

The Eighteenth Decade

Overview

The major development this decade continued to be the Urban Renewal program. Having essentially completed the Jefferson Street Plaza area south of Main Street, attention was next directed to the area north of Main Street. Then, that was followed by the area south of Ellicott Street and West Main Street, stretching from about Evans Street west nearly to Oak Street.

Other developments of considerable significance included more housing for low income and elderly residents, the County Nursing Home moving to Batavia, a new fire station, a year-round skating rink, and a new building for BOCES.

Batavia's population continued to fall. By 1980, it was down to 16,703 ("Genesee County Information," *Richmond Memorial Library*, online, accessed 3 January 2014), a decrease of 635 residents since 1970.

1: Infrastructure

By the 1970s, the City's water filtration plant, located on Lehigh Avenue, was about 50 years old and in the need of major work. Thus, at a cost of \$1.5 million, plans were made for it to be completely rebuilt with the installation of modern automatic equipment and provisions for future expansion (*The Daily News*, 24 August 1970). The renovated facility was opened to public inspection on May 19, 1971 (Ruth M. McEvoy, *History of the City of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: Hodgins Printing Co., 1993] p. 8).

In 1974, City Council voted to extend North Street from Vine Street to Naramore Drive (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 30 April 1974).

In this decade, sidewalks once more became a focus of discussion at City Council meetings. As new streets were built, plans for sidewalks were sometimes scrapped. This was the case on Naramore Drive, Bogue Avenue, and Dewey Avenue when residents on those streets objected to having sidewalks. (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 9 August 1976 and 14 September 1976)

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Repeatedly over the course of this decade, the state of Batavia's bridges was also a focus of local officials along with that of their State and County counterparts. In October of 1972, City Council noted that the South Jackson Street overpass was badly deteriorated, but not yet seriously enough to close. In 1974, City officials decided to close the Walnut Street bridge to vehicular traffic although foot traffic was still permitted (Ruth M. McEvoy, *History of the City of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: Hodgins Printing Co., 1993] p. 13). The same year, the State announced that it would build a new River Street bridge (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 3 August 1974) and by a year later, in 1975, construction work was well underway (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 17 September 1975). The Chestnut-Law Street bridge, which had been built in 1900, was also replaced by the State in 1975 (Ruth M. McEvoy, *History of the City of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: Hodgins Printing Co., 1993] p. 13). The South Lyon Street bridge had been erected in 1903, after reportedly seeing earlier service as a Walnut Street bridge and, before that, perhaps service as a railroad bridge. When, in 1975, it was judged in danger of collapsing, workmen reinforced it. In 1980, further work was done that involved replacing the plank deck with steel mesh. (Ruth M. McEvoy, *History of the City of Batavia* [Batavia, Hodgins Printing Co., 1993] p. 13)

As the South Jackson Street bridge continued to deteriorate, debate occurred regarding whether to repair the structure or demolish the bridge and create an alternative route. In June of 1976, City Council decided to build a by-pass (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 16 June 1976). The by-pass routed drivers along Ellicott Street, over Lehigh Avenue, and to Creek Road. Less than four years later, the South Jackson Street bridge was closed (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 29 January 1980).

By the late 1970s, the City was earnestly pursuing a recycling program. Residents were directed to separate out recyclables from ordinary trash for curb pickup. According to *The Daily News* of October 27, 1979, recycling got off to a good start. Officials predicted that recycling would bring in \$52,000 annually, a sum that would be used to defray landfill and labor costs. At the time, operation of a landfill on Kelsey Road was expected to cost about \$50,000 a year. The cost was to be shared by the Town and City in a 22-1/2% to 77-1/2% ratio. (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 27 October 1979)

2: Transportation

Early in 1971, it was proposed that City bus service be completely reorganized with a dial-a-bus service to replace fixed routes (Ruth M. McEvoy, *History of the City of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: Hodgins Printing Co., 1993] p. 23). In August, according to a report in *The Daily News*, a dial-a-bus service was planned to start in late September or early October. The service was to

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be under the auspices of the Rochester-Genesee Regional Transit Authority which had recently acquired the bus company. Under this new arrangement, the company planned to operate three radio-equipped mini-buses that would function in a manner akin to a taxi service. Called the "B-Line," it was expected to serve as a model across the Nation. It was touted as an answer to urban transit problems. (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 13 August 1971) Service began in mid-September (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 15 September 1971). Operations were subsidized by public funds (Ruth M. McEvoy, *The History of the City of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: Hodgins Printing Co., 1993] p. 23).

