chestnut streets were used for the first time May 31.
The telephone building on Dietz Street, home today to an apartment building, has been enlarged and a third story added.
The D&H has built barracks to house strikebreakers. The Wilson House, formerly on Market Street also became housing for "new employees." (so-called strikebreakers) The strike began on July 1, 1922 and ended on Dec. 4, 1923.
The shelter house at Wilber Park has been completed.
The city to purchase voting machines.

1923

The city voted to buy the water works, in accordance with the plan named in the will of George I. Wilber, who had previously owned the works.
The Normal School branch of the trolley has been discontinued and Fred Bliss has started a motorbus line.
St. Mary's parish has bought the former W.H. Morris property at the corner of Elm and Walnut streets, where a parochial school was built, today's parish hall.
Mitchell Street School opened on Jan. 22, found on the site of today's Nader Towers.
D.F. Keyes has bought a majority of the stock of the Oneonta Union Agricultural Society, the organization that operates the annual Central New York Fair.
The Otsego County Bar Association has been organized.
The old icehouse on Railroad Avenue is to be razed.
The corner stone of St. James parish house was laid May 27.
The J.C. Penney store opened Sept. 20 at 144-46 Main St.
The Kiwanis Club was organized Nov. 6.
The D&H shop men ended the strike on Dec. 4, which had begun in 1922.

1924

Oneonta had the biggest turntable in the world in the D&H roundhouse. It was 104 feet long.
The Catholics have bought the former Z.H. Sloat house as a residence for the Sisters of Mercy, today's 37 Walnut St., built in 1867 by A. Rodney Dutton.
The Sgt. E.N. Patten post, VFW was organized June 17.
St. Mary's school was dedicated Aug. 2, then at 38 Walnut St.
The historic Red Caboose was moved from the railroad yards to Neahwa Park and was dedicated Sept. 23.
The name of Brewer Avenue was changed to Woodside Avenue.
The Otschodela Council, Boy Scouts, was organized.

1925

A 7% grade has been secured for the Oneonta-North Franklin road on the mountain, today's state Route 28.
The First Baptist Church was rededicated after important repairs.
Dr. G.W. Augustin, speaking to the Rotary Club, said that another great war was sure within a generation unless there be a radical spiritual change in the world.
The West-Nesbitt Co. has been incorporated and a large building erected on 30-32 Market St. The building was razed in 2003-04, now the site of the Foothills Performing Arts and Civic Center.
The cornerstone of the present First United Methodist Church at 66 Chestnut St. was laid July 12.
About 1,200 attended a meeting of the Ku Klux Klan on the Plains, or West End. About 150 were initiated and three crosses were burned.
Dr. Alexander F. Carson has begun practice here. He later became a mayor of Oneonta.
The population of the city is 12,057.

1926

The Oneonta Ice Cream Co., 16 Lewis St., has been merged with the General Ice Cream Co.
The Chamber of Commerce has commenced issuing automobile licenses and plates.
The Franklin Turnpike (today's state Route 357 & 28) has been closed for the construction of a concrete road to Meridale.
Fred M. Baker is building a brick block adjoining the Baker block, 120-22 Main St. This was formerly on the south side of Main Street, razed in the early 1970s for today's Clinton Plaza.
Charles H. Bennett is building a one-story brick block at 359 Chestnut St. for use as a showroom and service station at the corner of Chestnut Street and Shafer Avenue. Later it was home to the Oneonta Dress Factory and is presently a series of retail shops.
The William H. Hoffman cleaning works has taken possession of its new block, presently the Red Caboose restaurant next to Kim K. Muller Plaza, 224 Main St.
The rails of the trolley road have been removed from Oneida Street.
Oneonta council, No. 87, Royal and Select Masons was instituted May 21.
The Board of Education has bought the Van Deusen building at the corner of Main and Park streets, to be used for a grade school. It is now a veterinary hospital.
An ambulance has been given to the city by Mr. and Mrs. D.F. Wilber.

1927

M.A. Ross is building a brick block at the corner of Main and Fairview streets, to include four stores.
The new Hartwick College may come to Oneonta.
The Central New York Fair has been discontinued. The grounds will be plotted and sold by D.F. Keyes. It is known today as the Belmont Circle neighborhood.
Will Rogers delighted a large audience at the theater.

W.W. Hughes is the new general secretary of the YMCA, succeeding Andrew C. Lange. Hughes is the father of former Mayor Roger Hughes.

The Oneonta-Meridale Road has been completed—12.5 miles.

L.E. Wilder retires from business and rents his 221-223 Main St. store to J.J. Newberry Co.

1928

The J.C. Penney Co. has taken possession of the new store at the corner of Main Street and Ford Avenue.

The Star and D.W. Orcutt printing shops have merged.

The new Huddleston-Walton bakery opened May 1 for inspection by the public. Once found at 6-8 Market St., it later was known as the Spaulding Bakery, until the late 1950s. It is now student housing.

Ground was broken June 26 for the first building on the Hartwick College campus.

Hartwick College opened Sept. 25 with services in the Palace Theater. First classes were conducted in the former Walling mansion, today's United Presbyterian Church until the first building on Oyaron Hill, Science Hall could open in late 1929.

All electric poles are to be removed from the business section of the city.

The Oneonta Country Club expanded from a nine to 18-hole golf course.

1929

J.W. Shaver bought the Windsor Hotel from B.E. Swart Co. The Windsor was once located at the corner of Wall and Chestnut streets, where today's NBT Bank is.

The old Ford stone mansion on Main Street is being razed for building a new bank building by the Wilber National Bank. The stone building was built by Eliakim R. Ford in 1840.

Oneonta Lodge, Free and Accepted Masons, has bought the former G.W. Fairchild residence and will convert it into a temple.

Dr. C.W. Leitzell has been chosen president of Hartwick College.

The George B. Baird residence at the corner of Chestnut and Church streets has been sold and will be converted into a Physician's Center. It was razed in the 1950s for a supermarket, now a series of retail shops.

A marker of the Clinton-Sullivan Expedition was unveiled in Brown Park Aug. 10. It is now on the site of the Clinton Plaza, corner of Market and Main streets.

The Linn Trailer building on the Plains has been completed. Later named Lyncoach, the business was on site until the mid-1970s. It is known today as 4200 Chestnut St., home for shops and small businesses.

The United Presbyterian Church on Dietz St. burned Dec. 1.

1930

Bertus C. Lauren was elected president of the Citizens National Bank, formerly located in the 189 Main St. block. Lauren was a mayor of Oneonta from 1926-31.

The YMCA, then located on the former Broad Street, opened its swimming pool April 30.

The population of the city is 12,527.

The Lions Club was organized July 14.

Work has started on the Pony Farm crossing. This is the bridge over the railroad tracks on lower Oneida Street, along state Route 7.

The cornerstone of the First United Presbyterian Church (Red Door Church) at 381 Main St. was laid Sept. 28.

1931

The Main Street river bridge has been condemned by the state superintendent of highways. An iron bridge, it has been in use 42 years and will be replaced. This had been the fourth bridge on the site since 1786. The fifth was completed in 1933.

Mrs. Evelyn Webster's system of teaching is to be published by the American Education Press, Inc.

Robert N. Briggs was fatally injured in a plane crash.

1932

The Stewart Ice Co. was formed at 45 Valleyview St. This was Oneonta's first artificial ice company; formed by refrigeration machinery rather than cut from area ponds.

The new United Presbyterian Church was dedicated June 14. The Walling mansion once stood on this site.

A large brick building has been erected on the Normal School grounds, for a training school. This was Bugbee School, which operated until 1975, and is now Bugbee Hall, part of the State University College at Oneonta.

The first graduating class from Hartwick College numbered 73.

A new fire alarm system is to replace the bell on Lawn Avenue.

Ground was broken for the state tuberculosis hospital on upper West Street. This was the Homer Folks Hospital, which operated until 1975. It is now a Job Corps Academy.

1933

Dr. Percy I. Bugbee retired as principal of the Normal School. Dr. Charles W. Hunt replaced him.

During a widespread milk strike, 100 cans of milk were dumped in Oneonta.

The bus terminal has been changed to the Windsor Hotel.

A sewage disposal plant for the city has been built below the Plains. It is on today's Silas Lane in the West End.

1934

The First Presbyterian Church has extended a call to the Rev. Dr. Boyd McCleary.

The Unger Dress Factory opened Oct. 1, corner of Chestnut St. and Fonda Ave.

1935

The Board of Education has purchased the E.D. Lewis property on Grove Street.

The first patient was admitted to the Homer Folks Tuberculosis Hospital on Upper West Street in December. It was named after the Secretary of the State Charities Aid Association. The 11-building campus cost approximately $1.25 million.

What was called the worst flood in a generation hit the Oneonta area on July 9. Record heat was shattered the day before with a long series of cloudbursts. The most damage was done in the center of the city, including Main, Dietz, Walnut, Elm, Center and Church streets. Property loss was estimated at over $400,000.

1936

The Oneonta Glove Co. has been formed. The building at 40-42 Market St. has been leased.
Length of streets within the city limits: River Street, 10,300 ft.; Main Street, 9,900 ft.; Maple Street, 8,400 ft.
The additional height of the dam at Wilber Lake will increase water storage to 212 million gallons.
After another bad flood in March, an act of Congress authorized the construction of seven big dams in the Upper Susquehanna region for prevention of floods in the Southern Tier. This created a number of battles against such dams for several decades to come.
Dr. Charles W. Hunt of the Oneonta State Teachers College convinced the City of Oneonta to appropriate $23,500 for the purchase of land on a hillside above the school, where today's SUNY Oneonta campus is found. In subsequent years, Hunt urged other donations for acquisition of more land in the same area, accumulating over 80 acres by 1944. The land was turned over to the state of New York.

1937

The Common Council adopted a zoning ordinance.
Rev. Harold C. Buckingham becomes pastor of the First Methodist Church.

1938

William A. Kelley died Jan. 9, the last local survivor of the Civil War.
The city has signed a contract for parking meters.
Rev. Arthur A. Cunningham became pastor of St. Mary's Church, then located on Main Street, presently the site of the Hughson & Benson Agency.
The river rose to 21.25 ft. on Sept. 22, the highest on record. The Mickle Bridge over the Charlotte Creek was carried away.

1939

The roof of the D&H freight house has been raised to provide a second story, which will be occupied by division offices. It is presently an apartment building on Market Street.
A steel grandstand is being erected at the Neahwa ballpark. It was funded by William F. Eggleston and the Works Progress Administration. It is still in use at today's Damaschke Field.
A swimming pool at Wilber Park has been opened. This was also a WPA project, including the stone bathhouse. Prior to this, water was dammed up in this area for swimming.
Dr. Henry J. Arnold succeeded Dr. C.W. Leitzell as president of Hartwick College.
The Upper Susquehanna Historical Society has been formed. The name was changed in the late 1990s to The Greater Oneonta Historical Society.

Belmont Circle was accepted as a city street.
The E.R. Ford, Jr. residence on Ford Avenue was demolished, erected in 1881. It made way for an Acme supermarket, later known as the early home for the National Soccer Hall of Fame, and presently offices for a law practice.
The trolley has been sold.

1940

Rev. Louis van Ess becomes rector of St. James Episcopal Church.
The Sportsmen's Club has purchased the "Vlaie" farm. It is at the top of Franklin Mountain on state Route 28.
Oneonta's Red Sox joined the Canadian-American League.
A farewell banquet for Company G was held Oct. 15. The company left for Fort Benning Oct. 22.
The Sears Roebuck store opened Nov. 14. It is now the Ruffino Mall, 222 Main St.
The Otsego County Sanatorium will cease work as a tuberculosis hospital on Jan. 1. It was located near Mount Vision.
Fourteen men, the first lot inducted by the Oneonta draft board, left Nov. 28 for World War II. By the end of the war, 60 Oneonta area men had died in service to their country, referred to as "Gold Star Men."

1941

Robert J. Simmons has been appointed chief of police.
There were no graduates from the State Teachers' College, owing to a change from a three-year to a four-year requirement.
A new annex to the Fox Memorial Hospital was formally opened Nov. 24.
The first echelon of the Sixth army went through the city Dec. 6, led by Col. Theodore Roosevelt and the 26th infantry. The second echelon went through Dec. 7.

1942

Charles H. Bowdish was the able city chamberlain 28 years.
Col. Fenmore B. Lynch was the first native Oneontan to be killed in World War II. A plane in which he was flying crashed between Kunming and Chungking.
Residents participated in the first blackout drill the night of Jan. 22. Lights went out for 15 minutes following a warning sound by numerous whistles from the railroad yard and the fire siren.
People gathered downtown on May 1 to a rally for buying war bonds and stamps. The day's effort raised $50,000, considered sufficient to buy a "Bomber for MacArthur."
Augustus M. Gurney has been promoted to brigadier general.
The new war council elected officers, with Dr. E.J. Parish, chairman.
The State Teachers College conferred degrees for the first time.

1943

Oneontans began to deal with gasoline rationing in January for the war effort.
A.E. Ford's three-story brick feed store on Market Street was gutted by fire May 23. It was repaired by removing the top two stories.
An honor roll was placed on the post office grounds, the site of the present city hall. It was sponsored by the Rotary, Kiwanis and Lions clubs, dedicated Nov. 11. It stood until Nov. 20, 1950 when it was toppled and heavily damaged by a windstorm, and removed.
Otsego County has been changed from the 39th to the 44th senatorial district.
Cigars and cigarettes were very scarce.
By autumn, enrollment at Hartwick College barely exceeded 100 due to the War, and was in danger of closing. A new government program chose Hartwick as a handful of colleges selected to train members of the new U.S. Cadet Nurse Corps., eventually a factor is saving the college. Also, the Rev. Harold C. Buckingham received the degree of Doctor of Divinity from Hartwick College.

1944

Maximilian Shepard has purchased the buildings and equipment of the Windsor Hotel, which once stood at the corner of Wall and Chestnut streets.

Rev. Paul J. Strenge has become the pastor of the Lutheran Church.

The Korrell Co. has established a branch dress manufactory here.

D.D. Crisp began his work as executive of the Otschodela Council of Boy Scouts, Sept. 1.

What was believed to be the final blackout drill has been held.

The Oneonta Daily Star has been sold by Francis A. Lee and associates to Oneonta Star, Inc. owned by James H. Ottaway and Byron H. French, publishers of the Endicott Bulletin.

1945

J. Kenneth Yager has returned to his position as secretary of the Chamber of Commerce, after a leave of absence to act as an assistant field director of the Red Cross in the Pacific theatre.

The Hartwick College laboratories were dedicated Feb. 28.

Dr. LeRoy S. House has been elected to the fellowship in the American College of Radiology.

Miss E. Doris Crandall succeeded Mrs. Lechevet as administrator at Fox Memorial Hospital.

Oneontans treated the news of V-E Day very solemnly by attending services at various churches. However, joyous crowds formed in the downtown area when the surrender of Japan was announced.

Dr. Harold V. Hager succeeded Dr. George J. Dann as Superintendent of Schools in the city.

Rev. Charles H. McClung became pastor of the United Presbyterian Church.

1946

The city's first Common Council with a Democratic majority was sworn into office, with Dr. Alexander F. Carson re-elected as mayor.

Donald H. Grant has been appointed county attorney, succeeding D.J. Kilkenny, retired.

A $150,000 fire at the D&H coal chute on March 13 resulted in two dead and ten injured, after the chute caught fire and then collapsed.

Hartwick College purchased and took possession of the former Parshall Hospital, 5 Myrtle Ave. on July 1, to be used as a dormitory for students incoming that fall. Parshall Hospital had been on the site since around 1920, named after Mary Parshall, nurse.

Aug. 21 was a Welcome Home Day for WWII veterans, with about 1,200 registered.

The city became free of debt when the last payment was made on the $250,000 school bond issue of 1926.

1947

The first electrical code went into effect in January.

The Federal Communications Commission gave The Oneonta Star authorization to operate a broadcasting station, with a frequency of 1400kc. The station signed on Dec. 1, as WDOS, with studios in the top floor of the Oneonta Hotel, today's 189 Main St. Also that year, the FCC granted authorization to operate an FM radio station, which signed on May 1, 1948.

Ground was broken May 25 for a $40,000 laboratory building at A.O. Fox Memorial Hospital, named for Dr. Marshall Latcher, in recognition of his long and devoted self-sacrifice in the community. Funds were contributed by friends and admirers.

A plaque was dedicated at the armory in honor of the 13 men in Co. G who were killed in action in WW II. Also, a new Company G was federalized Nov. 6, with Capt. Charles O. McGonigal, succeeding Co. I with Capt. Kenneth L. Black.

The large and valuable collection of firearms in the State armory was turned over to the city. The collection is now in the NYS Military Museum in Saratoga Springs.

Two buildings from Camp Shanks were dismantled and brought here, constructed in an "L" formation on the Hartwick College campus, to house offices, assembly and classrooms. Other Army surplus buildings were brought here for housing, nicknamed "Splinterville."

The city has received a new $10,000 pumper for the fire department.

Sterling P. Harrington has been appointed county attorney, succeeding Donald H. Grant.

Gordon B. Roberts opened his insurance agency on Oct. 17.

From the city's churches, Rev. George G. Summerson became pastor of the Elm Park Methodist Church, Rev. George Whipple became pastor of the River St. Baptist Church, and Rev. James Alcock became pastor of the Chapin Memorial Universalist Church.

1948

Leigh H. Murdock and George Gregory have sold the A.H. Murdock Implement Co. business to George Gregory and Merritt A. Gibbs. The store was located at today's 10 Market St.

A.O. Fox Memorial Hospital now has modern operating room equipment, the gift of the late James A. Dewar.

A Kiwanis Key Club has been organized, composed of Oneonta High School students.

Frank M. Reardon succeeded C. Nathan Pendleton as president of the Board of Education.

Oneonta celebrated its centennial as a village for five days in September.

The city is to construct a street leading to the new State Teachers College campus. That's today's Ravine Parkway. Sixty acres of land was contributed to the State and the Legislature authorized an appropriation of $1.25 million for the construction of modern buildings. Dr. Charles Hunt, college president held an informal groundbreaking ceremony during a summer session in July. It wasn't until Feb. 1954 that the first buildings went into use, as the Home Economics building opened that month.

1949

Major changes were made in the city's zoning laws. Commercial zones were extended beyond the downtown area along Main and Chestnut streets to the city limits and other areas in the city. This allowed many residences to become businesses, which gradually took place after the 1950s. At a public hearing in January, no one appeared in opposition to the changes.