Beginning in 1977, motorists in Batavia and throughout the State were allowed to make right-hand turns on red lights after stopping (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 15 December 1976).

3: Housing

The East Main Street site where the Richmond mansion had stood was offered for sale in 1972 (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 22 March 1972). A little over two years later, *The Daily News* reported that the property had been purchased by St. Joseph's Church (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 6 June 1974). The property became a parking lot owned by the Church, but shared with the Richmond Memorial Library. As this book is being written, all that remains of the mansion is a wrought iron fence along the sidewalk. An historic marker was placed at the edge of the parking lot in 2013 to identify the mansion's former location.

Batavia's first apartment housing for the elderly, 400 Towers, located on the south-east corner of East Main and Swan streets, was completed in 1971. It contained 150 apartments. Funding for the structure was provided by the Federal Housing Authority. (Ruth M. McEvoy, *History of the City of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: Hodgins Printing Co., 1993] pp. 130-131)

In September of 1980, City Council gave permission for the construction of a second high-rise for the elderly on the south-west corner of Washington and Jefferson avenues. In November, the Gautieri Construction Company began pouring the foundation and by the end of December the framework was in place for the 131-unit high-rise. (Ruth M. McEvoy, *History of the City of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: Hodgins Printing Co., 1993] p. 131)

During this decade, large-scale apartment house complexes continued to appear. In 1972, the Lawn Spruce Development Corporation built five buildings on the west side of North Spruce Street. Each building had 25 apartments. The development went by the name, "Woodstock Gardens." (Ruth M. McEvoy, *The History of the City of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: Hodgins Printing Co., 1993] p. 129)

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Also in 1972, Stanndco Developers, Inc. of Rochester began erecting apartment buildings on the north side of Bank Street opposite Ross Street. The company went into bankruptcy before work was completed and the buildings stood unfinished for over a year. In 1974, first the Sibley Corporation and then the Carmas Construction Company, took over the task of finishing the project. By 1975, the individual units were no longer planned to be apartments, but rather to become condominiums. When that didn't work out, in 1976 the development reverted to being an apartment house complex and remains so at the time this book is being written. (Ruth M. McEvoy, *history of the City of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: Hodgins Printing Co., 1993] p. 130)

A smaller apartment complex was erected on Mix Place in 1972. Construction was started in September of that year. It consisted of two 4-unit buildings. (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 18 September 1972)

Low-income housing continued to be built, as well. For example, in the early 1970s, such housing was built on the north side of Pearl Street. However, the largest development by far was that located south of Pearl Street and east of River Street. Originally referred to as "The Towne Houses," it later became known as "Birchwood Village." While construction started in 1970 (see the previous chapter), the 200 unit complex was not opened to tenants until March of 1973. (Ruth M. McEvoy, *History of the City of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: Hodgins Printing Co., 1993] p. 130) Under terms earlier established by City Council, the Council of Churches as the developer agreed to make either an annual payment of \$30,000 in lieu of taxes or an amount equal to 10% of the rent collected from residents. They also agreed to assume responsibility for maintenance of the streets. (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 30 June 1970)

4: Energy sources

In 1973, war in the Middle East and political retaliation against U.S. foreign policy led several oil producing nations to place an embargo on oil shipments to the United States. One of the results was a shortage of gasoline. With this shortage came restrictions on the sale of fuel. In June of 1973, *The Daily News* reported that some service station operators were closing on Sundays to save gasoline for regular customers who purchased fuel on weekdays. Some were limiting sales to \$2.00 at a time. (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 23 June 1973) Eventually, government restrictions were imposed which limited gasoline purchases to odd or even days of the week depending on one's license plate number.

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After several months, the embargo ended and oil supplies began returning to normal levels. However, there were long-term changes in policies and practices that resulted. Among them was a concerted effort to improve energy efficiency.

5: Communication

Cable television became one of the options available to television consumers in Batavia at the end of this decade. In June of 1978, City Council approved in concept the granting of a cable television contract (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 27 June 1978). A year later, in 1979, the City granted a franchise to Cablevision Industries of Liberty, New York. The company's subsidiary, Genesee County Cablevision, began operations in December of 1980. In addition to offering multiple-channel access to viewers, programming eventually also included broadcasts originating locally such as those of meetings held by the County Legislature or City Council. (Ruth M. McEvoy, *History of the City of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: Hodgins Printing Co., 1993] p. 75).

6: County and city boundaries

In the early 1970s, the King's Plaza, a 16-acre plaza on the south side of West Main Street, sought connections to the City's sanitary sewer system. At the time, the plaza was located in the Town of Batavia. When discussions with Town officials did not progress in a manner agreeable to plaza merchants, the latter sought annexation by the City. (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 22 February 1973)

As required by State law, the proposal to annex the property went before both the City Council and the Town Board. While the City Council voted to approve the annexation, the Town Board rejected the proposal. At that point, the City Council authorized court action. (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 17 July 1973)

Nearly two years later, a three-judge panel handed down its ruling on the matter. The judges ruled that it was in the "best interest of the people" that annexation occur. Thus, King's Plaza became a part of the City. (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 21 February 1975) It was the last time that the City succeeded in expanding into the Town.

7: Government, governing structure

Until relatively recently, women have played little formal role in the leadership of local government. It was not until 1971 that a woman was elected to City Council. That individual was Jean Paparella who was chosen by voters to represent the 5th ward (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 3 November 1971).

After the County began collecting a sales tax, it shared the tax with the City and the towns and villages. Periodically, adjustments were made in the formula. For example, in November of 1971, the City's share shifted from 43.74% to 42.83%, the towns' and villages' share changed from 28.05% to 29.38%, and the County's share declined from 28.21% to 27.79%. (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 26 November 1971)

In 1980, the sales tax throughout the County increased from 6% to 7% (Ruth M. McEvoy, *History of the City of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: Hodgins Printing Co., 1993] p. 6).

After Genesee Community College vacated its building on West Main Street Road, the County considered using the space to meet its expanding requirements. In 1972, the former college building became County Building No. 2. (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 16 February 1972 and 25 April 1972). At this point, the County building in the City proper was renamed, "County Building 1."

It is unfortunate that when Joseph Ellicott laid out the community of Batavia in 1801 he did not establish boundaries that were more extensive. The oversight has led to ongoing tension over the years between the City which has sought to expand and the Town which has resisted that growth. Periodically, there have been efforts to rectify the problem by merging the Town and City into a single entity. In 1966, a comprehensive master plan for the Town and City was proposed that recommended a "metro government." Then, in 1974, the planning boards of the Town and the City both recommended merger. (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y./., 29 May 1974) However, nothing resulted from these recommendations.

8: Crime, crime control, law enforcement

Historically, the County Sheriffs and their families have lived in quarters at the jail. That didn't change until 1971. In December of that year, *The Daily News* announced that the Sheriff would be moving out of his jail house apartment at 14 West Main Street in order to free up needed space. (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 10 December 1971)

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Also in 1971, Batavia police resumed downtown foot patrols (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 24 August 1971). This would prove to be an on-again, off-again proposition.

In other police department news from 1971, the department announced that a “meter maid” had been hired to patrol parking lots and spaces (Ruth M. McEvoy, *History of the City of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: Hodgins Printing Co., 1993] p. 16).