The D&H recalled 100 car shop workers.

The Del Sego Drive In Theater opened in Emmons. Opening night had traffic backed up half way to the city line. It is now the site of the Price Chopper Plaza.

New York State Freedom Train visited the city with three cars of rare exhibits of precious documents. Also on Feb. 8, the Gratitude or "Merci" Train also arrived in Oneonta, with 49 boxcars. This train brought gifts from France, in thanks for badly needed aid from the U.S. after the devastation France endured in World War II.

1950

A reception was given Rev. Boyd McCleary of the First Presbyterian Church, with a surprise gift of a new car to him.

Rotary Club auction to benefit the Otschodela Boy Scouts netted $70,000.

Frank Lamonica had an arm crushed by a railroad locomotive engine.

Post Office service extended to 44 more homes, and three more trucks added.

Oneonta chosen as site for State poultry laboratory.

The last tree on Broad Street, believed to be planted in 1867, yields to saw.

Community Art Center urged by Miss Genevieve Hamlin in a talk before the Oneonta Woman's' Club.

1951

Frank M. Gurney retires after 38 years in office as Oneonta city engineer.

Teachers to receive a salary increase passed by legislative session.

Oneonta organizations agree to terminate Bingo games.

Plans for urban arterial route through Oneonta announced. It eventually became the present Interstate 88, from Schenectady to Binghamton.

Building of a war memorial urged.

Chester C. Miller, a former Mayor of the city, died in St. Petersburg, Fla.

1952

New water plant survey voted. This would eventually lead to construction of the present filtration plant on East Street.

Fifty-six twin parking meters installed in Dietz Street parking lot.

The Enterprise Aluminum Co. of Massillon, Ohio came to Oneonta, building a factory on the 15-acre Bingham plot on lower River Street. The plant is now occupied by Corning, Inc.

The city received final payment of the George I. Wilber fund, $3,000 per year for 30 years, for upkeep and improvement of Wilber Park.

The water situation was very precarious, as the reservoir was down to 40% of capacity.

The first diesel powered locomotive made the first long distance trip on the D&H line, stopping in Oneonta Sept. 3. This new technology gradually changed the workforce in the Oneonta railroad yards.

Bresee's Dept. Store held a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the opening of its new escalator on Nov. 17.

1953

Board of Education decides to purchase a 100-acre tract of land for a new senior high school. This plot on East Street is the present site of the Oneonta High and Middle Schools.

Oneonta received natural gas through 49 miles of pipe from DeRuyter by way of Norwich. The first conversions took place Nov. 29.

The History of Otsego County written by Willard Huntington, and for which much search had been made for, was located in the San Marino, Calif. Library, and was transferred here as a loan to the Huntington Memorial Library.

The state gave approval of a site for new East End school. It became the present site of Valleyview School.

Mr. Roger Hughes elected for second term as Mayor.

The Fred Beach collection of 1,300 historical photographs, classified and annotated, has been purchased by the Dewar Fund and presented as a gift to the Huntington Memorial Library.

1954

The Law Committee of the city reported they were unanimously in favor of abolishing rent controls. Rents jumped 41%.

The 13 fringe school districts voted to continue sending their pupils to the city schools despite a jolting rise in tuition rates.

Seeking a source of water for the air conditioning system being installed at Bresee's Department Store, drillers went 472 feet in ground and developed a flow of 1,222 gallons per minute.

Private funeral services were held for Mrs. D.F. Wilber, with burial in Glenwood Cemetery.

Butts Block destroyed by a $400,000 fire. It is the site of today's 254 Main St., at the corner of South Main Street.

An informal poll of public opinion in retaining the Wilber Mansion for public usage was overwhelmingly in favor of doing so. The carriage house was used as a museum by the Upper Susquehanna Historical Society for a few years. That year, and again in 1964 there had been discussions of razing the property to make additional space for the Dietz Street parking lot.

Oneontans began subscribing to cable television from Oneonta Video, Inc. late in the year. The monthly rate was $3.25 after a $125 hookup fee.

Demolition began on Dec. 2 on the D&H roundhouse, claiming 36 of the 52 stalls where steam locomotives had been repaired and maintained since 1906. Increased use of diesel locomotives led to the building's demise. The remaining 16 stalls were used by the D&H and local companies for storage purposes.

1955

State aid to Oneonta schools is raised to 44% of budget.

Mayor Hughes announced his candidacy and won a third term as Mayor.

Mitchell Street School to be repaired and opened in the fall. Nader Towers now occupies the site.

Adolph Myrus elected President of the Board of Education.

Medical Coaches, which began in New York City by Ian Smith in May 1952 established offices in Oneonta in July. Production facilities were started on Country Club Road.

1956

Cornerstone of a new building at A.O. Fox Hospital laid with fitting ceremonies.

First "drive-in" mailbox in city placed on Main Street.

Elton P. Hall assumes position of general manager of The Star.

Oneonta Linn Coach & Truck Co. now doing business with Brazil, filling an order for a medical and dental coach to be shipped there. Another company, Medical Coaches had subcontracted work here before going on its own about this time.

Hartwick College received a $45,000 Ford Grant check.

1957

Citizens Bank opened a West End branch at 426 Chestnut St. It is now a branch office for Key Bank.

Roger Hughes is elected to his fourth term as Mayor.

Influenza, possibly Asian flu closed schools in the area.

A new St. Mary's Church opened on Walnut Street, capable of seating 1,000. The old church at the corner of Main and Grand streets could seat 400.

A new water plant was completed on its present East Street location. It went on line for the first time July 16. Fluoridation was approved that autumn. It was named after Mayor Roger Hughes in 1988.

Valleyview School opened in September.

The Physicians Building, formerly the George Baird Mansion, was demolished to make way for a supermarket called Loblaws. It later became a P&C Food Store, and is presently a series of retail shops.

1958

As Oneonta celebrated its 50th anniversary of being a city, it was noted that Mr. Charles Beams was the only living member of the "new city" charter committee.

The former St. Mary's church site was sold to Empire State Oil Company. It was razed for a gasoline filling station. The cornerstone revealed three newspapers and three coins. The Hughson & Benson Agency now occupies the site.

A snowstorm on Feb. 2 blocked roads, delayed trains and cancelled bus services.

D&H ticket office and station to be closed and sold. The ticket office will be transferred to the freight office. The depot had been in use since 1892. It is now the Stella Luna Ristorante.

The Brooks' family began operation of a concession stand at the miniature golf and driving range connected with the DelSego Drive-In Theater. Their specialty was barbeque chicken. They opened their first restaurant in the East End in June 1961.

A fund was started to be used to erect a suitable memorial to honor the dead of four wars.

The deaths of two prominent citizens saddened the city, in Mr. Louis Baker and Mr. Lothar Fieg.

1959

Atonement Lutheran Church congregation voted to build a new church at 1 Center St.

Voters approved construction of additions for Center Street School and Academy Street School, but defeated proposals on June 2 to build two new elementary schools (Greater Plains and Riverside). Then on Aug. 4, voters rejected a $4.9 million bond issue for the construction of two new elementary schools and high school.

Citizens protested a city plan to use Brown Park, at the corner of Main and Market streets, for parking. Nonetheless, the plan was approved. It is part of Clinton Plaza today.

Work began in late August on a new aluminum façade for Bresee's Dept. Store.

Albert Fortin and Harold Feske open a new private airport (F&F) near Emmons. It is Fortin Park today.

At Hartwick College, Dr. Henry Arnold, president from 1939 to 1953 died in Florida, age 71. Dr. Miller A.F. Ritchie resigned as president May 9 to take a similar position in Oregon. Dr. Frederick Binder was chosen as the college's sixth president Aug. 3. The college also received a $1.7 million bequest from the Marion Yager estate.

More than 9,000 telephones in Oneonta were switched to a direct dial system. To mark the occasion, a long distance call was placed to Oneonta, Ala.

James Georgeson defeated Donald Trinkino for mayor in November.

An Oneonta War Memorial in Neahwa Park was unveiled and dedicated on Veterans Day.

1960

A new wing at Huntington Memorial Library was unveiled to the public at an open house.

200 Sixth Ward families were evacuated Apr. 4 as flood waters mingled with gasoline. It was the worst flooding in that area since March 23, 1925.

School district voters, May 3, failed to give the necessary 60% support for construction of a new $2.7 million high school.

Over 800 students at the State University College at Oneonta carried 80,000 volumes from the college's old library in "Old Main," formerly at the top of Maple Street, to a newly constructed library on the upper level of the campus, May 24. It is today's Alumni Hall.

NYSEG purchased the 190-acre area in the West End, formerly known as Keyes Airport, near the Oneonta Country Club for future use as a division headquarters. About 30 acres would be required for the company's building; the rest was made available as an industrial park. NYSEG had been based in downtown Oneonta.

Split sessions were inaugurated at the Junior High School in September. This was due to the increased enrollment from the post WW II "baby boom."

Otsego County leased the old D&H station on today's Market Street from Dr. Alexander Carson to house welfare, motor vehicle and veterans service offices.

Elmer Wessell, 95, last surviving charter member of the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen died Sept. 25 in Oneonta. The union was formed in a caboose in the D&H yards here, Sept. 23, 1883.

Voters approved lengthening the terms of mayor and aldermen to four years and staggering the terms of aldermen.

1961

On Mar. 21 and May 2, school district voters failed to give the necessary 60% support for a $4.25 million bond issue for construction of a new high school and two elementary schools.

The D&H Railroad completed the assembly of the world's biggest flatcar in its Oneonta shops in April. The 24-wheel car was needed to transport a 350,000-pound turbine for the Schenectady GE plant.

A.O. Fox Hospital launched a $450,000 fund drive for construction of a two-story wing. A few days after the drive was announced, the federal government provided a $180,000 grant.

Space was rented at the National Guard Armory, today's Asa C. Allison Municipal Bldg., so that Oneonta High wouldn't have to go on a split-session schedule in September. The high school was still located on Academy Street.

Gov. Nelson Rockefeller came to Oneonta to dedicate four new SUNY Oneonta buildings on Sept. 25. They were Littell Hall, Lee Dining Hall, Tobey Hall, and the first Milne Library building, now Alumni Hall. The name of the college was changed in October from the State University College of Education to the State University College at Oneonta, a name that would carry forward to 2023; 62 years.

Albert S. Nader was elected mayor by 20 votes, defeating Republican John Dunn, 2108-2088. Nader took office Jan. 1, 1962.

Oneonta Video (now Time Warner Cable) withdrew a request for a rate increase and refunded about $35,000 to subscribers when they discovered they had been overcharging on their rates for several years.

1962

Jamesway Corp. announced plans on Feb. 23 to build a shopping center at Emmons. It closed in the mid-1990s.

The city's Charter Revision Commission submitted new recommendations Mar. 5. Among other things it called for a city

manager form of government, but voters rejected that form of government in the fall.
Joseph (Jerry) Monser was granted a variance to build a 20-unit motel at 340 Chestnut St., today's Motel 88.
Kenneth Hooks, acting fire chief since Nov. 1960 was promoted to the permanent rank of chief on Apr. 9.
Voters overwhelmingly approved a $2.75 million bond issue for a new high school, the seventh attempt in the last few years. Ani Colone was elected school board president, unseating A.A. Myrus.
Astrocom, with 16 employees, went into production on the top two floors of the former telephone building at 1 Dietz St. It later moved to its present site in Colliersville.
New York State announced on Oct. 19, a $25-million building program at SUNY Oneonta, involving as many as 20 buildings, with a 1970 target date for completion.
Common Council reversed itself on Nov. 26 and passed an ordinance permitting construction of a 48-unti motel at Main and Grand streets. It became the Town House.

1963

Homer Folks, the internationally known pioneer in social work and public health, for whom Oneonta's state tuberculosis hospital was named, died at age 95 on Feb. 11. It is today's Job Corps Academy.
The new Lutheran Church of the Atonement was dedicated Feb. 17 at 1 Center St.
Passenger service ended Jan. 24 on the D&H Railroad.
Enterprise Aluminum closed its Oneonta facility on lower River Street. It meant a loss of 100 jobs. Corning Inc. arrived later on the site.
Initial efforts were launched in March to get a National Railroad Museum located in Oneonta. These and subsequent efforts were never successful.
John C. Burdis Associated began work on a Master Plan for Oneonta in June.
A.O. Fox Hospital opened an eight-bed intensive care unit.
Plans for construction of a new YMCA were announced. The old "Y" was then on Broad Street, and the new one was proposed on Ford Avenue.
Masked gunmen held the Sadie Koury family hostage for two hours on Apr. 1, beat Mr. Koury and made off with an undisclosed amount of money.
Voters in the Oneonta school district overwhelmingly approved a $2-million bond issue to construct today's Riverside and Greater Plains schools.

1964

In April, Master Plan consultant J.C. Burdis proposed demolishing the George I. Wilber Mansion, today's 11 Ford Ave., to make room for a circular traffic pattern around the business district and more parking. The idea was dropped due to adverse public sentiment.
Two former mayors, Russell E. Brigham and Dr. Francis H. Marx died within a few weeks of each other in early 1964.
The FAA recommended federal aid to help get an airport located in Oneonta.
Former Otsego Co. District Attorney Donald Grant died. He was the prosecutor in the notorious Eva Coo murder trial in the 1930s.
Oneonta Citizens National Bank and the National Commercial Bank & Trust Co. of Albany announced plans on July 29, to merge. It was found at 189 Main St., and later became Key Bank.
The new Oneonta High School opened on Sept. 9.
Aldermen approved plans on Dec. 1 for the construction of a municipal airport near Wilber Lake, in the Town of Laurens.

1965

Dr. Harold Hager announced his resignation on Jan. 20 as Oneonta's Superintendent of Schools. Robert C. White took over.
Elmore Milling Co. was purchased by Wirthmore Feeds, Inc. and the longtime business was closed. The mill and its predecessors went back to the first days of the Oneonta settlement, first known as Mc Donald Mills.
A rotunda on the upper level of Huntington Park on Church Street was demolished and the slope landscaped.
The new $700,000 YMCA on Ford Avenue was dedicated on June 27. The fund drive had been spearheaded by Oneonta businessman W. Clyde Wright.
An Oneontan who built one of the earliest radio sets ever to be patented, Lee D. Crouch, died Nov. 30 at age 79.
Albert S. Nader was re-elected mayor over former mayor Roger Hughes, the Republican nominee, 2269-1949.
Miss Edna M. Tripp retired after 18 years as Junior High School principal.

1966

After 15 years, professional baseball returned to Oneonta. The Boston Red Sox moved its Single-A New York-Penn League Franchise here from Wellsville.
A.O. Fox Hospital announced plans to build a 40-bed, $750,000 nursing care facility near the hospital.
The preliminary Urban Renewal proposal was submitted to the Federal Dept. of Housing and Urban Development for approval.
A Master Plan was unveiled by John C. Burdis at a Jan. 28 meeting.
Ten new buildings were opened on the SUNY Oneonta campus. Four others were under construction, set to open in 1967. This was the single largest "boom" year for the college.
The Delaware-Otsego Line, called the DO Line, began excursion runs for the first time on Aug. 3, founded by Walter Rich. It was at the former U&D Depot on Railroad Avenue.
The Oneonta Municipal Airport was opened and dedicated on Sept. 18. More than 5,000 attended the open house.
Corning, Inc. announced plans on Dec. 19 to establish a plant in Oneonta.

1967

Lynn H. Bresee, 78, died May 30. He had been chairman of the board at Bresee's Dept. Store.
Gladding-Keystone opened a $250,000, 40,000 sq.ft. manufacturing plant in the Sixth Ward.
Hartwick College completed and opened its 98,000 sq. ft. Yager Museum-Library building.
A $225,000 renovation project at St. Mary's School was completed. It was then found on Walnut Street.
Despite vigorous objections from Oneonta merchants, Otsego County approved a 2% county sales tax to become effective Feb. 1, 1968.
The city's new post office on Main Street was dedicated on Sept. 23.
The Capital Budget and Planning Commission approved Oneonta's urban renewal plan on Oct. 24. Common Council approved the plan on Dec. 5. The process had been delayed by the Dept. of Housing and Urban Development, due to concerns of housing for people displaced by urban renewal plans. The Oneonta Housing Authority was named that year. Low income housing for the elderly was approved for a site on Mitchell Street, today's Nader Towers.
The city purchased the Westcott block and announced plans to demolish it to provide more downtown parking space. It is the lot

between Ruffino Mall and the Otsego County office building on Main Street.

Felix Barnett was elected president of Wilber National Bank on June 16, succeeding Burton Hulbert, who retired.

1968

SUNY Oneonta opened six buildings during the year.

Hartwick College opened its $2.4 million physical education building, named after Frederick Binder, college president. The college also voted to sever its ties with the Lutheran Church.

The new Boys Club on River Street was opened with former police officer Carl Delberta as its full time executive director. Delberta founded the Boys Club in 1947, which had met behind the VFW building on Main Street. It is now called the Boys and Girls Club.

Voters in Otsego County approved a countywide re-apportionment plan that gave Oneonta four seats on the 14-member Board of Representatives.

A swimming pool was built and opened in Neahwa Park, funds for which were donated by the Briggs family.

The federal Dept. of Housing and Urban Development gave Oneonta a $4.1 million grant for downtown re-development.

1969

Joseph DeSalvatore was given permanent rank of police chief on Mar. 27. He had been acting chief since Robert Simmons' death in 1968.

A midnight fire ravaged the historic Gilles block at 24 Broad St. in May. The $100,000 fire left more than 20 people homeless.

Dr. Frederick Binder resigned at Hartwick College in January to become New York State's Associate Commissioner for Higher Education. Dr. Adolph Anderson was named the college's seventh president in September.

Republican James F. Lettis, a Third Ward alderman, was elected mayor. He defeated businessman Bill G. Bright, 2806-1311.

A 38-inch snowfall paralyzed Oneonta on Dec. 26. It was believed to be the biggest single snowfall to hit Oneonta since the blizzard of 1888.

1970

Town of Oneonta voters permitted sale of alcoholic beverages in stores but rejected a proposal to permit bars. The vote ended a 58-year "dry" spell in the town.

Demonstrations that began in late April as a sit-in at SUNY Oneonta's administration building, with students demanding more voices in administrative decisions, turned into Vietnam War demonstrations following a demonstration at Kent State University, where National Guardsmen killed four students. More than 2,000 students marched through downtown Oneonta in protest.