When the police department moved from School Street to 10 West Main in 1964, the new facility had four jail cells. Because of a need for additional office space, in 1971 the number of cells was reduced to two. (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., May 3 1971) Early in 1974, City Council requested permission from the State Commission on Correction to permanently close the lock-up, a request that appears to have been soon granted (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 15 February 1974).

A familiar theme was again sounded in 1973 when *The Daily News* reported that the police were plagued by vandalism in City parks (*The Daily News*, Batavia, 26 June 1973). Five years later, in 1978, the problem was noted once more (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 10 July 1978).

9: Retail establishments/other commercial enterprises

So-called “blue laws” which restricted Sunday sales in New York State were still in effect in this decade. However, some retailers began to ignore them. In February of 1973, *The Daily News* reported that the City was making an effort to keep supermarkets closed on Sundays (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 1 February 1973). A few days later, the newspaper reported that A & P was closing the coming Sunday and that others were following suit on the 20th of the month (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 6 February 1973).

Nearly three years later, in December of 1975, the blue laws were still in effect, but local enforcement had shifted. The Genesee County District Attorney said the laws would not be enforced if there were no citizen complaints and none had occurred. Consequently, some stores were opening on Sunday. (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 15 December 1975)

In 1976, George’s Dairy discontinued home deliveries of milk (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 1 September 1976).

10: Factories/industries

Monroe Davidson, a manufacturer of woolen shirts and jackets made under the name, "Melton Shirts," started operations in a building on Liberty Street in 1972. Six years later, in 1978, Davidson moved the business to the Batavia Industrial Center and added an outlet store to the operation. (Ruth M. McEvoy, *History of the City of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: Hodgins Printing Co., 1993] p. 189)

In 1972, the P. W. Minor Company moved its shoe-making business on Jefferson Avenue to the Industrial Park off Pearl Street (Ruth M. McEvoy, *History of the City of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: Hodgins Printing Co., 1993] p. 178). Four years later, in 1976, the Rowell Box Company moved from its building at the intersection of Ellicott and West Main streets to the Industrial Park off Pearl Street. (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 8 December 1976) In both instances, the original factory buildings were razed during Urban Renewal (Ruth M. McEvoy, *History of the City of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: Hodgins Printing Co., 1993] pp. 178-179).

Only 23 years after coming to Batavia, in 1975, Sylvania announced that it was closing the local plant. A few office workers remained until the end of 1976. After that, the factory stood empty and, at first, no company showed any interest in the facility. (Ruth M. McEvoy, *History of the City of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: Hodgins Printing Co., 1993] p. 192) The future looked bleak in a period of energy shortages, high inflation, and other woes.

In 1975, the Town and City began working together to create a single industrial park development off Pearl Street and Pearl Street Road. The City's section was already well along when the Town began developing its part of the complex. (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 28 July 1975)

11: Banking/financial services

This decade witnessed considerable activity in the banking sector. The Home Federal Savings and Loan opened in April of 1974 with a building at the corner of East Main and Summit streets. Then the Bank of LeRoy opened a facility in February of 1975 at 408 East Main Street. That was followed, in April of 1977, by Lockport Savings Bank which opened a bank at the south-west corner of West Main and River streets. (Ruth M. McEvoy, *History of the City of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: Hodgins Printing Co., 1993] pp. 65-660)

A second credit union in the Batavia area was formed in 1976 when the Batavia Federal Credit Union was organized (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 13 May 1987).

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Credit cards had been around for quite some time. However, credit cards as we know them, i.e., buy anything, anywhere, anytime and without having to pay off the full balance at the end of the monthly credit cycle, did not appear to have become widely available before the 1970s. ("History of Credit cards," *Bankrate.com*, online, accessed 20 November 2014) In 1976, the M & T bank here in Batavia began offering VISA credit cards (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y. 9 November 1976).

12: Education

In 1972, Genesee Community College moved to a brand new campus on College Road north-east of the City. It consisted of five buildings, arranged along a north-south axis, and interconnected so students and staff did not need to go outside to move from one building to another.