Arson was suspected as the cause of a late night, $30,000 fire at SUNY Oneonta's "Old Main" building on May 13. Meanwhile, Dr. Royal Netzer announced his retirement as president, a post he had held for nearly 20 years. Dr. Clifford J. Craven became the next president, appointed in 1971.

The city's new Environmental Advisory Board objected to plans to take part of Neahwa Park for the Grand Street Arterial, today's James F. Lettis Highway. Businessmen and city leaders went to Washington to counteract the objections and were successful.

Mayor James Lettis created a College Advisory Board—a board of student representatives from both Hartwick and SUNY Oneonta—to meet regularly with city officials to discuss matters of mutual concern.

A February thaw sent tons of mud from the construction site of the Wilber Park Apartments into the upper level of Wilber Park. The mud was finally cleared by May 1971 at a cost of $50,000.

Formation of what was to become the Upper Catskill Community Council of the Arts was announced Mar. 11. Dr. Charles Hunt was picked as the organization's first president.

The Oneonta Housing Authority sent plans for a 110-unit high rise for the elderly to the federal Dept. of Housing and Urban Development, today's Nader Towers.

1971

In a state budget cutback, a 10-county underground civil defense center on the Homer Folks Hospital (Job Corps Academy) grounds was closed. It was reopened in 1974.

Sherman M. Fairchild, 74, an Oneonta native who became one of the nation's most important inventors and industrialists, died in New York City, Mar. 28.

Roscoe C. Briggs, 92, died April 17. He was a longtime businessman and prominent in all aspects of civic life.

The Walter B. Ford estate contained a $200,000 bequest for the city. Mr. Ford, a prominent mathematician and the last surviving grandson of one of Oneonta's foremost pioneers, Eliakim R. Ford, died in February at age 98.

Robert C. White resigned as Superintendent of Schools June 30. Edward Onody was named acting superintendent.

Work on the Oneonta bypass of Interstate 88 was started.

Ground was broken on Nader Towers on Mitchell Street.

On Sept. 10, Joseph P. Molinari became a member of the Papal Household. As a "Gentleman of His Holiness," Judge Molinari automatically became the third-ranking prelate in the Albany Diocese.

The first annual Festival of the Arts took place in June, launched by the Upper Catskill Community Council of the Arts.

Helen Baldo was the first woman ever elected to the Common Council.

Frank Getman was elected City Judge.

Burglars broke into the Oneonta Post Office on Feb. 20, stealing over $14,000 in stamps and $500 in cash. They cut their way into the safe.

Hartwick College and SUNY Oneonta both announce plans to allow men and women to live in the same residence halls for the first time in the 1971-72 school year.

1972

Pyramid Mall, the Oneonta area's first enclosed shopping center, opened in the East End. The major store was White's Dept. Store.

Burton Hulbert died Jan. 7. He had been the Wilber National Bank president from 1955-67.

Anti-war demonstrations heated up in May. A focal point was a sit-in on Dietz Street in front of the military recruiters office. Traffic was blocked for several days. In June, Police Sgt. Leland Higgins filed neglect of duty charges against Chief Joseph DeSalvatore over his handling of the sit-in. Unrest in the police department resulted in a controversial city study of the department later in the year.

Private investigator Andrew Liddle was retained by the city for the police department study, based in part on charges made by Sgt. Higgins. The Liddle report was made public in November.

The three-member Board of Public Safety resigned en masse in November.

Dr. Frederick Bardsley, 43, of Chelmsford, Mass. was named Superintendent of Schools.

The $3.5 million student union building was opened at SUNY Oneonta, later named after former president, Charles W. Hunt.

Hartwick College opened its $3.5 million Center for the Arts, completing the college's building program launched in 1959. It was

named after Dr. Adolph and Mrs. Margaret Anderson. Dr. Anderson was a former college president.

Hartwick and SUNY Oneonta, two nationally ranked soccer powerhouses, meet in NCAA post-season competition for the first time. Oneonta won, 3-0.

1973

The city's safety board, on Feb. 26, suspended Police Chief Joseph DeSalvatore for one month without pay as a result of hearings on neglect of duty charges filed by Sgt. Leland Higgins. The chief was acquitted of a charge of failure to suppress unlawful and disorderly practices, such as anti-war sit-ins. The suspension was appealed but upheld by the courts, and DeSalvatore served it in January 1976.

Philip W. Bresee became president of Bresee's Deptartment Store, succeeding Wilmer E. Bresee.

Groundbreaking was held on Mar. 19 at "Block One" of Oneonta's first urban renewal site. The former Stanton block had been demolished, and 125 Main St. stands on the site today. Its first tenants were Oneonta based Otsego County offices, including the Dept. of Motor Vehicles, and the Oneonta Urban Renewal Agency.

The D&H, the oldest transportation firm in continuous operation in the U.S., celebrated its 150th birthday Apr. 23.

Dr. H. Claude Hardy, 86, died in June. His career was helping Hartwick College grow, through fund raising and public relations in the 1950s and '60s.

Charles Belden, principal at Oneonta High School since 1947, announced his retirement in June. Lloyd Baker was selected as Mr. Belden's successor.

Robert Moyer became ninth president of Wilber National Bank on Jan. 1, succeeding Felix Barnett who retired.

Homer Folks Hospital was closed because of state budget cutbacks. It briefly reopened, but closed its doors for good in June 1975.

Mayor James Lettis won re-election, defeating Peter Clark, a First Ward Alderman.

A huge D&H shop (Building 18) burned in an early morning fire July 28. Estimate of damage was around $300,000.

Dr. Charles W. Hunt, SUNY Oneonta President from 1933-51, died Sept. 3 at age 92.

The former River Street School was demolished. It is now the Oak Square apartment complex.

1974

A D&H derailment and subsequent propane gas explosion near Emmons on Feb. 12 injured 56 people, many of them Oneonta firefighters. There were no deaths but many men were badly burned.

Oneonta lost two leaders this year. Gabriel Harris, Oneonta jeweler and former school board president died Feb. 22. Dr. Alexander F. Carson, noted physician, former mayor and veteran Democratic leader in Otsego County, died in April.

A court injunction holding up completion of two Oneonta sections of Interstate 88 was lifted and the sections were opened.

A nine-hour fire in the Hartwick Museum-Library building resulted in injuries to 17 firefighters. The huge building was saved but extensive renovations were necessary.

Urban Renewal "Block Two" demolition and construction began in April. It is today's Clinton Plaza. The first stores in the multi-store unit opened in autumn 1975.

An area on lower Oneida Street, formerly known as the Pony Farm is first eyed as a potentially good site for industrial development. No significant action began until 1978.

The Oneonta Teachers Association began a three-day strike, the first time in the history of the school system. A compromise agreement was worked out between district and teachers' representatives in the chambers of State Supreme Court Justice Joseph P. Molinari, but disagreements over that settlement later resulted in grievances and court suits.

One of the apartment buildings at Campus Heights Apartments burned in a late night fire Dec. 5. They are now called the Wood Ridge Apartments.

1975

The Oneonta school board votes to build a junior high addition at the senior high school site on East Street. The school on Academy Street had served as the junior high school since the 1964-65 school year.

The W. Clyde Wright family donated funds for a swimming pool at the junior-senior high school site. The pool was dedicated in the fall of 1977.

The capital Budget and Planning Commission, and the Common Council, approved a new zoning ordinance in the city. Also a city reapportionment plan provided eight wards instead of six, began.

Oneonta's new parking garage was completed and opened to the public in time to accommodate Holiday shoppers and the opening of shops in Clinton Plaza.

The state offered Old Main, once the heart of SUNY-Oneonta, for sale at public auction. The building had been vacant since around 1967. A Delhi first acquired the building and defaulted, and then owned by an Oneonta school teacher

The Percy I. Bugbee School, SUNY-Oneonta's campus school announced the closure at the end of the 1974-75 school year.

Miller Trailer closed its Oneonta plant on June 30. This was once the site of Lyncoach on Chestnut Street, known today as Commerce Plaza. At its peak, Miller employed as many as 300.

Medical Coaches, with its business expanding, moved its facilities from West End to Hemlock Road.

W.T. Grants closed its Oneonta store in the East End Plaza after 40 years in the area. It is now a building supply store. Grants had also been a downtown store before moving to the East End in the mid-1960s.

In April, Oneonta Sales lost the Ford franchise after 63 years because of the local firm's refusal to relocate to Oneonta's expanding Southside.

Trooper K.W. Beijen was shot after stopping a car on the Oneonta section of Interstate 88. He escaped serious injury in the June 20 incident because of a protective vest.

1976

In an intense school board election, Eloise Ellis narrowly defeated Johanna Koenig for the board presidency. Two years after the teachers' strike, the district's relations with its employees were still the major campaign topic.

Urban renewal projects continued, with the closing and complete demolition of remaining buildings on Broad Street. A downtown shopping mall was planned in the area, and the search was on for major retail tenants.

The junior high on Academy Street was abandoned in June. Demolition began on the old North and South buildings, which had been the alma mater for thousands of students dating back to 1908. Affordable housing units now occupy the site.

Oneontans joined in America's bicentennial celebration. Among the activities was a large parade on Main Street, and the dedication of the recently saved and lightly restored Swart-Wilcox House.

Jessie Smith Dewar died, reportedly one of the richest women in the country, leaving her fortune to friends, relatives and charity. Hartwick College and A.O. Fox Hospital got large shares, once her estate was settled.

The modern era Oneonta Farmers' Market in downtown Oneonta debuted on Jul. 24 in the Market Street parking garage. It later moved to Main Street.

Hartwick College mourned the death of Dr. Adolph Anderson, former college president.

With interest in soccer growing on both college campuses and a strong youth soccer program in the city, the first Mayor's Cup Tournament was held on Sept.10-11. Hartwick beat Southern Illinois University to win the first cup. SUNY-Oneonta took third, beating Bucknell. The games were played at Damaschke Field.

The city carried the vote for putting U.S. Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan into office. Moynihan had a residence near Pindars Corners, Town of Davenport.

1977

SUNY Oneonta co-ed, Linda Velzy went missing on Dec. 9. It attracted nationwide news coverage. Velzy was found dead on New Year's Day, 1978, and a West Oneonta man, Ricky Knapp was charged with the slaying. Knapp was found moving the body to another gravesite on Winney Hill Road. Knapp was believed to have picked up Velzy on West Street on Dec. 9, as she was hitchhiking a ride back to campus.

A serious flood struck the Sixth Ward on Mar. 14. One hundred families evacuated their homes, and at some points along lower Main and Luther streets, water was three-feet deep. Damage was estimated in the $500,000 range.

Another police department scandal leads to the dismissal in August of Sgt. Leland Higgins on a variety of issues.

Hartwick College picked a new president, Dr. Philip Wilder. The college was experiencing a deficit of over $600,000 at the time. Meanwhile, Hartwick became national soccer champions on Dec. 4 when they defeated the University of San Francisco, 2-1. Celebrations of the championship went on for several days.

The D&H Railroad had major financial problems during the year, coming close to the edge of bankruptcy. Through it all, the company said it had big revitalization plans for the rail yards, which never did happen.

"Old Main," the first home of what is now SUNY Oneonta was torn down and the site prepared for what is now the Old Main Apartments.

Talk began about possibly using the old post office, 258 Main St., as a second city hall.

Efforts by the United Transportation Union to get the "Little Red Caboose" in Neahwa Park moved to the Smithsonian Institution were dropped due to public outcry. Further efforts to have it moved continued into the early 1980s.

Prominent Oneontans who passed on included former Supreme Court Justice Joseph P. Molinari, former Fire Chief Kenneth Hooks, and attorneys John K. Dunn and Arthur Seybolt.

1978

Ricky Allen Knapp was convicted in June on one count of second-degree murder for the death of SUNY Oneonta co-ed Linda Velzy in December 1977. He was sentenced to a 25-year-to-life term in state prison.

The United Methodist Homes Agency of the Wyoming Conference announced plans to build a senior citizens retirement center on the site of the former Oneonta Junior High School. When the city announced it would tax the property, the Agency promptly pulled out of the project.

The D&H Railroad spent the year operating on the strength of federal and state loans and grants.

Sears, Roebuck & Co. prepared to close its doors in September in the large downtown store at 222 Main St., now the Ruffino Mall.

Businessmen conducted a "Save our Sears" campaign to convince corporate officials to change their minds, which was unsuccessful.

Oneonta had a new school superintendent, Thomas Paternostro.

There was change in urban renewal officials. The city's aldermen became the agency, replacing prime developer Joseph Dobson. The search continued for major tenants to fill the new downtown shopping center.

A new bridge over the Susquehanna on lower Main Street opened, replacing a narrower span built in 1933. It was the sixth bridge on the site in Oneonta's history, the first dating back to 1786.

A proposal was presented in September for improvement to land near the former Pony Farm on lower Oneida Street for industrial development. The $1.4 million proposal called for a road from the Interstate-88 interchange area, opposite the River Street service road, plus water, sewer and buried power loops to possible plant sites.

1979

After being closed for nearly a year, the new Main Street viaduct opened on Aug. 24. The wider viaduct over the D&H tracks replaced a structure that had been on site since 1904. In a dedication ceremony similar to 1904, Mayor James Lettis was the first to ride over the new viaduct in a horse and wagon.

In the early morning of June 23, the New York Telephone switchboard in Oneonta was closed for the final time at the offices on Elm Street. It ended an era of live operators in Oneonta dating back to 1882.

Downtown Developers of Oneonta, new agency for the development of a 240,000 sq. ft. shopping center on the former Broad Street announced groundbreaking several times during the year, only to be re-scheduled each time.

The city hired a Binghamton architect for a re-design of the aesthetics of Main and Water streets.

The Yager Museum at Hartwick College started a display of soccer memorabilia from Oneonta. Talk continued to grow, following Mayor James Lettis' appointment in 1977 of Albert Colone and a committee, to explore the idea of a national soccer museum.

1980

Construction began in late May for a complete refurbishing of Main Street, changing its "modern" appearance to that of a 19th century look with bricks, planters, trees and old fashioned street lamps. Delays caused the street to reopen on Nov. 20. The $1.3 million project was funded by the city's urban renewal fund.

Dedication ceremonies were held Oct. 23 for the newly renovated City Hall, the city's old post office.

The national soccer museum committee, headed by Albert Colone, simply proclaimed in March that Oneonta would be the site of The National Soccer Hall of Fame.

Students arrived on Sept. 10 for the first time at the Oneonta Job Corps, on the former grounds of the Homer Folks Tuberculosis Hospital.

Talk of a proposed Southside shopping center was first heard in May. By late August, K-Mart said they were looking at sites on Southside.

Downtown Developers painted a grim picture for a downtown shopping mall, saying that the proposed Southside shopping center would kill all prospects of a downtown project. Downtown Developers contract with the city expired and was not renewed. Local business leaders formed Citizens' Development Corp. of Oneonta to carry on the downtown plan.

The Otsego County Industrial Development Agency had received full funding by November to develop an 81-acre site for industrial development, called the Pony Farm Industrial Park.

1981

In January, a New Jersey developer sought a permit for a Southside shopping center. In May, plans were unveiled for an estimated $8-million enclosed mall, and leases had been signed with J.C. Penney's and K-Mart. Citizen's Development Corp. attempted to block the project in court. On Oct. 8, State Supreme Court Justice Robert Harlem dismissed their effort. Groundbreaking for today's Southside Mall was held Dec. 3.

More than 1,000 school students paraded through Oneonta streets on Jan. 21, the day after 52 American hostages were released after 444 days in captivity in Iran.

Many Oneonta school students created get well cards for President Ronald Reagan, after an assassination attempt was made on Mar.30. Catholics filed in to St. Mary's Church throughout the day May 13, after Pope John Paul II was shot and critically wounded in the Vatican City.

Former Oneonta High School football standout Mark May was selected in the NFL Draft by the Washington Redskins. May played in the 1982, 1983 and 1987 Super Bowls. He retired in and became a TV sports analyst and commentator for NFL and college broadcasts.

The newly formed National Soccer Hall of Fame got a provisional charter from the New York State Board of Regents. Albert Colone was named the first executive director. A search for a site began.

Oneonta's new public safety building opened in September at the corner of Main and Market streets. The building was formally dedicated in September 1982.

The Otsego County Industrial Development Agency acquired land and began work on the Pony Farm Industrial Park in June.

1982

Tragic deaths of three people in student housing in Oneonta, two by fire and one by carbon monoxide resulted in Common Council ordering landlords to install smoke detectors in their rental units. After the third death of a SUCO graduate in November, the city stepped up its housing code inspections.

After a relatively dry summer, water supplies dwindled. SUNY Oneonta extended its Thanksgiving vacation to a full week to conserve and city car washes were told to close in order to conserve water.

The 1978 murder conviction of Ricky Knapp was overturned in October, after an appeal returned a court decision that evidence used in Knapp's trial was obtained illegally.

John J. Donadio became the new police chief, replacing Joseph DeSalvatore, who had retired in December 1981.

The D&H Railroad's future remained uncertain. Millionaire Timothy Mellon attempted to purchase the line during the year, but the plan was delayed in court in Boston. Mellon was hoping to unite the D&H with two New England rail lines to form a super railroad.

The George I. Wilber mansion on Ford Avenue opened as a temporary site as the National Soccer Hall of Fame. In its first year, the museum attracted 2,500 visitors and was open three days a week.

1983

A re-trial of Ricky Knapp for the death of SUNY Oneonta co-ed Linda Velzy in 1977 was held. Hearings lasted several months, one of which went to the U.S. Supreme Court. Knapp was convicted again and Otsego County Judge Joseph Mogavero sentenced Knapp to 25-years-to-life in prison.

Oneonta was designated by the United States Soccer Federation as the site for its National Soccer Hall of Fame. Fundraising and plans for a bigger museum began.

A threat against the life of President Reagan was found scrawled in a book borrowed from Oneonta's Huntington Library. Thomas Currie was arrested in November. Librarian Marie Bruce (Bruni) filed a complaint with the U.S. Attorney's office that Secret Service men harassed her during the investigation. Charges against Currie were dropped in 1984 after he underwent months of psychiatric tests.

Rehabilitation of the Ford Block at 202 Main St., and the old city hall at 242 Main St. began. At the latter, the State Supreme Court chambers, Motor Vehicle Dept. and Mental Health Center opened in December.

The 35-store Southside Mall opened for business June 28.

Guilford Transportation, headed by Timothy Mellon said in mid-December that it planned to assume control of the D&H Railroad on Jan. 3, 1984, with firm plans to rehabilitate the Albany to Binghamton line.

1984

Seeley's Ceramic Service became the first company to announce plans to move into the new Pony Farm Industrial Park. Ground was broken early in the year, and the company moved in during October.

The city received a $1-million federal grant, part of which was used to develop apartments on the upper floors of downtown buildings.

A $1-million federal loan will be used to build a senior citizen housing project on Academy Street on the grounds of the former junior high school, near the James F. Lettis Apartments. It is called the Academy Arms Apartments.

The downtown pedestrian walkway and arcade opened, connecting Main Street with the Market Street parking garage.

The Board of Education agreed to build a $1-million gymnasium for the junior high school, today's Oneonta Middle School.

A private plane crash took the lives of five Oneonta area people. A piper aircraft owned by Kar-San Development Ltd. Crashed Mar. 21 as it was returning to Oneonta from a Florida business trip. Killed in the crash was city alderman Joseph P. Molinari, Jr., Darryl Place and John Lyall of Oneonta, and Wolfgang and Marcia Hutzel of Wells Bridge.

Another plane crash took place a week earlier when two alleged drug smugglers were killed when their cargo plane crashed about a mile northeast of the Oneonta Municipal Airport.

The National Soccer Hall of Fame announced on the last day of November that it had found a home for its proposed multi-million soccer museum and stadium complex on a 66-acre West End site in the Town of Oneonta. The Hall was still in the Wilber Mansion, still seeking a larger, temporary site. The planning and purchase of the 66 acres was still a few years away.

1985

After more than ten years of delays, refurbishing of the Ford Block, 180-202 Main St. began in December. George Sarkisian announced that a work crew had been assigned and began working to renovate the four vacant 19th century buildings in that area.

Mayor James Lettis announced he would not seek another term. David W. Brenner, former chairman of the Otsego County Board of Representatives won the election in November.

You had to be age 21 to drink an alcoholic beverage beginning at the stroke of midnight, Dec. 1. The drinking age was raised from age 19. An establishment called "The Library" on Market Street was the first casualty of the new law.

The National Soccer Hall of Fame had raised $500,000 during the year to purchase a tract of land from NYSEG in Oneonta's West End, where it would eventually build a museum-stadium complex.

The first stage of the Regents Action Plan was adopted, affecting local education. The plan was meant to ensure that students studied more science, math and language.

1986

Flood control in the Sixth Ward had been an ongoing debate since a flood struck the area in 1977. On Aug. 11, 1981, it was reported that the state Dept. of Transportation decided to build two dikes near Neahwa Park. One was for the millrace and another upriver from the millrace. Bids for construction went out in March 1986. By August 1987, the project between Main St. and Neahwa Park was nearly complete.

Local people rallied to help the hungry and homeless, and drought stricken farmers. About 1,000 gathered May 25 at Gilbert Lake State Park for the "Hands Across Gilbert Lake" event to fight hunger and homelessness, similar to a national event called "Hands Across America." In late July local farmers brought hay to the former D&H Railroad depot, to be sent to drought stricken farmers in the southeast. Ten boxcars full of hay were brought to the Deep South by a train nicknamed "Haymaker."

Dairy farms were already disappearing from our region during the early 1980s, but the rate of the departure of these farms got a bit faster starting in 1986, due to something called the Milk Production Termination Program. Essentially it was a herd buyout. In New York State, 542 farmers had their bids accepted. There were initially 25 buyouts in Otsego County. Many farmers left the business, and moved to the cities. In 1930, one American in four lived on a farm. By 1985, one in 45 lived on a farm.

Local peace activists proclaimed Oneonta as the "official center for the world peace movement." Former Mayor James Lettis had made the proclamation last December just before stepping down from office.

1987

Newly elected Sen. James Seward was sworn into office Jan. 1.

United Feature Syndicate, which distributes the Peanuts comic strip, set a June 1 deadline for Michael Muehl of Emmons to remove the images of Snoopy and Woodstock from his barn. Muehl did so, but only under protest.

A 4,000 sq. ft. building on Ford Avenue next to the George I. Wilber Mansion opened as the new National Soccer Hall of Fame. It had once been a supermarket and is presently an office building of Community Bank, N.A..

Sanyo Sewing America opened its $4.2 million clothing plant Mar. 2 in the Pony Farm Industrial Park.

Tim Pidgeon, a 1982 All-State football player at Oneonta High School and outstanding player at Syracuse University, was drafted by the Miami Dolphins Apr. 28.

Dr. Clifford J. Craven announced his plans for retirement in August after 17 years as president of SUNY Oneonta.

Hartwick College received a $12-million gift from the estate of Judge Abraham L. Kellogg. Kellogg died in 1946 and the distribution of his estate was delayed in courts for over 40 years.

The Interstate Commerce Commission issued a restraining order Oct. 23 against Guilford Transportation Industries, which had tried to force D&H Railroad workers to work under a less restrictive labor contract that would have meant pay cuts and fewer benefits.

The City of Oneonta and Otsego County agreed on Dec. 15 and 16, respectively, to join a pact to build an 80-ton-a-day solid waste transfer station in the city. Negotiations were ongoing to find a final destination point for garbage. In October, Otsego County declined by inaction to join a proposed Solid Waste Management Authority with Schoharie and Montgomery counties.

1988

After several years of controversy and construction, the Marcy South power line went into operation June 1.

Alan B. Donovan became the sixth president at SUNY Oneonta as of July 15.

The new solid waste transfer station in Oneonta began operations Sept. 6 and construction of a recycling center was begun. The total cost of the project was $1.8 million, located on Silas Lane, near the city's sewage treatment plant in the West End.

Guilford Transportation Industries filed for bankruptcy in June for its subsidiary D&H Railroad. Later, the New York Susquehanna and Western Railroad, controlled by Walter Rich of Cooperstown, took over as the interim operator of the D&H.

Several local town landfills closed at various times during the year, including Oneonta.

A SUNY Oneonta student was among those killed in the bombing of a Pan Am jet over Lockerbie, Scotland in December. Kathleen Jermyn was a business economics major from Staten Island and had been studying abroad in London.

A.O. Fox Hospital underwent a change in administration in the wake of a $48,000 fine by the State Health Dept. for various violations. John E. Remillard soon replaced Lorraine B. Kabot as chief administrator.

1989

Catskill Airways, which had been in operation at the Oneonta Municipal Airport since its opening in 1966 announced in late January that would not continue operating at Oneonta's airport. No specific date was announced for the end of operations, but daily flights were cut from 14 to 3. In May, the city approved a 10-year contract with Lance Whitney, who also was operating the Sidney Airport. In October 1988, the runway at Oneonta had been extended 800 feet, at a cost of $1.3-million.

About 25 Army National Guard soldiers began using bulldozers and other heavy equipment on Nov. 6 to clear land off state Route 205 in the West End for the site of the proposed $10 million National Soccer Hall of Fame. The generosity of W. Clyde and Brian Wright and the insight of D.K. Lifgren allowed a 61-acre plot in West End to be purchased that year.

A block of homes on lower Main Street near the Interstate-88 interchange were purchased and demolished to make way for commercial development. An office building and ice cream store now occupy the area.

Daily bus runs began Apr. 3 from Oneonta to Cooperstown on Oneonta Public Transit.

Costs of attending Hartwick College increased from $13,750 to $15,000 between academic years.

SUNY Oneonta celebrated its 100th anniversary on Sept. 18. At the time of its opening it was called the Oneonta Normal School. The Catskill Brass provided introductory, performance and recessional music at the convocation, held at the Chase Physical Educational Building.

Initial plans for the former D&H freight house on Market Street were announced in October by two Oneonta developers. It called for businesses on the main floor and apartments on the second.

Residents were frightened by news of a murder in the Oneonta city parking garage on Sept. 12. An 18-year-old Milford Central School graduate was stabbed to death by a former classmate.

A Southside development project in the works since 1987 gained supporters and protestors this year. Bettiol Enterprises proposed to level a hillside south of state Route 23 and mine it for fill in a low-lying area opposite Christopher's Restaurant on state Route 28. The fill area is where today's Aldi and Hannaford supermarkets are found. The leveled hillside is now Wal-Mart. The Town of Oneonta Zoning Board of Appeals approved the mining permit Aug. 28. The city opposed the plan, but a judge dismissed the proceeding in December.

1990

A dedication ceremony on Jan. 21 drew 160 for the opening of the Science Discovery Center on the campus of SUNY Oneonta, founded by retired physics professor Albert J. Read.

Otsego County Judge Joseph A. Mogavero pleaded guilty to driving while ability impaired by alcohol on Feb. 27, three weeks after a witness saw Oneonta police stop him but not arrest him on River Street.

State Senator James Seward was re-elected, defeating Beverly E. Livesay of Tompkins County.

Preliminary census figures showed that the city of Oneonta's population dropped 7.3% from 1980.

Ground was broken on Reynolds Avenue in Oneonta on Apr. 28 for Otsego County's first home under a local Habitat for Humanity program.

W. Clyde Wright passed away on Apr. 21 at age 81. He was one of Oneonta's most prominent benefactors, with an estate worth $58.4 million.

Two D&H Railroad landmarks, the footbridge over Fonda Avenue and Richards Crossing Bridge were demolished in May.

Hartwick College announced its "Campaign XXI" in May, to raise $21-million for new construction and to enhance academic programs.

Despite protest by students, trustees voted in July to reinstate a football program after an absence of nearly 40 years. In September the new Museum in Yager Hall was unveiled in a public reception.

SUNY Oneonta was ranked number 56 in the top 100 best values among American public colleges by Money Magazine. The college announced plans to cut the number of school days and lengthen class periods, in addition to turning thermostats down, closing buildings and otherwise reducing services, to save money as state budget cuts and rising fuel oil prices forced money saving strategies.

After getting the Swart-Wilcox House placed on the State and National Register of Historic Places, three school teachers and a librarian began an effort to revitalize the 1807 house in the Sixth Ward.

After its first 14 years of being held at Damaschke Field, the Mayor's Cup Soccer Tournament moved to Hartwick College's Elmore Field in Sept. to mark the 15th anniversary.

Elizabeth Hotels Corp. revealed plans to build a Quality Inn in downtown Oneonta on an urban renewal lot, the former Broad St. Plans never materialized in this effort.

1991

The D&H Railroad was purchased for $25-million on Jan. 18 by the Montreal-based Canadian Pacific Ltd., bringing the railroad out of bankruptcy proceedings. About 40 workers were in the Oneonta shops, and nearly 625 system wide. Plans to hire 200 furloughed and new employees were announced.

A.O. Fox Hospital announced an $18.6 million renovation and expansion plan Mar. 15 to meet a demand for more outpatient care. A new addition fronted Main Street. The expansion, to include a parking lot on Fourth Street required the move of the old St. Mary's Cemetery, which was later relocated to Mt. Calvary Cemetery in Emmons.

As part of the new Campaign XXI at Hartwick College, ground was broken June 20 for a new $5-million academic building, later named Clark Hall. Also, after drawing protest by students and faculty, the college seal, depicting an Indian and pastor, John Christopher Hartwick, was set to be changed in 1992. Scott Adams, a 1979 graduate was recognized for his creation of the nationally syndicated comic strip, "Dilbert," which parodies every day office life in America. Philip S. Wilder, President, announced his retirement.

Otsego County celebrated its bicentennial in June. About 5,000 attended a concert to mark occasion by Oneonta native Jerry Jeff Walker (Ron Crosby) at Damaschke Field on May 26.

A sign was unveiled on lower Main Street near state Route 28 entering the city Aug. 6 declaring Oneonta a "Nuclear Free Zone" to commemorate the 46th anniversary of the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan.

The Oneonta Police Dept. began a pedal patrol with two police officers on bicycles the weekend of Aug. 30-31.

About 1,000 anti-abortion protestors lined up along the James F. Lettis and Leslie H. Foster Highway, as well as state Route 23 on Oct. 6, as part of National Life Chain Sunday.

Plans were announced Oct. 21 for a new shopping center in the East End, called the Towne Centre. It is anchored by a Price Chopper Supermarket. It was the grounds of the former Del-Sego Drive-In movie theater, torn down in 1981. Plans were for a 1993 opening.

Mining began in November to move a hill on state Route 23, now occupied by Wal-Mart, to a site along the Susquehanna River on state Route 28, now occupied by the Hannaford Plaza.

Plans were first announced in Dec. for a new 70,000 sq.ft. field house at SUNY Oneonta, and initially raised concerns of neighbors living on nearby Ravine Parkway.

1992

A fire ravaged three Market Street buildings on Feb. 29, destroying the Dark Horse Saloon and J.J. Maloney Co., and leaving 40 residents temporarily homeless. The fire forced broadcasts on radio station WDOS and WSRK to cease, as their building at 10 Market St. was in the midst of the blaze. It was ruled arson.

Richard A. Detweiler was named the new president of Hartwick College Jan. 8, succeeding Philip S. Wilder. The cost of attending Hartwick for the 1992-93 academic year rose 6.2% to $18,900. A new college seal, a sower casting seeds of knowledge, was unveiled Feb. 14. Nearly 2,500 attended the college's first football game since 1950 on Sept. 12. Hartwick lost in the closing 30 seconds to King's College, 20-17.

Opportunities for Otsego dedicated their new offices on West Broadway on May 21.

Saturday's Bread, a new soup kitchen, opened on May 23, at the First United Methodist Church.

Commuter service was resumed for the first time in three years in May at Oneonta Municipal Airport. Otsego Airways scheduled four round-trip flights per week to Newark, N.J.

New York State Electric & Gas began pumping coal tar contaminated water from Neahwa Park in July at the site of a former coal gasification plant, as part of a multi-year clean-up project.

Pope & Talbot, a diaper manufacturer announced an expansion of 25-30 workers in August. The company opened on River Street in December 1989. It is now a warehouse for Drogen's Electrical Supply.

The handling of a report of a foiled burglary attempt in Sept. in the Town of Oneonta stirred racial tensions, provoked questions of individual rights in the face of law enforcement officials and brought national scrutiny to the city. The "list" of black males at SUNY Oneonta was released by campus security to state police, used for investigative purposes. The release was protested by students, faculty and staff, as racial profiling. The alleged burglar was never apprehended, but the incident sparked several years of lawsuits and a subsequent community-wide effort to advocate for and form partnerships with people affected by racial bias.

Increased college student violence struck downtown Oneonta beginning with the new academic year. City police planned to double their manpower on weekend nights in response to the increase.

Suspicions continued to mount against state police investigator Robert M. Lishansky of Oneonta, arrested in November and charged with tampering with evidence and lying in court. This was part of a state police scandal across the Southern Tier and Central New York.

1993

SUNY Oneonta, still dealing with the 1992 "blacklist" incident is called a "party school" in late Jan. by a national survey of 60,000 college students in 125 schools. 418 students were surveyed at Oneonta.

Downtown Oneonta violence erupted in May in a gang-like brawl. Police said certain individuals, fraternities and groups of young men were going out to look for fights.

Legal action was brought to the Town of Oneonta in May by three Oneonta men, claiming that new development on Southside, today's Hannaford Plaza, would cause injury from expected traffic congestion and accidents and "increased urbanization and uglification." State Supreme Court Justice Carl J. Mugglin dismissed the lawsuit in July.

Three new shopping centers made plans or broke ground this year. Wal-Mart kept quiet about its plans, but later built on Southside. Shop n' Save, later re-named Hannaford, began construction in the spring along state Route 28 on Southside. Oneonta Towne Center in Emmons began taking shape. Meanwhile, the Pyramid Mall closed its doors on Oct. 31, due to near total vacancy.

In downtown Oneonta, Woolworth's announced its closure at the end of the year, after 75 years as a familiar fixture on Main Street. Building 203 opened its store in the summer of 1994 on the same site.

A late winter blizzard struck the region on Mar. 13 temporarily paralyzing the area with 21.7 inches of snow in Oneonta, with more falling in Cooperstown (28.3") to break the previous all-time record of 27.4 in a 24-hour period, set in Dec. 1969.

Computer labs were first introduced in the Oneonta City School in September.

Oneonta's historic D&H Railroad roundhouse, once the largest in the world, was demolished on Dec. 7 to make way for a future industrial park. The roundhouse had been partially demolished in Dec. 1954, after diesel locomotives were introduced to the railroad system. Attempts to save the roundhouse were considered, possibly as a warehouse, but restoration costs were considered to be prohibitive.

Al Gallodoro celebrated his 80th birthday on June 20. Gallodoro has been a resident of the area since 1981. A professional clarinet and saxophonist, Gallodoro played throughout the Big Band era, and on radio shows with Rudy Valee and Bing Crosby, among others.

Iannelli's Italian Ristorante opened on Chestnut Street in April. The restaurant and other nearby buildings were razed in late 2007 to make way for a Walgreens store.

1994

A $13.9-million reconstruction project for Oneonta's middle and high schools was approved by the Oneonta Board of Education. A new 26,000 sq.ft. wing to Oneonta High was among the improvements. The approval came despite local residents unsuccesful call for a public vote on the project.

For a short time in February and March, talks between A.O. Fox and M.I. Bassett Hospitals took place regarding a possible merger of the two institutions. The idea was eventually abandoned.

Highway Equipment Co. closed its doors at 179 River St., idling 13 employees. The company opened in 1980, manufacturing de-icing and fertilizer equipment.

Bresee's Deptartment Store announced its closing on Apr. 2. The store first located on Main St. in 1899. Owner Marc Bresee attributed the closing to a floundering economy. The store closed for the final time as a department store on Saturday, July 9. It later reopened as a kitchen and furniture store, using only the first floor space of the three-floor building.

On Southside, Shop n' Save (Hannaford) opened in December. Wal-Mart was under construction, east of the Southside Mall. BJ's Wholesale Club was also under construction. The latter two opened in 1995.

The Downtown Oneonta Improvement Taskforce (DOIT) was formed, receiving a $10,500 state grant on Dec. 20 to study local shopping patterns and entice businesses to the city. The group planned to do more downtown promotional activities. The Future for Oneonta Foundation administered the funds.

Hartwick College President Richard Detweiler received an anonymous letter, made public on May 19, in which a student said he had the HIV virus and might have infected six other students. It was never determined if the letter was a hoax.

State Police investigator Ricky J. Parisian was shot to death on May 20 at a former Great American supermarket, today's Office Max, while trying to foil a robbery attempt by Colin Hyde, a local construction worker. Parisian was off-duty and unarmed Hyde was arrested May 22 in Denver, Colo. Hyde went to trial in 1995.