When the State School for the Blind was opened in the 1800s, it was designed, as the name implied, to serve just the blind. That continued to be its focus until the 1970s. Then, in this decade, the School began primarily serving individuals who were multi-handicapped. (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 29 November 1974)

In 1976, a new BOCES facility opened on State Street opposite the High School. The public was invited to an open house in September of that year. (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 28 September 1976)

The Brooklyn Avenue School was closed in 1979 and arrangements were made for the students to attend other schools in the City (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 27 June 1979). The building was offered for sale early the next year (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 1 February, 1980).

13: Religion

The New Hope Fellowship began meeting in 1974 or 1975 in the Seventh Day Adventist Church on Richmond Avenue. At first, the congregation called itself "The Christian Faith Center," but by the end of 1977, it became "The Evangelical Christian Community." Soon after, the congregation built a parsonage and then a church on Bank Street Road. (Ruth M. McEvoy, *History of the City of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: Hodgins Printing Co., 1993] p. 126)

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14: Libraries/archives/museums

In 1977, a second wing was added to the east end of the Holland Land Office Museum (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 5 November 1977). It housed the Genesee County Department of History.

After abandoning an earlier proposal to build a new library on the former site of the Richmond mansion, the Richmond Memorial Library Board chose to build an addition onto the original building. The addition, 1,800 sq. ft. in size, was funded in part by Federal building funds. (Ruth M. McEvoy, *History of the City of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: Hodgins Printing Co., 1993] pp. 98-99). The new facility opened to the public in February of 1979 (*The Daily News*, 10 February 1979)

15: Cemeteries

Potter's Field is the term given to the section of a cemetery set aside for burial of the indigent. In this decade, the nature of the Potter's Field in the Batavia Cemetery came to public attention after a relative of someone buried there complained about the Cemetery's policies. It was revealed that, due to limited space, bodies buried in the Potter's Field of the Batavia Cemetery were placed up to three deep. It was also against the Cemetery's policy to permit markers at individual grave sites in the Potter's field section, in part because the land there was not owned by the deceased. In privately funded burials, the land was purchased and a deed granted, but in the Potter's Field section, the land was not sold and it remained the property of the Cemetery Association. (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 26 July 1975)

16: Firefighting

During most of the 1970s, the fire department was housed at 3 West Main Street and at a smaller station on Ellicott Street. Beginning in 1974, City Council began to discuss building a new fire headquarters. It chose a site on Evans Street and in 1977 awarded a contract for the construction of a building to house the fire department and an ice skating arena. By January of 1978, the fire department was in its new quarters. (Ruth M. McEvoy, *History of the City of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: Hodgins Printing Co., 1993] pp. 18-19) An open house was held in May of 1978 (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 10 May 1978).

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17: Healthcare

Until the 1970s, the Genesee County Nursing Home was located in Bethany at the original site of the County's poor house and farm. In 1974, residents were moved to a new building on Chandler Avenue in Batavia. A domiciliary for individuals not needing direct supervision or nursing care was added in 1977. (Ruth M. McEvoy, *History of the City of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: Hodgins Printing Co., 1993] pp. 83-84)

In 1978, a Planned Parenthood office was opened on East Main Street. It was an extension of the Planned Parenthood facility in Rochester. (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 10 August 1978)

Regional Action Phone (RAP) also began in the 1970s. It was partially funded by the United Fund (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 14 June 1972). The service was created to offer help to people experiencing psychological distress.

18: Care of the handicapped, aged, poor, and young

In 1973, a sheltered workshop was established by the Association for Retarded Children (ARC). Located in County Building No. 2 on West Main Street Road, it was designed to prepare mentally-challenged adults for gainful employment in the community. Thirty clients were enrolled in a 33-week program. The Association had subcontracts with area industry for work that was performed by the clients in the workshop. (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 29 January 1973) Later in the year, the workshop was renamed, "Achievement Center" (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 9 October 1973). In 1976, ARC moved the Achievement Center to 64 Walnut Street in Batavia (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 28 February 1976).