"Log on to the Internet" was first heard in Oneonta, as Dr. Robert Gann of Hartwick College gave 15 local businesspeople a demonstration of the information superhighway on Aug. 24.

SUNY Oneonta unveiled a new college seal, a pen-and-ink drawing of the former "Old Main" over the year 1889 and encircled by the words, "Founded in Honor and Good Faith." New fund raising efforts, begun in 1992-93 did well this academic year, at $548,290, a 40.4% increase. Also, groundbreaking ceremonies were held Sept. 24 for a new fieldhouse. The college's new Center for Social Responsibility opened in the fall.

The vacant Pyramid Mall was purchased in late December by developer Eugene Bettiol Jr. No plans were announced for the property at the time.

Oneonta lost two prominent citizens. LeRoy "Sonny" House and Richard T. Applebaugh were both active in raising or donating funds for many Oneonta organizations.

1995

Colin Hyde of Morris was found guilty in June of killing state police investigator Ricky J. Parisian in May 1994 at a grocery store in the Southside Mall. Hyde was sentenced Aug. 18 to 37.5-years-to-life in prison.

The retail scene saw many changes this year. The Great American grocery store in the Southside Mall closed July 22 (now Office Max). BJ's Wholesale Club on Southside opened July 16, and Wal-Mart opened Aug. 16. Oneonta Town planners gave approval for the ALDI supermarket to build near Hannaford Plaza. Jamesway in the East End closed on Dec. 22 as the discount department store chain went bankrupt.

Part of the former railroad yard off Fonda Avenue began transformation into an industrial park. Crop Production Services was already on site when ground was broken in early March for the Dry Town Brewery, and F&R Antique Transport moved from New Jersey into a new building on the grounds.

The Oneonta Armory, today's Asa C. Allison Municipal Building, was named to the National Register of Historic Places on Apr. 20.

W. Pierce Electronics offered the first commercial internet access to Oneonta beginning the first week of May.

SUNY Oneonta began offering Music Industry Studies as a major, making the college one of 35 in the nation to offer the program.

What was called the biggest drug bust in Oneonta's history was made by Oneonta city police on Oct. 19 with the arrest of seven men for allegedly selling crack cocaine to undercover officers.

Mayor David Brenner and city officials announced a plan in August to crack down on Oneonta's image as a "party town." Former mayor James Lettis and two aldermen began the Save Our City committee, calling for more police patrols, higher court fines and fewer bar hours to decrease the downtown violence. About 1,500 citizens signed the committee's petition, presented to Common Council on Oct. 3.

The 28 remaining D&H Railroad employees in the car repair shop and Oneonta yards were laid off. Canadian Pacific officials said there was no work planned for the shop in 1996. Employees were informed six days before Christmas.

1996

Plans stayed alive for an 80-100 room hotel in downtown Oneonta. Elizabeth Hotels made their presence known by bringing in a construction office trailer to the former urban renewal site. Plans were first announced in Dec. 1990. No progress was made during 1996.

The D&H railroad car shop closed its doors for the final time on Feb. 16, eliminating the last railroad jobs in Oneonta. That ended an era of employment dating back to 1871.

Oneonta's School Board became mired in controversy. Squabbles over expenditures, personnel investigations and ongoing consideration of a new administration office building (then at 290 Chestnut St., an old school building) led to several school board resignations. By Jan. 11 only three remained on a seven-member board, and new members were chosen days later. Questions arose over whether the members were properly appointed. Superintendent Hans Dellith, whose contract was due to expire in 1997, openly looked for other jobs.

The Save Our City committee, led by former Mayor James Lettis, sought to close Otsego County bars an hour earlier, and won. The move was aimed at curbing troubles caused by students at SUNY Oneonta and Hartwick College.

Paragon Trade Brands, formerly Pope & Talbot, manufacturers of diapers announced closure of its River Street plant on Apr. 16, effective by the end of the year. It affected 110 workers. On Apr. 18, West-Nesbitt, a feed-grain company on Market St. for 72 years, closed shortly after an employee died in an accident. This idled 24 workers.

After a dozen years of performances at the Oneonta Theater, Orpheus Theater moved to a new home at Goodrich Theater at SUNY Oneonta, with its performance, "Annie Get Your Gun" on July 22-23.

A.O. Fox Hospital announced on June 28 it had bought the former Pyramid Mall, in a move to expand its outpatient services. It was purchased for $1.5-million, and $4.5-million was planned to renovate and expand the 27-acre complex.

City aldermen wanted to meet with Oneonta's Town Board to discuss sharing services and possibly merging. On Nov. 20 Town Supervisor Duncan S. Davie said, "Read my lips—we're not merging and we're not meeting to discuss merging."

The Oneonta Boys Club unveiled plans Sept. 19 to double the size of its River Street facility and to change the name to the Oneonta Boys and Girls Club.

Oneonta lost two civic-minded citizens. WWII hero and former postmaster Samuel J. Bertuzzi died Oct. 30. Entrepreneur and philanthropist Derwood K. Lifgren died Nov. 3. Lifgren founded Astrocom Electronics in 1961, and was a backer of the National Soccer Hall of Fame.

1997

A fire on Feb. 11 at a 15 Grand St. apartment building killed two children and totally destroyed the building. More than 20 were left homeless.

Money problems caused a temporary shutdown in January of the National Soccer Hall of Fame. Albert Colone, executive director since 1981, was removed from his job and the Hall board that month. Colone was replaced in February by a new president, Will Lunn.

Hartwick College commemorated the bicentennial of its founding. In September the college launched a $25-million fund raising campaign to improve scholarships, academic and residential buildings and to meet expenses. The college community mourned the death of a junior, Rob Jordan, who drowned after a party May 3, found a few weeks later in the Susquehanna River near Milford.

The Upper Catskill Community Council of the Arts moved from 250 Main St. to its present location, the George I. Wilber mansion at 11 Ford Ave.

The Future for Oneonta Foundation made a gift of a portable stage in April, for musicians, actors and dancers at public events.

Landscaping work began on the new Applebaugh Gardens on the upper level of Wilber Park. It was named after Richard and Margaret Carr Applebaugh, who left a bequest to the city to improve and enhance parks.

Approval was given in September for St. James Episcopal Church to construct a food-program building at 18 Elm St., known today as The Lord's Table. An opening was scheduled for 1998. St. James also announced plans for a new retirement community, St. James Manor, in the Town of Oneonta on the West Davenport Road, to open in late 1998.

After being a family business since 1920 in the Sixth Ward, Foti's Bakery was sold to Jim Tomaino of Oneonta.

The recreational "bubble" building on the SUNY Oneonta campus was deflated in Nov., and the new $12.8-million field house remained on schedule for opening in Aug. 1999.

The Fox Care Center, formerly the Pyramid Mall, opened for outpatient care on Aug. 4, with a grand opening on Sept. 6. A.O. Fox Hospital also chose to affiliate with Albany Medical Center, rather than Bassett Healthcare.

James C. Piscitelli was appointed new Superintendent of the Oneonta City School District on Aug. 13. Charles Skiptunas was an interim superintendent, who replaced controversial superintendent Hans Dellith, whose contract expired in June.

Oneonta High's girls basketball team won a state championship in mid-March, with a 26-1 record.

Mayor David W. Brenner announced he would not seek another term in April. In November, Kim K. Muller, a Democrat became Oneonta's first woman mayor, defeating Michael Lambiaso, First Ward Alderman.

Oneonta celebrated a new New Year's Eve celebration, First Night Oneonta on Dec. 31. There were 22 entertainment venues. Nearly 5,000 buttons were sold for the event. First Night continued each year until First Night 2007 (Dec. 31, 2006).

1998

On Apr. 28, the National Soccer Hall of Fame won a $1-million grant from the United States Soccer Foundation. A groundbreaking ceremony was held Nov. 9 for a $30-million soccer campus project in the West End, including an 85,000 sq.ft. museum complex.

Five tornadoes ripped through the area on May 31, damaging homes and businesses and leaving thousands of people without electricity. Two days later another tornado hit. On the first day of tornadoes, Robert Simms, a 32-year-old carpenter, died after being hit by a falling tree in his backyard.

St. Mary's School, on Walnut Street since 1924 announced it would move to the former Jamesway building in the East End. The Walnut Street school had reached its capacity, and additional space was needed for the school's programming needs. Renovations and additions began to the former discount department store in 2000.

The Oneonta Yankees won their 12th—and final—NY-Penn League championship. It was announced in September that the Yankees were moving to Staten Island. Then New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani wanted to see two minor league teams in the city. In October it was announced by the Oneonta Athletic Corp. that minor league baseball would still be played in Oneonta. A new affiliation began in the 1999 season with the Detroit Tigers.

Preparation began in November for the changeover in the calendar to the year 2000 and possible problems computers might encounter. This was known as the Y2K bug.

A new Oneonta High School Alumni Association was formed by a group of about 15-20 OHS graduates. William "Bud" Pirone was the first president.

The idea of a skateboard park was first introduced in February. Skateboarders were assigned the task of designing a skate park on Oct. 19.

Oneonta celebrated its 150th anniversary as a village on Oct. 10 with the "Step Back in Time Festival." Oneonta became a village on Oct.

14, 1848. The Greater Oneonta Historical Society, formerly known as the Upper Susquehanna Historical Society, gained momentum in activity and membership under the leadership of Norma Hutman. Mark Simonson was appointed city historian in September.

After almost a year of battle between the city and the Main Street Baptist Church, a house at 5 Maple St. was razed to make room for additional church parking. The city and residents of the Walnut Street Historic District fought to keep the church from destroying the 115-year-old building, but in the end a judge ruled the city didn't have the power to stop the demolition.

A grand opening was held at the renovated Boys and Girls Club on River Street on Sept. 12.

1999

Oneonta applied for federal grant money in January to buy and raze the former West-Nesbitt building on Market Street for future development. The site later became the Foothills Performing Arts and Civic Center.

Optimism grew in April for the construction of a downtown hotel on the former Broad Street urban renewal site. City planners saw drawings for the five-story hotel, which Elizabeth Hotels first announced in 1990. The site was fenced off in September and Common Council approved a $400,000 Community Development loan in December for the project.

After 12 years of playing in Minor League Baseball, Oneonta High graduate Clay Bellinger began playing for the New York Yankees in April. During his tenure, Bellinger and the Yankees won two World Series.

Eddie Einhorn, vice chairman of the Chicago White Sox confirmed that he was interested in operating a youth baseball camp in the area. On May 27, the original facility was intended for the Hartwick Seminary area, but by December, Einhorn had struck a deal with the City of Oneonta, SUNY Oneonta and Hartwick College. Operation of Cooperstown Baseball World began operations in 2000.

The Oneonta City School District put its administrative building, 290 Chestnut St. on the real estate market in June. It was the former Chestnut Street School.

A grand opening ceremony was held June 12 for the Soccer Hall of Fame's new $5.5-million interactive museum in Oneonta's West End. More than 5,000 people passed through the museum gates.

George R. Waddington, known to two generations of Oneontans as "Mr. Tennis" was honored on June 19, as tennis courts in Wilber Park were named in his honor.

After U.S. Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan announced his retirement, former First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton came to nearby Pindars Corners and Oneonta on Jul. 7 to launch a "Listening Tour," in a bid to succeed Moynihan in the Senate.

Sanyo Sewing America, Inc. announced Jul. 28 that it would leave the Pony Farm Industrial Park by the end of September. Two local businessmen, Leonard Marsh and Geoffrey Smith, calling its company Valley Holding LLC, bought the building with plans to rehire Sanyo employees.

SUNY Oneonta showed off its new Alumni Field House for the first time on Aug. 27 with a ribbon cutting and tour of the new 92,000 sq.ft. facility, to be used for intercollegiate sports and physical education. An inaugural concert on Aug. 31 featured internationally known singer Tony Bennett, for about 2,700 people.

Michele Rabeler became the Oneonta Fire Department's first female firefighter in November.

The Oneonta High School boy's soccer team won a Class B state championship on Nov. 20, finishing an undefeated season at 23-0.

City, county and area business employees spent New Year's Eve on duty in anticipation of potential Y2K problems. Midnight, Jan. 1, 2000 passed without incident.

2000

Eddie Einhorn and his new baseball camp, Cooperstown Baseball World, ended plans to locate a camp in Hartwick Seminary, instead exclusively locating in Oneonta. The camp started in June on the SUNY Oneonta campus, and also used Damaschke Field. Mayor Kim K. Muller encouraged residents to rent properties for short-term housing for camp visitors. First campers arrived June 18. In December, the camp was approved to expand into Neahwa Park, including a new baseball field, constructed in April 2001.

The Oneonta City School District received offers for its office building at 290 Chestnut St. A deal reached early in the year was cancelled in April. However a deal was reached and voters approved the sale Nov. 28 to Jerry and Debbie Kabat to turn the former school into a residence and spiritual retreat center.

The Showcase Cinema, a small theater on Elm Street, closed and was converted into a home decorating store and apartments on upper floors. The Showcase opened in the late 1960s.

The $4.8-million loan was closed in March for the new downtown Oneonta hotel on the former Broad Street urban renewal lot. Construction began on July 10 with no ceremonial groundbreaking or festivities. Main Street Plaza was torn up in August, which forced the weekly Oneonta Farmers' Market to move to the city hall parking lot.

Construction began on the 22,500-sq.ft. skateboard/in-line facility in Neahwa Park, with a groundbreaking on June 10.

A blessing ceremony was held June 14 for the renovation project at the new St. Mary's School in Oneonta's East End. The $5.7-million project was targeted for completion in 2001.

The founder of Orpheus Theater, Peter Macris, first presented the idea of transforming the former West-Nesbitt feed mill site on Market Street into an arts and conference center. The city received its first $250,000 state grant for the arts center on Sept. 27, soon to be named the Foothills Performing Arts Center. The feed mill still stood, only a couple years away from demolition.

2001

Opportunities for Otsego met with city officials to lay out a plan to build a 6,000-sq. ft. homeless shelter on Depew Street in the Sixth Ward. Reaction was mixed at the first public meeting on Jan. 11. Concerns were raised about the impact a shelter would have on property values, safety and parking, among other issues. Residents in April filed a civil suit in state Supreme Court in April to stop the project.

A Market Street parking garage brawl on Feb. 10 left a local college student gravely injured. In August, Judge Michael Coccoma dismissed all indictments against five men in the assault. New indictments were announced for three of the men in September. The assault was racially motivated.

The Greater Oneonta Historical Society purchased a building at 183 Main St. in March to eventually become a history museum and research center.

The city leased a trolley for seasonal transportation this summer for the first time. The "Spirit of Oneonta" began rolling July 11.

A more aggressive cleanup plan for coal tar contamination in Neahwa Park was considered by NYSEG in June. The "air sparaging" cleanup process, used since 1997, was completed.

The move of furniture and classroom supplies began July 20 from the old St. Mary's School on Walnut Street to the new school in the East End.

Police officers at SUNY Oneonta were armed at all times beginning in late August.

The Sept. 11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon had local impact. Thomas W. Duffy, a 1967 OHS grad was among the missing at the World Trade Center. Former Hartwick College basketball star Timothy O'Brien also died in the attack. Amely Moore, a 1994 graduate of OHS was working in the Pentagon when it was hit,

and survived. The city tightened security on its water supply in October. Anthrax scares in October changed the way the post office handled mail.

Kim K. Muller won a second term as mayor, defeating Joseph Lipari by a 3-to-1 margin of votes.

The Clarion, the new 78-room, $4.8-million downtown hotel, opened to its first guests on Dec. 7. The opening was quiet and without fanfare, ending more than a decade of review and financing delays, and filling the Broad Street urban renewal lot, vacant since 1976.

2002

A new dormitory for SUNY Oneonta was announced in January, the first new building on campus since 1972. The $8-million dorm was scheduled to open for the fall semester of 2004, to meet a growing demand for on-campus housing. Meanwhile, the College received a major upgrade in the U.S. News & World Report 2003 list of best colleges in September. Oneonta placed second that year in total applications among the 13 SUNY arts and sciences colleges. Former president Clifford J. Craven, who served from 1970-87 died Oct. 15.

Complaints arose in February involving the leasing of summer homes to Cooperstown Baseball World families in center city Oneonta. It prompted city officials to consider enforcing lower occupancy numbers. Rental units were going for about $500 a week for one-bedroom and $875 a week for three-bedroom apartments.

Despite opposition, Common Council on Feb. 19 approved issuing a five-year special use permit to Opportunities for Otsego for operation of an emergency homeless shelter on Depew Street in the Sixth Ward. Shelter plans included construction of a 6,000 sq. ft. partial two-story building to house up to 16 residents. Some funding came in March from the state, totaling $584,100. A ceremonial groundbreaking took place Apr. 18.

John Clune of Oneonta was shot and killed in Schoharie County after a high-speed chase with police after allegedly robbing a bank in Albany County on Mar. 25.

The three men indicted last September for the Market Street parking garage brawl were all found innocent of gang assault Mar. 26 on SUNY Oneonta student Joseph Olivio. Two charged in the assault were found innocent while the third testified in exchange for having charges dropped.

On Apr. 22, Martin Patton announced plans to build an eight-field, 66-acre baseball camp at his Cathedral Farms facility on state Routes 23 and 205. The camp was opposed by local residents who filed a lawsuit in July to stop the project. The Oneonta Town Board approved Patton's plans on July 31. Construction began in early spring 2004.

Due to "destructive behavior by patrons" and downtown violence, the City of Oneonta Planning Commission in May called for a six-month moratorium on the establishment of new bars in the city. Common Council approved the cap on Oct. 1.

A $600,000 state grant was received May 15 by the Otsego County Industrial Development Agency for the demolition of the former West-Nesbitt feed mill on Market Street. A contract was signed in July between the City of Oneonta and the Foothills Performing Arts Center for the sale of the former feed mill.

Terry Mattison became the new owner of the Oneonta Theater in July. Mattison had worked at the theater for 25 years. Philip Colone had owned the theater since 1988. On Oct. 23, Lt. Gov. Mary Donohue was in Oneonta to announce a $25,000 state grant to renovate and restore the 105-year-old building.

Fire destroyed Monser Bros. Tire Sales on Wall Street Aug. 16. The nearly 100-year-old building was later razed. The business relocated to Chestnut Street in October. During the fire, a local business owner was criticized after demanding his employees pay for bottled water they handed out to thirsty firefighters during the blaze.