In 1977, the Youth Center, most recently housed in the rear of the fire headquarters at 3 West Main Street, was relocated to the second floor of a new building located on Bank Street just north of the former Bank of Genesee. The building was constructed with Federal community development funds. The Youth Center shared the building with a Senior Center and the Office for the Aging located on the first floor. (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 2 May 1977) Before moving to the Bank Street address, the Office for the Aging had been in County Building 2 on West Main Street Road (*The Daily News*, 19 August 1974). An open house for the two facilities took place in August of 1977 (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 2 August 1977).

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19: Disasters

The “Blizzard of 1977” is arguably the worst storm to hit Batavia in modern times. It began on January 28, 1977 and the main blast lasted for more than a day as powerful winds swept the length of a frozen Lake Erie, picked up snow from the Lake’s surface, and carried it inland for close to 40 miles. The blizzard completely paralyzed the area and marooned thousands. The wind chill dropped to as low as minus 68 and drifts piled as high as two-story houses. Roads could not be reopened for many days in some instances. One of the common recollections of individuals who lived through the experience was the suddenness with which the storm struck. One minute, the day was calm and visibility fine. Literally the next minute, the winds were roaring and visibility dropped to nearly zero. (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 28 January 1997) The author recalls finishing lunch at home, looking out the window as he prepared to drive downtown, and everything looked normal. A minute later, he looked out the window again and he couldn’t see the neighbor’s house only 30 feet away.

20: Entertainment and recreation

The Genesee Chorale was organized in 1971 (Ruth M. McEvoy, *History of the City of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: Hodgins Printing Co., 1993] pp. 151-152).

The park located on the former site of the sewage treatment plant on Hillcrest Street northwest of the State School received a name in 1971. It became Lambert Park in honor of Henry Lambert who had been in charge of the sewage facility for many years. During his tenure, he had set out bird houses at the site and was known for his love of nature. (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 24 December 1971)

In 1974, Off Track Betting opened in Batavia. James Lullo was appointed as manager of the local operation. (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 23 August 1974) The facility began in the basement of the Grant store on Main Street (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 8 May 1974). In 1976, it was relocated to a site at Center and Main streets (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 13 February 1976).

The next year, 1975, a hockey league was started by the Jaycees. For the first three years, teams skated at the Fairgrounds (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 17 January 1975). Perhaps this development was partly in anticipation of the indoor skating rink on Evans Street that was approved by City Council in 1976 (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 11 May 1976) and opened in November of 1978 (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 13 November 1978).

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In February of 1976, *The Daily News* reported that the Sacred Heart Social Center would hold its grand opening on March 1st (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 24 February 1976).

21: War, impact of war

Direct U.S. military involvement in Vietnam ended in 1973. The last American personnel were evacuated from Saigon in 1975 as North Vietnamese forces attacked the City. The latter's subsequent capture of Saigon effectively marked the end of the War. In the following year, 1976, North and South Vietnam were united under a single, Communist, government. (Vietnam War, *Wikipedia*, online, accessed 20 November 2014) In the course of nearly 20 years of war, 18 Genesee County residents lost their lives (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 24 January 1973). It would be well over a decade before Batavians were again involved in a military conflict.

In 1975, Batavians no longer faced involuntary military service. The military became an all-volunteer force. (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 13 June 1975)

22: Families/persons of note

In the last chapter, it was noted that Genesee Community College, while not physically located in the City, deserves to be included in this book in part because of the impact its faculty has had on the community. An example of that impact can be seen in the example of Dr. Theodore Ashizawa who came to be in the area solely because of employment offered by the College.

Ashizawa moved to the Batavia area in 1971 when he was hired as an instructor in music at Genesee Community College. Over the course of his subsequent career, he organized and directed several choral groups, most notably the Genesee Chorale which he founded soon after his arrival.

Aside from his musical talents, Ashizawa is also of interest because of his personal history. Of Japanese ancestry, he was born in 1934 in the United States and lived with his parents in California at the time World War II broke out. Ashizawa's family was among those Americans of Japanese descent who were forced into internment camps by the U.S. government. They were interned first in Northern California and then in Idaho until the end of hostilities.

Following their release from the internment camps, Ashizawa's family moved to Nevada for several years before returning to California. After high school, Ted Ashizawa earned a

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bachelor's and a master's degree from San Jose State College, a Ph. D. from the University of Washington, and a certificate in choral conducting from Julliard. While pursuing his education he was drafted into the U.S. Army in 1956 and served two years before receiving an honorable discharge. The irony of being interned as a possible threat to national security and also drafted into the army to insure the nation's security should not be lost on the reader.

In addition to his lengthy tenure at Genesee Community College, the institution from which he retired, Ted Ashizawa also taught high school students for two years in the 1960s.

23: Private clubs/social organizations/service organizations/non-profit groups providing services

In 1972, the Batavia Chamber of Commerce became the Genesee County Chamber of Commerce (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 15 November 1972).

In 1973, the Batavia Moose Club was fined under a ruling of the State Human Rights Appeal Board when the Club refused bar service to seven black citizens who were attending a private party. Five women and two men were each awarded \$250 by the Board. The event in question was a fashion show run by promoters who had rented the Club's facilities. (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 20 February 1973)

In 1973, the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) was started under the auspices of the Office for the Aging (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 18 May 1973). The program linked retired persons seeking opportunities to volunteer with organizations, government offices, or other local entities needing volunteers to provide various services.

Also in 1973, the Christian Business and Professional Women began meeting. The group was made up of individuals who were concerned with the role of Christian ethics in business. (Ruth M. McEvoy, *History of the City of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: Hodgins Printing Co., 1993] p. 145)

A new building on East Main Street was dedicated by the YMCA on May 15, 1977 (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 13 May 1977).

The Herb Society was organized in 1980. The group planted and maintained a herb garden in front of the Richmond Memorial Library. Each Christmas, it also decorated a Christmas tree in the Library. (Ruth M. McEvoy, *History of the City of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: Hodgins Printing Co., 1993] p. 149)

24: Sex/sexual services/sexual entertainment

Exotic entertainment featuring topless female dancers appeared at some area establishments during this decade. For example, one such place was a tavern on West Main Street Road about a mile outside the City. However, City officials actively sought to prevent such establishments within City boundaries and no such businesses appeared within Batavia with one brief exception that will be cited in a later chapter.

25: Urban renewal

The second phase of Urban Renewal got underway in the very early 1970s. It included mainly the area north of Main Street from Bank Street west to Jefferson Avenue and north to Washington Avenue. Also included were the structures on the east side of Bank Street between the former Bank of Genesee and St. Jerome Hospital. Well-known establishments that disappeared included the New Hamilton Hotel, the Batavia Dipson Theater, Capuano's Post House, and the Dagwood Restaurant. After razing all the structures in this area, a decision was made to build a downtown mall. That decision occurred after rejecting the original plan to erect several free-standing buildings. The mall, although not yet fully complete, officially opened in 1976 as the Genesee Country Mall. (Larry Barnes, *Batavia Revisited* [Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2011] pp. 57 and 83)

In the latter part of the decade, a decision was made to expand Urban Renewal to much of the area along the north bank of the Tonawanda Creek between Oak and Ellicott Street and then along the south side of Ellicott Street nearly to Evans Street. After razing the structures involved, most of the area between the Holland Land Office Museum and 3 West Main Street became a green area. Some of the establishments or firms that disappeared included the E. N. Rowell Co., Granny's Attic, and Sloat's Tires (Larry Barnes, *Batavia Revisited* [Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2011] p. 84) The Rowell Company and Sloat's relocated.

By the time Urban Renewal ended, it had seen four different Directors. (Larry Barnes, *Batavia Revisited* [Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2011] pp. 83) In the years since completion of the program, residents of Batavia seem to generally feel that it was a mistake and an alternative manner of dealing with the decay of some downtown buildings should have been taken. The downtown areas of LeRoy, Brockport, Albion, and Medina are often cited as examples of what Batavia lost.