Ricky Knapp, the man convicted of second-degree manslaughter in the 1977 death of 18-year-old SUNY Oneonta co-ed Linda Velzy, was denied parole in August.

Otsego County got 969 acres into the state's Empire Zone program in July to receive tax breaks and other financial incentives. In Oneonta, the new River Corp. Industrial park and the Pony Farm Industrial Park were added to eight development areas.

Ames Department store closed in the fall, leaving the West End Plaza nearly vacant.

Richard A. Detweiler, Hartwick College president since 1992 announced his retirement on Oct. 9, effective the next June.

Oneonta celebrated its whitest Christmas ever. A Nor'easter dropped 28.8 inches of snow at Goodyear Lake, a single day record for any Dec. 25 in the region, breaking a previous high of 13.3 inches in 1978.

2003

K-Mart in the Southside Mall announced its closure on Jan. 15, making several thousand square feet of space vacant after its closure within the next few months.

Reactions were mixed by local veterans regarding military actions in Iraq, which began Mar. 20. About 50-60 students walked out of classes at Oneonta High School. Rallies were held on both college campuses and protestors from all walks of life gathered in downtown Oneonta that afternoon. A candlelight vigil opposing the plans to go to war was held Mar. 16 at the Main Street Plaza.

Plans were announced by both Home Depot and Lowe's for construction of large home improvement stores on Southside in the next year or two. Home Depot broke ground that fall.

Former Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan, a part-time Pindars Corners gentleman farmer, died Mar. 26 at age 76.

Hartwick College, owners of the Emmons stone house mansion on state Route 7 since 1996, sold the property in August to a developer with plans for senior housing on the site. Richard P. Miller was inaugurated as Hartwick College's ninth president on Sept. 20.

The City of Oneonta obtained the armory on Academy Street in July from New York State for $1. Before the ownership transfer was complete, the NYS Division Of Military and Naval Affairs had a large collection of arms removed and placed in a newly opened war museum in Saratoga Springs. Questions of the ownership of the arms collection touched off a controversy in August.

Demolition began on July 7 on the West-Nesbitt feed mill on Market Street, to make way for the Foothills Performing Arts Center.

Downtown Oneonta received the nomination for 28 properties to the State and National Registers of Historic Places on Sept. 15, in an area stretching from Elm Street to Fairview Avenue. The designation became official on Dec. 10, with a celebration at the Greater Oneonta Historical Society, 183 Main St.

The P&C supermarket on Chestnut Street announced in November that it would close the next month. It was the last large grocery store remaining in the city limits.

SUNY Oneonta's women's soccer team became national Division III champions on Nov. 30, defeating the University of Chicago, 2-1 in overtime.

The City of Oneonta, using eminent domain on Dec. 1, claimed the property where Monser Bros. was formerly located on Wall Street. The vacant lot had been eyed as additional downtown parking space.

The Opportunities for Otsego emergency homeless shelter held a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Dec. 5, opening for business Dec. 8.

Ownership of the Bresee's building on Main Street changed hands in early 2004, announced on Dec. 9. Many of the items that adorned the former department store went on the auction block Dec. 11 at the Lettis Auction room.

2004

Michael F. Getman was appointed the city's new prosecutor on Jan. 1.

Catskill Area Hospice and Palliative Care acquired a new house and 82-acres at the corner of Farone and Birchwood Drives, to be used primarily for bereavement and counseling sessions.

The City of Oneonta sought public use for the former Oneonta Armory, such as office space and recreational activities. One of the first interests, the Oneonta Community Alliance for Youth, expressed interest in a youth center in November, and eventually became a tenant.

After Hartwick College had recently announced the end of funding its Division I sports teams, specifically men's soccer and women's water polo, alumni and community support announced the "Re-ignite The Wick" program on Feb. 17 to continue funding the upper division teams. With funds raised, Hartwick reversed its decision.

The Cooperstown All-Star Village, at the site of the former Cathedral Farms Country Inn, officially opened on July 3.

Colin Hyde, accused killer of state police investigator Ricky J. Parisian in 1994, died in prison May 16 in Elmira.

A tourism center on Main Street, the Regional Visitor Center And Stuff, opened at 254 Main St. opened in early June. It closed in September 2007.

In August, the Swart-Wilcox House in the Sixth Ward received a charter to become an official museum.

Three new tenants were named for the former P&C grocery store at the corner of Chestnut and Church streets in November, including a video store, tanning salon and a pharmacy, although the latter dropped plans. A dollar store was later named.

Oneonta native Jaclyn Lambros became a dancer with the Radio City Rockettes.

An ordinance to regulate bars in Oneonta passed on Dec. 21 by a vote of 5-2 in Common Council. It was designed to hold bars more accountable for underage drinking and violence.

2005

A favorite diner for over 60 years in Oneonta's West End, The Duke, closed its doors at 48 Oneida St. on Jan. 19.

Valley Fashion Apparel, a manufacturer of garments in the Pony Farm Industrial Park (formerly Sanyo Sewing America), closed April 15.

A.O. Fox Hospital had its first magnetic resonance imaging machine delivered Aug. 2 through the roof by a crane into its new room. The MRI weighed 14,000 pounds and cost $1.5-million.

Mayor Kim K. Muller announced she would not seek re-election in May. In November, John Nader won the election over challenger Sean Farrell by a 61-39 percent margin of votes.

The Greater Oneonta Historical Society held an official grand re-opening of its 183 Main St. headquarters on June 20, after several years of building renovation and restorations.

Alfred Whittet, President and CEO of the Wilber Corp. for 33 years, announced his retirement in late September. Douglas Gulotty was named Whittet's successor.

Toxic waste remediation continued through the year in Neahwa Park near the former coal gasification plant. NYSEG had agreed last year to remove several thousand tons of soil tainted with coal tar. The first stage of removal began Oct. 31.

SUNY Oneonta booked anti-war activist Cindy Sheehan to appear Nov. 24 at the Hunt Union Ballroom. Sheehan, whose son was killed in the Iraq War was paid $11,000 for the one hour appearance. A Fox News Channel military analyst was also booked to counter the lecture. Also in late November, the College Division I soccer team was switched to a lower Division III status. The move was said to be in line with SUCO's mission of placing academics at the core of a student's academic experience.

A wood burning plant to create power was proposed in early December for the former Delaware & Hudson Railroad roundhouse area. Catalyst Renewables said the $70-million plant could create 150 logging jobs and be operational by the fourth quarter of 2007.

The Twelve Tribes, looking to locate some businesses in the downtown area, faced opposition from the Oneonta Planning Commission and some community members in May, because of their actions and beliefs. Some individuals said they have cult-like methods and practices. In December, Twelve Tribes bought properties at 134 Main St. and on Market Street.

The state's longest-serving city alderman died Dec. 29 at home. Eighth Ward alderman Asa C. Allison was 81. He was appointed in 1982 to Common Council by Mayor James F. Lettis to fill a vacancy. The Oneonta armory building was renamed in his honor in 2004.

After re-opening as Bresee's Kitchen, Furniture and Bath in late 1994, replacing the former Department Store, Bresee's announced its final closure at the end of business Dec. 30.

2006

State police violated the civil rights of two of the dozens of black Oneonta residents questioned by police in the 1992 "black list" case, a state judge ruled on Feb. 14. The ruling dismissed the class-action racial-profiling claims. A judge in December awarded a black woman $35,000 for the mental anguish she suffered during questioning that began in an investigation by SUNY Oneonta and area police on an assault of a 77-year-old white woman.

Major flooding on June 27 caused costly damage to Oneonta's wastewater treatment plant on Silas Lane. Flood victims from the more hard-hit region were temporarily housed in dormitories on the SUNY Oneonta campus. Sidney, Walton and Binghamton received the brunt of the damage.

After 24 years of serving in the U.S. Congress, Rep. Sherwood Boehlert (R) announced his retirement in March at the end of the year. His seat was won in November by Michael Arcuri (D).

Oneonta lost two of its finest citizens. Former Mayor James F. Lettis died May 14, and James Catella, former supervisor of streets and parks on Oct. 11.

Some unusual baseball milestones were reached. The Oneonta Tigers victory over Brooklyn, 6-1, on July 20 went 26 innings, the longest game in NY-Penn League history, dating back to 1939. On May 2, Little Leaguer Michael Calkins not only pitched a perfect game for his Moose team at Doc Knapp Field, he hit for the cycle—a feat never accomplished by a major league player.

A part-owner of Monser Bros. Tire Sales, Jeffrey Gelbsman, was charged Apr. 11 with arson and insurance fraud in a 2002 fire on Wall Street that destroyed the business. In January 2007, Gelbsman was sentenced to five years probation and ordered to pay restitution of over $56,000 and no jail time.

Police Chief John Donadio announced his retirement in August. Joseph Redmond, a veteran of the department since 1979 was named chief.

National Soccer Hall of Fame President Will Lunn resigned on Sept. 1. George Brown was named acting president until a permanent replacement could be named.

After much debate and protest, plans for a 35-megawatt woodburning power plant in the city's rail yards were abandoned in September by Catalyst Renewables Corp. after Mayor John Nader sent a letter to the company opposing the plan.

Oneonta and Otsego County residents opened their property tax bills on Dec. 29 and found their tax increase had gone up 22%, after the Otsego Co. Board of Representatives had announced an increase of 2.5%. The reaction and response lasted well into 2007.

2007

A new public radio station developed by SUNY Oneonta, WUOW, signed on at low power at 104.7 FM on Feb. 7.

A new President and CEO was named to the National Soccer Hall of Fame on May 11, in Stephen H. Baumann. He began his duties on Aug. 14.

Hartwick College held a cornerstone ceremony on May 11 for a new building, Golisano Hall, an upstate New York businessman who donated $5-million toward the cost of the building that will bear his name. The building will open in 2008. President Richard Miller announced his retirement at the end of the 2007-08 academic year.

Three businesses near downtown on Chestnut Street were demolished for construction of a Walgreens store, to be completed in 2008.

Otsego County residents were mailed refunds in August averaging $62, after the county discovered they had raised taxes about 22%, while intending to raise them 2.5%.

SUNY Oneonta President Alan B. Donovan announced his retirement on Sept. 7 at the end of the academic year. Donovan served 20 years in the post.

Foothills Performing Arts Center presented plans for a 618-seat theater in September next to its existing scene-shop building on Market Street. The theater was scheduled to open by summer 2009.

The City of Oneonta received $1-million to renovate the former Bresee's Dept. Store complex of buildings as part of Gov. Eliot Spitzer's "City by City" project. Bresee's had fallen into disrepair in recent years. During 2007, the complex was sold from a private owner to a non-profit organization, and then purchased by the city for $150,000. The title was then transferred to the Otsego County Development Corporation.

Ground was broken in October for "The Plains at Parish Homestead" in Oneonta's West End near the intersection of state Routes 7 and 205.

First Night Oneonta encountered financial and volunteer problems, stepping aside this year for a celebration of the kickoff of Oneonta's centennial as a city beginning on Dec. 31 and additional events throughout 2008. Mayor John Nader appointed a committee in early 2007, which assumed duties previously conducted by First Night. The plan was for First Night Oneonta to reorganize and resume the event on Dec. 31, 2008.

2008

The possibility of drilling for natural gas in the region began a debate that lasted several years. Concerns included health impacts, chemical toxicity from a procedure known as hydrofracking, traffic and damage to roads. Benefits included the creation of jobs, invigorating the economy and producing fuel that could reduce the reliance on foreign supplies.

New York City attorney E. Miles Prentice purchased the Oneonta Tigers franchise in the New York-Penn League in July from the longtime ownership group known as the Oneonta Athletic Corporation. The remaining two members, Sam Nader and Sidney Levine, began the 10-man corporation in 1966. The sale price was not disclosed, but the OAC had rejected a deal in 1998 worth $2.5-million. The Tigers agreed to stay in Oneonta until at least 2010.

New leadership began at both Oneonta colleges. In February it was announced that Margaret Drugovich was named as Hartwick College's 10th president. In May, SUNY Oneonta announced that their seventh president was Nancy Kleniewski.

A new manufacturing plant, a subsidiary of Custom Electronics, announced plans to open in July. At first named Renewable Energy Development Inc., it was later renamed Ioxus. The company produces ultracapacitors to sell in global markets. The hope was to creaate 185 jobs in the next five years. The company opened at 118 Winney Hill Rd.

D&H Shop #7, believed to be one of the two original buildings erected in months after the D&H decided to locate its railroad shops in Oneonta in 1870, was razed in December. For local historians it was a great loss to Oneonta's heritage as a railroad town.

With fears that Oneonta might lose the historic Oneonta Theatre to a developer with other plans for the building, a group called the Friends of The Oneonta Theater formed in February. Owner Terry Matteson was looking to sell the building. FOTOT hoped to eventually purchase the theater.

Expansion at the Foothills Performing Arts Center, including a 618-seat theater, began on July 20.

Oneonta celebrated its centennial as a city throughout the year with several events planned by the Oneonta Centennial Committee, appointed by Mayor John Nader.

The city of Oneonta received $1.35 million in state aid to assist in the redevelopment of the former Bresee's Department Store complex, which had fallen into major disrepair in recent years. The city also sought a private developer, Bloomfield/Schon & Partners of Cincinnati, Ohio, to assist. The arrangements didn't work out and the city resumed searches for other developers.

Local music legend Al Galladoro, 95, died in October.

2009

Two Oneonta police officers resigned and a third was suspended after the department faced incidents allegedly involving on-duty officers, sex and alcohol.

After decades of competition, A.O. Fox Memorial Hospital and M.I. Bassett Hospital in Cooperstown agreed to affiliate. It came as a result of economic pressures and changes in the health care industry, including difficulties recruiting physicians to rural areas, reduced payments for services and an emphasis on providing outpatient treatments and decreasing hospital stays.

The National Soccer Hall of Fame in Oneonta closed to the public after Labor Day because of financial difficulties. Scheduled tournaments continued in the fall, but no decisions had been made about the future of the hall.

Mayor John Nader announced he would not seek a second term as the city chief executive. Former Hartwick College President Richard Miller defeated Third Ward Alderman Erik Miller (no relation) and Jason Corrigan, a SUNY Oneonta student.

Noticeable work began on the former Bresee's complex in downtown Oneonta. The aluminum façade, placed on the store in 1959, was removed in November. The fomer owner of the complex, Maurice Ramos, donated it to the National Emergency Medicine Association in exchange for a tax break. The Otsego County Development Corporation engineered a transfer-of-title agreement with NEMA, and the city of Oneonta leased the complex from OCDC.

An original occupant of the Pony Farm Industrial Park, Seeley's Ceramics, departed from its 20,000 sq.ft. building for a smaller buiding in Otego.

SUNY Oneonta's public radio station, WUOW changed from a low-power station to full power, broadcasting at 88.5 FM.

Thomas Cormier purchased the Oneonta Theatre, and working in conjunction with the Friends of the Oneonta Theatre, sought to restore entertainment to the stage and screens at 47 Chestnut St. Renovations, such as removing a musty odor, bats, and other improvements soon began.

Hartwick College began marketing its liberal arts program in a three-year format to earn a bachelor's degree instead of the traditional four. The college also dedicated its 1,100-seat gymnasium to longtime coach and former student Nick Lambros in February, now called the Lambros Arena.

Oneonta mourned the loss of Carl J. Delberta, 92, remembered as a world-class athlete who gave back to his community. Delberta founded the Oneonta Boy's Club in 1947. The River Street facility, today's Boy's and Girl's Club, was built in 1968.

The Veterans Memorial Walkway, a paved pathway linking several war memorials in Neahwa Park, was completed and opened in the fall.

2010

It was a tumultuous year at the Foothills Performing Arts Center. Four employees were fired and two resigned in January amidst fiscal problems in the organization. In reorgainzation efforts the name was changed to Foothills Performing Arts and Civic Center. By December, Mayor Dick Miller became the new Board of Directors chairman, with seven new board members, initiating a project to raise $1.25 million to finish the theater and begin a new marketing strategy.

The Oneonta Tigers baseball franchise announced on Jan. 27 it would move the team to a new home in Norwich, Conn. in time for the 2010 season. By Feb. 16, Mayor Dick Miller announced that a team from the New York Collegiate Baseball League would play at Damaschke Field that summer, leaving its home in Saratoga. The team's new name became the Oneonta Outlaws, part of a 14-team wood bat league that featured 42 games per season in June and July.

The National Soccer Hall of Fame and Museum announced on Feb. 10 that it would cease operations in Oneonta. The Soccer Hall transferred the title of its 62-acre campus to the Otsego County Development Corp. The soccer artifacts were removed and placed in storage. A new National Soccer Hall of Fame will open in 2016 at Toyota Stadium in Frisco, Tex. The new electronics firm Ioxus moved into the vacated building in 2011.

The Oneonta Theatre re-opened after extensive renovations with an Open House Gala in August.

A new "Life Enjoyed" brand was unveiled for Oneonta in August to promote Oneonta for arts and economic development. It was equally criticized and defended by local residents, developed by The Glen Group of North Conway, N.H. for $20,000.

Community Bank System Inc. acquired the Wilber National Bank for $101.8 million in October. Wilber National Bank was chartered in Oneonta in 1874. The merger was completed in March 2011.

A 127-year-old hardware business, L.P. Butts, announced in October it would close by the end of the year. The business was on Broad Street until the streets were reconfigured in the city's urban renewal program of the 1970s, becoming Market Street.

After a three-year absence, First Night Oneonta reorganized and held a full evening of activities and fireworks on Dec. 31.

2011

A case of alleged police brutality began a year of troubled times for the Oneonta Police Department. In February, Bradford Shanks said he was beaten by officer Michael Breen, opening up a civil rights lawsuit, in which Shanks later received $135,000. Breen was suspended and later fired. Chief Joseph Redmond resigned through retirement in March during what Mayor Dick Miller called a time of "cultural changes." Lt. Dennis Nayor became the new police chief and an outside investigation into the department was called for.

The board of St. Mary's School decided to close the 87-year-old school, having relocated to its new campus in 2000 in Oneonta's East End. Struggles with enrollment was the cause for closure at the end of the school year in June.

Mayor Dick Miller called for the arts community in the area to organize themselves in order to become an economic engine that benefits the entire community.

Oneonta's city charter received some major changes during the year, due to the work of the Charter Revision Commission. The most notable change in the charter called for the administrative duties of the city to be executed by a city manager. City voters chose the new form of government by a 3-to-1 margin.The new charter took effect Jan. 1, 2012.

News was mixed for the Oneonta Municipal Airport during the year. The city received a more than $481,000 in federal Department of Transportation funds to enhance airport safety. Meanwhile the city was fined by the state Department of Environmental Conservation for a clear-cutting project, causing sedimentary pollution, and for not having a proper permit to do the work. In December, the city chose not to continue its contract with Clipper Aviation for services at the airport. The airport became self-operating.

SUNY Oneonta announced it would do away with its independent public radio station, WUOW. The station's final broadcast was on May 9, 2013. The college also announced plans for a 200-bed housing complex at the end of Clinton Street, bordering the southwest edge of campus. Opposition to the plan ended the plans during 2012.

Oneonta had its own form of Occupy Wall Street protests in October. Rallies took place at Oneonta's Muller Plaza.

Plans for the former Bresee's retail building were unveiled by Klugo Development in May, calling for commercial, retail and market-rate apartments. The $4.5 million renovation project called for four to seven retail or commercial tenants on the first floor and 15 apartments on the second and third floors.

2012

The former St. Mary's School building was sold in late January to Springbrook, a non-profit agency serving people with disabilities. Springbrook was formerly known as the Upstate Baptist Home, based in the town of Milford. The space in Oneonta's East End centralized many of the agency's operations and community functions from other locations.

While it didn't affect Oneonta directly, a state judge upheld the legality of the town of Middlefield's ban on drilling for natural gas in February.

The Oneonta High School Yellowjackets completed its path to the school's first state baseball championship on June 9 with a 2-0 victory over Section One's Briarcliff, played in Binghamton.

Budget cutbacks and declining enrollments led to the Oneonta City School District's plan to close Center Street Elementary School in June. In May voters turned down an option to keep classes at the school. Students at the school made plans to attend other city elementary schools beginning in the fall. School district offices as well as adult and special education were relocated to the school.

Oneonta swore in its first city manager on Sept. 7 during a special meeting of Common Council. Michael H. Long, city administrator of Poughkeepsie, started his $115,000-a-year position on Oct. 1. The post was created by the revised city charter.

A legal dispute was resolved between partners in the Cooperstown All-Star Village, located off state Route 205 in West Oneonta. Martin Patton and his wife Brenda became the sole owners of the baseball camp for boys, opened in 2004.

Local businessman Gary Laing announced that he purchased the franchise of the Oneonta Outlaws Baseball Club from Keith Rogers and Dan Scaring. Oneonta High School athletci director Joe Hughes was appointed to manage the Outlaws.

Oneonta lost three longtime business icons during the year. Sidney Levine, 99; John Stevens, 94; and Frank "Diz" Lamonica, 101, were all remembered for their community service and as proprietors of Oneonta Ford Sales Co., Stevens Hardware and LaMonica Beverages, respectively.

2013

A group called Save Oneonta, consisting of property owners, merchants and residents, circulated petitions opposing a 325-bed apartment complex proposed for Blodgett Drive. The complex, soon to

be known as Hillside Commons would, according to petitioners cause "severe adverse economic impact on Oneonta merchants." Mayor Dick Miller disagreed, calling the complex a "boon to Oneonta."
Construction on the complex began in August by the Newman Development Group of Vestal. Hillside Commons, a private sector business, marketed its living facilities primarily to SUNY Oneonta students.
Otsego County Economic Developer Carolyn Lewis left her position in August after more than 12 years on the job. She said it was to devote more time to raising her three children. In October, SUNY Oneonta announced the hiring of Lewis as its economic development coordinator for the college's "START-UP NY" Program, to promote the establishment of public/private partnerships based on SUNY campuses.
The town of Oneonta, after a study, found no compelling reasons to merge with the city of Oneonta. Since becoming mayor, Dick Miller had been pushing for a merger of the two municipalities.
Klugo's Parkview Place was officially opened with a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Oct. 15. This is the re-developed properties that include 1 Dietz St. and the buildings formerly known as Bresee's Oneonta Department Store.
Faced with a growing number of vacant or abandoned homes, plus a need for rental units, the city of Oneonta embarked with a non-profit organization, Housing Visions Coalition, on a plan to improve housing options through revitalization of properties and neighborhoods. The $15 million project icalled for Housing Visions to buy properties, hire contractors to build or restore units and then manage the properties. The focus of the project was on the center city area and some properties on Chestnut Street.
The OHS Yellowjackets girls' soccer team became the fifth team in OHS history to win a New York State Public High School Athletic Association title on Nov. 17, following a 2-1 victory over Section Three's Marcellus, played at SUNY Cortland.
News about the Oneonta Municipal Airport improved after a report in November told how the Oneonta Job Corps Academy had teamed up with the airport to give students experience in renovating the airport terminal and converting the former reservation center into a Job Corps sattelite classroom for airport facilties management.
A $15 million equity offering allowed Ioxus to bring 20 to 40 additional jobs to Oneonta before the end of the year. Elsewhere in local business news, The Palace Cigar Store, an Oneonta institution since the 1920s, closed in March at 277 Main St. Also, after three decades as a popular eatery on Oneonta's Southside, the Neptune Diner closed on Dec. 29. The property was sold during 2014 and is currently a series of storefronts, across from the Southside Mall.

2014

Two beloved Oneonta landmarks were vandalized on Jan. 19 in an arson and graffiti incident. Doc Knapp Field, commonly known as the Oneonta Little League Field, was set on fire, and the neighboring Swart-Wilcox House was vandalized with graffiti. Three underage suspects were soon apprehended, but no names were released.
With the opening of a new 14-bed observation unit at A.O. Fox Memorial Hospital in March, the final phase of Fox's "Gold Standard of Patient Care" modernization project was completed, started in February 2013.
Otsego County introduced its new economic development "team" in January, filling a vacancy with the departure of Carolyn Lewis last year. Alexander "Sandy" Mathes Jr., past executive of the Greene County IDA was retained as a consultant to lead the effort, and Elizabeth Horvath of Cooperstown serves as the chief operating officer. The post had been filled on an interim basis by Douglas Gulloty.
Michael H. Long, Oneonta city manager for 18 months, announced his retirement in March. A source at City Hall said that Long's standing with the Common Council was in question and that his job was in jeopardy. Common Council members refused to comment, saying the matter was a confidential personnel issue. Martin Murphy was selected as Oneonta's second city manager, sworn into office on Monday, Oct. 13.
Oneonta lost a current and former mayor of Oneonta within days of each other. James Georgeson died on Oct. 22, elected for one term in 1959. Mayor Dick Miller died on Oct. 25, the cause of death being a self-inflicted gunshot to the head. Miller was serving his second term in office, elected in 2009. Common Council member Russ Southard was appointed as acting mayor.
Bettiol Enterprises of Oneonta unveiled a sketch plan to develop a 13-acre parcel on state Route 7, Oneida Street, with a convenience store, hotel, two restaurants, a car dealership and other businesses.
The Utica School of Commerce, an educational institution branch campus on Elm Street in Oneonta since 1985, suspended most classes in the city in the spring semester, a step that meant layoffs for eight or nine of the branch's 14 employees. Declining enrollment and parking availability in downtown Oneonta were reasons for the cuts.
The Oneonta area was affected by two major decisions for large projects in December. On Dec. 2, the Federal Regulatory Commission voted to approve the $683 million Constitution Pipeline — a 124-mile subterranean natural gas transmission system that stretches from northeastern Pennsylvania through hundred of parcels in Broome, Chenango, Delaware and Schoharie counties. On Dec. 18, the administration of Gov. Andrew Cuomo clamped a ban on horizontal shale gas drilling in New York, using a process called hyrdraulic fracturing.

2015

The proposed Constitution Pipeline took a major step forward in February, with a federal judge granting it eminent domain rights to easements on properties whose owners had been resisting right-of-way agreement. Opposition to the pipeline stiffened throughout the year.
John Remillard, A.O. Fox Memorial Hospital's chief executive officer since 1989, announced his retirement in March for the end of the year. Jeff Joyner was named new president of the hospital, effective Jan. 1, 2016.
The Plains at Parish Homestead senior housing development in Oneonta's West End, was sold in May to Capital Senior Living of Dallas, Tex. The development which includes private homes, apartments and assisted care facilities opened in November 2007.
Hartwick College laid off 18 non-faculty employees in June in an effort to address an estimated $1.68 million shortfall in the university's 2015 budget. The cuts were not well received by remaining faculty and staff.
Another consolidation study for the city and town of Oneonta to merge was considered in July. It was refused without a vote two days later by the Oneonta Town Board after the city Common Concil had voted in favor of the study.
The Oneonta Common Council voted, 5-2, with one abstention at a special meeting on July 17 to end the employment of City Manager Martin Murphy. "The fact that the majority of the council has gone through two professionally trained city managers in over slightly more than a year speaks for itself," Murphy told The Daily Star. Council, in a motion stated it has "lost trust and confidence in…Murphy and his ability to satisfactorily perform his duties and responsibilities."
Gary Herzig, a Democrat and the sole candidate in this year's mayoral race, was appointed mayor of Oneonta by the Common Council in a unanimous vote on Tuesday, Sept. 1. Herzig was officially sworn in on Jan. 1, 2016.
Norfolk Southern Corp. completed an acquisition of about 283 miles of the Delaware and Hudson Railway Co.'s line from Sunbury, Pa. through Oneonta to Schenectady in September.
A SUNY Oneonta student was arrested on Dec. 6 in connection with an online threat made that he was going to "shoot up the school." Brandon Mathew Negron, a sophomore mass communications student was taken into custody.

The Pony Farm Industrial Park in Oneonta's West End got a new name in November: The Oneonta Business Park. The Oneonta area and four-county region received word of several awards amounting to millions of dollars in state economic development funding. Among the Oneonta awards was $700,000 for a new Upper Susquehanna Agricultural Center — known as the "food hub" — to be built on the former Oneonta Sales building site on Market Street; $500,000 for transforming the abandoned D&H Railway yards into a hub of regional economic activity; $250,000 for the Generations Malting Co. to help set up a malt house processing facility in Oneonta, and $68,000 to further the Craft Food and Beverage Center on the Hartwick College campus.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held on Dec. 14 to unveil the renovations at the Oneonta Muncipal Airport, the result of the partnership between the city of Oneonta and the Job Corps Academy. A $70,000 grant was announced to further improvements at the airport, opened in 1966. The city spent $50,000 in 2014 and 2015 for materials and supplies. Job Corps students provided the labor at no cost.

2016

The State Liquor Authority suspended the liquor licenses Tuesday, Feb. 2 of two bars in downtown Oneonta after a sting resulted in multiple violations for underage drinking. Legends Filling Station and Choice Ultra Lounge were charged and closed. Both re-opened in the next couple of months after paying fines, a $15,000 setback for Legends.

Rehabilitation of housing in Oneonta got underway in March, part of a $15.9 million project in the city by Housing Visions, including sites at 63-65 Spruce St., two four-unit buildings at the corner of West and Columbia streets, as well as two four-unit buildings and a 40-unit complex called Oneonta Heights near Monroe Avenue, along Silver Creek.

Oneonta's search for a new city manager continued through the year. Acting city manager Meg Hungerford stepped down from the position on April 5. The city manager job was advertised in December, with hopes to fill the position in early 2017.

It was announced on April 19 that A.O. Fox Memorial Hospital would eliminate its birthing services by the end of the year. Bassett Medical Center in Cooperstown would take on those services. "The demographics in rural America are changing," a hospital official said. "Fewer people are giving birth."

Many Oneontans participated in a rally around Islamberg, a small Muslim community near Hancock. A "Ride for National Security" by American Bikers Against Jihad took place on May 15, with only five riding motorcycles, met by hundreds of demonstrators supporting the Muslim community.

There were mixed reactions on April 22 when the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation said it would not issue a permit for a 124-mile Constitution Pipeline from Northeast Pennsylvania to eastern New York, passing near Oneonta.

The New York Summer Music Festival, an intensive summer music camp for musicians ages 11 to 25, held on the SUNY Oneonta campus since 2006, came to an end before its opening in June.

Oneonta officials got word on Aug. 19 that the city was awarded a $10 million grant in the state's competitive Downtown Revitalization Initiative, funding which officials said would benefit not only the city but the entire region for years to come. The award will help Oneonta leverage private investment to provuide new housing opportunities, create a food and beverage district and expand upon its economic potential as a regional center of culture and commerce.

A day of festivities marked the 50th anniversary of the Oneonta Municipal Airport on Saturday, Sept. 17.

It was announced on Halloween that a large Norway spruce at the 72 Country Club Road home of Angie and Graig Eichler had been selected to serve as this year's Rockefeller Center Christmas tree in Manhattan.

In some comings and goings during the year, Oneonta Mayor Gary Herzig retired from his day job in August at Opportunities for Otsego to allow him more time to be mayor. Former Oneonta Mayor John Nader and provost at the State University College at Delhi was named as the new president of Farmingdale State College on Long Island. Also, after 21 years on the force in the Oneonta Police Department, Chief Dennis Nayor announced his retirement in December. Nayor accepted the position of director of research, development and training with the New York State Association of Chiefs of Police.

2017

Oneonta's Downtown Revitalization Initiative, funded by a state grant of $10 million made progress during the year but also became the target of criticism. The critics said they feared the impact of planned housing units on the existing stock of rental housing in the city, part of the DRI.

Oneonta Common Council declared itself lead agency in September in an environmental review of the proposed Oneonta Rail Yards economic development project. Nearly 80 acres were targeted for development in April, on either side of Roundhouse Road. The Otsego County Industrical Development Agency provided $250,000 for land purchase from Oneonta River Corp.

An opening ceremony was held Nov. 14 for the $15.9 million Oneonta Heights housing project.

Oneonta appointed a city manager on May 16. George L. Korthauer began work in August as the third city manager in the past five years. Korthauer was the retired city manager in Petoskey, Mich. before coming to Oneonta.

The city also appointed a new police chief. Oneonta native Douglas Brenner took helm on July 6, replacing retired chief Dennis Nayor.

SUNY Oneonta president Nancy Kleniewski announced her retirement in April, effective in July 2018. The search process for the college's eighth president got underway in October. The new Red Dragon Outfitters building opened in August and a new Welcome Center was reaching completion in December, with opening scheduled in January 2018.

At Hartwick College, students reacted negatively toward a new four-year on campus housing requirement. Students also were upset in November over the abrupt dismissal of the Dean of Student Success, Robin Diana. The college completed a new gateway project along West Street and opened a new residence hall.

Two landmark eateries in Oneonta finished business during the year. Fire on April 16 destroyed Christopher's Restaurant. Owners Martin and Brenda Patton announced that the business would not resume. The site was cleared and awaits future development. Meanwhile, long-time pizza maker Joe Ruffino Jr. said Joe Ruffino's Pizzeria and Restaurant would not continue, after an abrupt closure in July.

Oneonta lost two prominent citizens. Eugene Bettiol Sr. died in December at age 85. Bettiol was remembered for his efforts in developing several businesses on Oneonta's Southside, developing the Oneonta FoxCare Center and the Foothills Performing Arts and Civic Center. In May, Oren "Doc" Knapp died at age 90. Knapp's legacy was his work with the Oneonta Little League and the establishment of a fundraising foundation which enabled thousands of children to play baseball.

2018

The Oneonta Downtown Revitalization Initiative continued progress through the year. Among the developments were the use of the Westcott Lot on Main Street to construct mixed commercial/residential space; funding for a transit hub on Market Street; space for shared living and studios for artists; hiring Trampoline Advertising & Design Co. of Glens Falls for marketing and signage improvements, and the

possibility of reopening of the Oneonta Theatre in an alliance with the Foothills Peforming Arts and Civic Center.

Hartwick College announced in March it would cut Division I sports, specifically its men's soccer and women's water polo teams, moving instead to the NCAA Division III level.

SUNY Oneonta welcomed its eighth president in July, Barbara Jean Morris, who came from Fort Lewis College in Durango, Colorado. The college also received a $5 million donation from graduate Janet Perna. The school's Science I building was named in her honor.

High school students from Oneonta and across the region joined a national gun protest in March, following the Feb. 14 school shooting at Marjory Stoneman High School in Parkland, Florida.

Ricky Allen Knapp, 66, died in prison March 8. Knapp was convicted in 1978 of second-degree manslaughter in the death of Linda Velzy in December 1977. Velzy was a student at SUNY Oneonta.

Oneonta received a $1 million state grant to demolish the Damaschke Field grandstand, built in the late 1930s. The space will be rehabilitated to provide a safe, family-friendly recreational area.

The Town of Oneonta Fire District Commission dissolved in November amid disputes over a contract for services in the town with the City of Oneonta. The contract was transferred to the Oneonta Town Board.

Upon celebrating its 95th year of service, the Oneonta Kiwanis Club dissolved in November. A long period of decline in club membership led to the decision.

The Oneonta Muncipal Airport was renamed in November as the Albert S. Nader Regional Airport to honor the former city mayor who made it a reality.

Fire, determined to be arson, killed a former Oneonta firefighter, John Heller, at 5 Walling Ave. Heller died after evacuating his fiancee and four nephews at a sleepover at the house in the early morning of Dec. 29.

2019

A murder suspect was captured on April 23, when Gabriel Truitt was found by police hiding in a home next door to the police station.Truitt, 33, was charged with murder and arson in the Dec. 29, 2018, fire that killed former Oneonta firefighter John Heller. A trial was set for early 2020.

As part of the city's Comprehensive Plan to make downtown Oneonta more of a hub for the arts, the city proposed converting a portion of the Dietz Street parking lot into space for a mixed use building in July. Calling the project the "Lofts on Dietz Street," it is specifically aimed for artists and affordable middle income housing. The building would take 50 parking spaces from the lot. On Dec. 6, several business owners filed a lawsuit to halt the project.

Oneonta was ranked eighth among more than 900 communities across the United States in a recent report of the most "artsvibrant small communities," by SMU Data Arts. The report was released in August.

The overhaul of the Damaschke Field grandstand began in October. The 1930s-era grandstand was demolished. A temporary backstop will be created and ready for use by the 2020 baseball season, and the second phase will be the construction of a more family-friendly facility to include seating and a play area for children. The second phase will be completed in time for the 2021 baseball season.

Remaining tenants at 195 Main St. were evicted following a dispute between the landlords and city over safety hazards in the building. It was formerly the Oneonta Hotel. Street-level businesses were not affected.

From the colege campuses, news came from Hartwick College that it would launch its first master's degree program in the fall, in translational biomedical research. Meanwhile, Hartwick decided to part ways with SUNY Oneonta on planning the annual OH-Fest. Hartwick will continue to sponsor a street fair on Main Street in April. SUNY Oneonta will sponsor and host a concert on campus. In October, the SUNY Oneonta campus was locked down after a report of a possible shooting threat. While never an actual threat, it was the result of a cyber crime, and the threat didn't originate in Oneonta. The college administration's response was criticized by students, and in months ahead, plans were developed to prepare for future possible threats.

A longtime Oneonta bar, Sip & Sail, lost its liquor license in November after a raid found 90% of its patrons were underage. The bar had nearly 300 patrons at the time,with a maximum occupancy of 178. Police issued appearance tickets and confiscated 223 fake IDs. Sip & Sail reopened in February 2020.

A popular eatery in Oneonta since 1969, Friendly's, closed in early April, joining 13 other of the chain of restaurants in New York state, due to corporate restructuring. These were corporate-owned restaurants. Franchisees remained open, the closest one located in Johnson City.

2020

Without a doubt the most influential event that affected everyday life and times around the city throughout the year was the COVID-19 virus. Before the outbreak struck hard in March, two political announcements were made, as state Sen. James L. Seward announced on Jan. 20 he would not seek re-election, following 34 years in office. Within a week, Assemblyman Clifford Crouch announced he would not seek re-election after a 25 year career in that house. In November, voters chose Peter Oberacker of Schenevus and Joseph Angelino of Norwich, respectively, to succed the retirees.

Downtown Revitalization Initiative projects made some progress before the COVID pandemic halted progress planned for the year. Large scale apartment projects on upper floors at 186-212 Main St., the Ford Block, and at 250 Main St. were funded by grants to Springbrook and Peter Clark Students Rentals, respectively. Meanwhile, a lawsuit to stop the proposed "Lofts On Dietz Street" project was dismissed by a local state Supreme Court judge in June.

Otsego County's first confirmed case of COVID-19 was announced on March 22. By this time, all public schools had been closed, and the campuses of Hartwick College and SUNY Oneonta had closed, all going to distance-learning and sending the students home.

The Daily Star, a six-day per week newspaper operation, announced on April 15 that it would go to a five-day per week operation, discontinuing publication of its Monday edition. The COVID-19 pandemic was named as the cause, due to a reduction of advertising revenues.

Racial tensions caused by the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis in June touched our area, but without the violence experienced in many major U.S. cities. A peaceful demonstration for racial justice, attended by hundreds, was held on June 16 at the Muller Plaza. The City of Oneonta also announced that an advisory board on police relations was set to form, in response to the death of George Floyd.

On July 17, Otsego County Court Judge Brian Burns sentenced Gabriel Truitt to life in prison without parole. Truitt had been accused of setting fire to a house at 5 Walling Ave. on Dec. 29, 2018, which killed former Oneonta firefighter John Heller.

Hartwick College and SUNY Oneonta planned for a reopening of their campuses with limited number of students for the fall semester. Within a week of opening, SUNY Oneonta announced a campus closure, due to a sizeable spike in infections of the COVID virus, which continued to increase in subsequent months. President Barbara Jean Morris reportedly resigned in mid-October, replaced by Dennis Craig from SUNY Purchase on an interim basis. Hartwick remained open.

On a lighter note, the 88th Rockefeller Center Christmas tree came from the Oneonta area, a 75-foot, 11-ton Norway spruce, donated by Susan and Allan Dick of state Route 23 in West Oneonta. Upon completion of the tree's journey to Manhattan in late November, an "inhabitant " was discovered in the branches, an adult male Saw-whet owl. The bird, dubbed "Rockefeller," was rehabilitated by wildlife specialists and eventually released back to the wild in our area.

2021

Throughout the year again, life in the city was greatly overshadowed by the continuing COVID pandemic. While some residents took a vaccine and a booster, others didn't. New variants of the virus, Delta and Omicron affected the amount of residents wearing masks at public and private venues and events, or being hospitalized.

Within a few short weeks of each other, Oneonta's police and fire chiefs announced their retirements. After 22 years with the Oneonta Police Department, Chief Douglas Brenner retired in February. Brenner was succeeded by Lt. Christopher Witzenburg. On Feb. 8, Fire Chief Patrick Pidgeon announced his retirement, effective March 25. Brian Knapp was appointed the new chief in July.

Two fires of note during the year kept Oneonta crews busy. The Holiday Lanes Family Recreation Center on Oneonta's Southside was destroyed on April 9 and later demolished, while Monser Brothers Tire & Auto Repair on Chestnut Street was heavily damaged on Dec. 3.

Oneonta Mayor Gary Herzig announced on Feb. 23 that he would not seek re-election in the fall. Common Council members Len Carson (R) and Mark Drnek (D) announced their candidacy for Mayor, won by Drnek in Novermber.

In the Town of Oneonta, Supervisor Bob Wood announced his retirement after 14 years in office. Randy Mowers was elected Wood's successor in November.

A former mayor and legendary citizen, Albert "Sam" Nader, died at age 101 on Feb. 9. Nader was mayor from 1961 to 1969, and was highly credited for bringing professional baseball back to the city in 1966, among many other outstanding achievements in his lifetime.

Common Council adopted a draft plan in April to improve the city's police department. Oneonta, like other cities and municipalities around the state, was mandated to do a review of the department by then Gov. Andrew Cuomo, following the death of George Floyd in 2020 in Minneapolis.

Within days of that plan's adoption, an Oneonta man was fatally shot during a confrontation with Oneonta police in front of his River Street home, April 6. Tyler Green, 23, was killed following a domestic dispute. The use of force drew considerable scrutiny, with a protest in front of City Hall on April 12. The state Attorney General's office determined in early December that the police actions were justified in preventing the death of a child in that dispute.

Gregory Mattice was named April 20 as new City Administrator, starting his job on July 1.

A groundbreaking ceremony took place on April 30 for the Lofts on Dietz Street, a four-story, mixed-use building for artist lofts, general apartments and also the new home for the Hartwick College Grain Innovation Center. The project is part of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative, awarded to Oneonta in 2016.

Related to downtown revitalization, Springbrook presented a proposed $5 million plan to renovate the upper floors of the Ford Block on May 18.

Listeners of WDOS radio said farewell to "Big Chuck" D'Imperio on June 29, a local staple in Oneonta radio for 33 years.

On July 20, the State University of New York Board of Trustees appointed Alberto Jose Cardelle as president of SUNY Oneonta, who began duties on Sept. 6. Also in early September, Hartwick College President Margaret Drugovich announced her retirement at the end of the 2021-22 academic year.

A ribbon cutting ceremony took place on Oct. 12 to unveil a dog park in the city's Neahwa Park.

2022

Police were busy during the year, with two notable cases. On Jan. 27, a SUNY Oneonta student died from exposure. Tyler Lopresti-Castro, 20, was found lying on the pavement at the Oneonta Public Transit bus garage on Silas Lane near Exit 13 of I-88. Lopresti-Castro had been outdoors in sub-zero temperatures, miles from campus.The incident was still unexplained by the end of the year. Oneonta was also shaken on May 30 when a local man died after being stabbed in an alley off Dietz Street. Charged in the murder of Kaleb O'Neill, 24, of Oneonta, were Terry DeCutler, 31, of Sidney and Nicholas DeCutler, 34, of Unadilla. Their cases were still pending at year's end.

A notable rally was held in Oneonta's Muller Plaza during the year. On May 5, a rally to support abortion rights was held, in protest of the U.S. Supreme Court decision to reverse the Roe vs. Wade case in 1973.

A prayer vigil for victims of a mass shooting at a Buffalo supermarket on May 14 was held days later at Oneonta's Elm Park Methodist Church.

A 28-year-old October tradition in Oneonta came to an end when it was announced in March that the Pit Run road race and walk would be discontinued. Also in March, it was announced that a Boy Scout tradition of camping at Camp Henderson was over, as the site in the town of Maryland was put up for sale. Financial and maintenance issues were attributed for the closure.

The Cooperstown All Star Village in Oneonta was bought from its founders, Marty and Brenda Patton, by a company owning the Philadelphia 76ers, New Jersey Devils and Prudential Center sports arena in New Jersey, it was reported on March 24.

Oneonta mourned the death of former Mayor David W. Brenner in March. Brenner had a long career in public service in Oneonta and Otsego County, as well as in higher education at SUNY Oneonta.

On the higher education front, Hartwick College installed a new president. Darren Reisberg is the 11th president in the college's 225-year history. Hartwick also announced a new program to encourage students from the local region to enroll there, with the "HartLand Promise," to make attending financially comparable or less than a four-year public college or university.

At SUNY Oneonta, university status was reached. The name State University College at Oneonta, which had been used since 1961 was now the State University of New York at Oneonta, or simply SUNY Oneonta. The status changed after the number of graduate-level degrees the institution offers made it possible. Also, with the announced closure of Cazenovia College in December, SUNY Oneonta was actively seeking to support student transfers from that private Madison County college, beginning in the 2023-2024 academic year.

Several organizations were recipients of grants during the year. The City and Town of Oneonta received a state Department of Transportation grant to make improvements on the whole length of the James F. Lettis / Leslie G. Foster Highway, and much of the Southside business area. The city was also awarded a $500,000 grant to refurbish the historic Oneonta Theatre.

It was announced in December that the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs would soon open a VA clinic at the FoxCare Center.

Throughout the year, meetings were held to discuss the growing number of deer in the city and to manage the overpopulation. A task force was formed to come up with a management plan by 2023. Deer have been a concern for many years here, over damage caused to residential vegetation, car/deer accidents, and how deer carry ticks that can cause Lyme disease.

2023

A growing deer herd within the city made plenty of news. No solution to the problem was made during the year, after it was discovered that no one from the city had applied for a state DEC deer management permit by a deadline. Susan Lettis was appointed as deer management plan coordinator in November.

Homelessness was a problem in our region. In February, two local organizations received grants of $1.1 million from the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development, to be split between Opportunities for Otsego and Catholic Charities of Chenango County.

Temporary emergency housing for the clients of Otsego County's Social Services Dept. was expanded through increasing the number of rooms it uses at Oneonta's Motel 88 in the city's West End.

Another temporary emergency housing location was closed in September. The Town House Inn, 318 Main St., was closed and the inn manager ticketed for second-degree criminal nuisance. It had been the site of a recent shooting, and where people gathered to engage in unlawful conduct.

Market Street was the site of changes during the year. Oneonta's parking garage was closed in May due to structural concerns. While some downtown merchants petitoned the city to build a new three-tier garage to replace the 1975 structure, the city moved with other plans. Demolition began in September and continued into 2024. City plans called for a surface parking lot, transit hub city and commerical bus lines, and staircase and elevator to Main Street where the lot stood. Elsewhere, the 27 Market St. buidling, the former Oneonta Sales Co., was demolished in October. It is presently a city parking lot, but was being eyed by a private developer by year's end.

From the city's higher education campuses came news in October that Hartwick College President Darren Reisberg resigned to take a position at Vanderbilt University. Back in August, Hartwick College and SUNY Oneonta entered into an agreement that allows SUNY Oneonta students to easily transfer into Hartwick's nursing program. Also SUNY Oneonta was named a "School of National Service," to offer new incentives, scholarships and enrollment deferrals to AmeriCorps alumni applying to the university. The university also unveiled renovations of Alumni Hall in September.

Both SUNY Oneonta and Hartwick College joined Springbrook and Otsego-Northern Catskills BOCES to launch the Regional Innovation Council in March.

Smoke from wildfires in Canada impacted air quality across our region on June 6. Smoke was so thick in the afternoon that automatic outdoor lights came on at many locations and people drove with their headlights on.

Two brothers were sentenced to terms in state prison for a 2022 murder in the city. Terry and Nichalos DeCutler were sentenced for the murder of Kaleb O'Neil.

Facing a possible closure of the FoxCare Fitness Center, the Oneonta Family YMCA took on the management of the center, re-opening in July.

The first retail cannabis store in Oneonta opened on Aug. 12. The business opened with the name Dosha.

The Dietz Street Lofts opened to tenants on July 31.

TV star Kelsey Grammer visited Oneonta as a guest bartender at the Autumn Cafe in late October to promote his new craft beer line.

Public hearings were held in November for a proposed traffic roundabout at the intersection of Maple Street and state Routes 7 and 23, also known as the James F. Lettis Highway.

A deadly home explosion on Dec. 9 left a neighborhood in Oneonta's West End stunned. One man died at his residence at 18 Richards Ave. A gunshot fired by Desmond D. Moan was said to cause a gas leak that led to the explosion.

2024

Market Street continued to make news all year. New curbs, pavement, infrastructure and lighting was completed. Work began on a new transit hub building where the former parking garage stood. Also, the site where 27 Market St. once stood, was subject of public debate. Rehabilitation Support Services was looking to construct a mixed-use building for offices for RSS mental health services and apartments. Decision on the controversial project is expected during 2025.

Water Street improvement projects got underway, following the demolition of the former parking garage.

Former state Senator James L. Seward, Oneonta native, died on July 27. He was first elected and served from 1987 until 2020.

A total solar eclipse on April 8 drew the eyes of thousands to the sky, and featured viewing events on the Hartwick College and SUNY Oneonta campuses.

Troublesome experiences were brought to light regarding life at the Lofts on Dietz Street during March.

Springbrook's new affordable housing project, Ford on Main, opened on May 30 on the upper floors of 186-212 Main St., which had been vacant since the early 1970s.

One man died in an apartment fire above the Oneonta Theatre on Sept. 17. The man died of a self-inflicted gunshot, after igniting what appeared to be gasoline in his apartment. Firefighters fortunately brought the blaze under control quickly. The theatre has been undergoing renovations for an eventual reopening.

In baseball camp news, Cooperstown Baseball World, calling SUNY Oneonta home for almost 25 years, cut ties with the university. Immediate plans for the camp moving elsewhere have not been specified. Meanwhile the Cooperstown All Star Village in Oneonta's West End announced an expansion that would allow up to an 82 team capacity. A new three-story bunk house was part of the expansion.

From the local college campuses, news at SUNY Oneonta included the opening of a downtown Oneonta location, called the Extended and Community Learning, or ExCL Center. Oneonta and Utica University entered a new agreement to help SUNY Oneonta nursing students transition to Utica's advanced nursing program. Hartwick College also opened a location downtown with its Baking Innovation Lab at the Dietz Street Lofts building on Oct. 22.

Changes to Oneonta's city seal were set in motion, to replace the image of a Native American man. The seal has been in use for 115 years, modified once in April 1978.

The Oneonta YMCA announced on Aug. 5 plans to expand with a new outdoor urban sports complex on the northern end of its Ford Avenue building.

Fundraising began around Aug. 1 by the Swart-Wilcox House, the city's oldest house, for adding a historic barn from the same time period to the land on Wilcox Avenue. Goal: $500,000, with having the barn in place by July 4, 2026.

Oneonta officials wanted to hear ideas of residents for developing local waterfronts in June.

Vacant since 2019, the former Oneonta Hotel building on Main Street was placed on the market for $1.6 million. The quarter-acre parcel has about 55,000 square feet of available space, considered prime for apartment redevelopment.

2025

The Utica Center for Development celebrated the grand opening of a new veterans resource center in the Oneonta Armory on March 11.

Common Council voted down the sale of downtown property at 27 Market St. in May. The vote was 5-3 against selling it to Rehabilitation Support Services, Inc. (RSS). The site was proposed for affordable and low-income housing. RSS provides community-based mental health and substance abuse services, including housing and employment assistance. RSS proposed the $25 million multi-story structure, with 25% of the housing unites dedicated to RSS clients. The project faced opposition from a group of landlords and business owners.

Operations at the Oneonta Job Corps Academy faced possible closure in June from a U.S. Department of Labor "pause" at contractor-operated Job Corps centers nationwide. After negotiations, all centers remained open.

A man was arrested by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers outside of a house on Watkins Avenue on Saturday, June 14.

Oneonta's Muller Plaza became home to the new Al Gallodoro Memorial Stage in June.

Once a staple of the Oneonta community, radio station WDOS, AM-730 went off the air in early June, operated by Townsquare Media Group. WDOS signed on on Dec. 1, 1947.

Developers Gail and Cyril O'Reilly have taken over about 55,000 square feet of available space of the historic Oneonta Hotel at 195-201 Main St. for residential and commercial development. Plans are to renovate the upper floors into market-rate housing.

A group of residents who live near the Oneonta municipal airport aired their concerns about a proposed airport runway expansion plan in August.

After the Oneonta Town Board declined to approve a zoning amendment for the Emmons Farms Farmouse, a former restaurant, owners tore down the building.

Oneonta community leaders announced a plan to renovate the old St. Mary's School on Walnut Street into senior housing. Developer Al Rubin plans to transform the building into eight units, four on each floor.

Grow America, a non-profit that supports community and economic development, offered their services to the city with a potential housing development at 27 Market St. in October.

RSS proposed another low-income housing development in Oneonta in the city's Sixth Ward, at 164 River St., to be called Solstice Commons. It soon faced opposition by Sixth Ward Neighbors United, and was countered by another group of residents in favor of the project.

Democrat Daniel Buttermann won the race for the city of Oneonta mayor on Nov. 4, defeating Republican candidate Luisa Montanti.

Hartwick College announced its 13th president in November, in Laurel Bongiorno.

Construction was near complete on Oneonta's roundabout at the end of the year. The project had been started in the spring, converting the intersection of Lettis Highway and Main Street into a single-lane roundabout.

The new city of Oneonta transit hub opened Dec. 1 after Oneonta Public Transit completed its move to the space at 47 Market St.

With the end of the year, The Daily Star ended a five-day a week printing of the newspaper, going to three days a week, Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. Access was maintained for coverage to news on The Star's online editions.

Check back in February 2027 for updates.

MAYORS

1909—Albert Morris
1912—Frank D. Blodgett
1914—Joseph S. Lunn*
1917—Andrew E. Ceperley
1922—Clarence C. Miller
1924—W. Irving Bolton
1926—Bertus C. Lauren
1932—Francis H. Marx
1938—Daniel Franklin*
1942—Dorr S. Hickey*
1942—Russell E. Brigham
1944—Alexander F. Carson
1952—Roger G. Hughes
1960—James Georgeson
1962—Albert S. Nader
1970—James F. Lettis
1986—David W. Brenner
1998—Kim K. Muller
2006—John S. Nader
2010—Richard P. Miller*
2016—Gary Herzig
2022—Mark Drnek
2026—Daniel Buttermann

* —Died while in office