

### **3.0 HISTORIC OVERVIEW**

This section provides a brief history of Chautauqua County and the Towns of Westfield, Ripley, and Chautauqua, which are located in the southwestern part of the county. Ripley and Westfield border Lake Erie and Chautauqua borders the southern portion of both towns. Following an overview of the early development of the region, the history of Westfield is summarized first, then that of Ripley. This section concludes with a short history of the Town of Chautauqua.

#### **3.1 Early History of the Region**

Some of the earliest European activity in Chautauqua County was the creation of a portage road between Lake Erie and the head of Chautauqua Lake. The French opened this road in 1753 from the mouth of Chautauqua Creek on Lake Erie, which is now in Westfield. The road became an important means of transporting goods between the lakes and the Ohio River. The English and French disputed the boundaries of their American possessions in this region, leading to the French and Indian War in America and the Seven Years War in Europe (Lindquist n.d.). In the early years of the nineteenth century, the first settlers used the French Portage Road as a connection between Westfield and Mayville (Young 1875: 116-117).

European-American settlement of the Niagara Frontier began at the end of the American Revolution in 1783, though the legal sale of these lands was impeded by the fact that both New York and Massachusetts claimed the new territory. New York State won the dispute in 1786 under an agreement signed in Hartford, Connecticut, which gave New York all of the land once occupied by the Iroquois. However, Massachusetts retained the right to sell the territory west of Seneca Lake and, during the next decade, sold large tracts in Western New York to private investors to open it for settlement. The initial purchasers of the western lands, a syndicate of land speculators under the leadership of Oliver Phelps and Nathaniel Gorham, did not follow through, so Massachusetts next sold the land rights to Robert Morris in 1791. Morris sold the majority of this land to a consortium of Dutch investors, called the Holland Land Company, in 1792-93. The sale included all of the present Chautauqua County. (Turner 1974 [1850]:396-403; Ellis et al. 1967:154-156).

To prepare for settlement of the area, the Holland Land Company's agent, Theophilus Cazenove, contracted Joseph Ellicott in 1797 to survey the land in western New York into townships. On April 15, 1805, the Town of Chautauqua, Genesee County, was created; it included most of the present Chautauqua County. Chautauqua County was delineated out of Genesee County in 1808, with the entire present county included and divided into two townships: Pomfret in the east and Chautauqua in the West. (Beers 1881:18-19; Young 1875:466). However, the act of 1808 provided that Chautauqua County should act with Cattaraugus until each had 500 taxable inhabitants. Chautauqua County became fully organized as a separate municipal entity in February 1811 (Young 1875:112-113).

Settlement of Chautauqua began years before the county was organized. Though there is some controversy surrounding the first settlers, it is generally agreed that the first significant settlement began at the "Cross Roads," now Westfield Village, by settlers from Pennsylvania in 1802. The first land purchases from the Holland Land Company in the Chautauqua area, transacted in 1801, were tracts located in the present towns of Westfield and Ripley, though neither township was yet organized at the time. (Young, 1875: 72-73)

The War of 1812 interrupted the growth of Chautauqua County because of military action between the British and Americans throughout western New York. Though most of the battles were north of Chautauqua County, a British vessel, the *Queen Charlotte*, patrolled the shores of Lake Erie and sent marauding parties ashore. After the war, settlement recommenced (Cinuqino, et al, 2001: 12).

### **3.2 Historic Trends and Themes- Town of Westfield**

The Town of Westfield is located in Chautauqua County north of Lake Chautauqua. It is distinguished as the location of the earliest settlement of the county, the creation of French Portage Road, an important early lighthouse on the Great Lakes, and the rise of the Welch's Company.

The Village of Westfield was early known as the "Cross Roads" because the Buffalo and Erie Road crossed the Portage Road (NY 394) there. It is the location where the first land in the county was cleared by James McMahan in 1802. The previous year, John and James McMahan of Pennsylvania had purchased about 26,000 acres from the Holland Land Company. This purchase was located in the area that would become the towns of Westfield and Ripley. Subsequent early settlers purchased land from the McMahans, and settlement progressed rapidly with most of the inhabitants living on the road to Erie, now US Route 20 (Young, 1875: 73).

The first industry in the Westfield area was related to the byproducts of clearing timber from the land; pot and pearl ashes and black salts were produced from burned trees. At that time, these products were highly marketable. Potash was used for manufacturing glass and soap, for bleaching cloth, and in medicine. Ashes from different trees varied in value, with elm being the best. Early nineteenth century manufacturers in Westfield had the advantage of efficient transport to distant markets, which included for example Montreal and Pittsburgh (Lindquist n.d.).

By 1804 mills operated along Chautauqua Creek, with a gristmill and sawmill located near the mouth of the creek (Lindquist n.d.) A gristmill built by Thomas Campbell around 1818 was said to have milled the first flour from the county for shipment to New York on the Erie Canal (Young 1875: 589). During the first three-quarters of the nineteenth century, the gristmills and sawmills were gradually accompanied by paper mills, oil-mills, a woolen factory, a cloth dressing establishment, tannery, foundry and machine shop, agricultural implements company, wood work manufacturer, and steam heating company (Young 1875:590-591).

The Town of Westfield formed from Portland and Ripley in 1829. It is about 30,000 acres or nearly 47 square miles. Chautauqua Creek flows north through the town to the lake and the Village of Westfield is located on this creek, nearly equidistant from the eastern and western township lines. The Village of Westfield was incorporated in 1833 (Young, 1875: 584).

Other development in Westfield during its formative period with a distinct identity included an area called Volusia, which referred to a section located roughly in the center of the township, about as wide as the township and three-and-one-half miles north to south. The 1854 Gifford and Giles map depicted this early crossroads community, and the emergence of the surrounding farmsteads is documented on the 1867 and 1881 atlas maps. Harmon Culver purchased the first tract of land in this area in 1817 and settlement continued during the 1820s.

By 1830 Hiram and Henry Haight opened a post office at Haight's Corners, in their home. The Hights came to the area in 1822 and the hamlet was named for Hiram Haight's daughter Volusia. Later the post office was moved to Howard's Corners (corner of Ogden and Pigeon), named for the Howard Brothers who settled in 1828. When a church was built there in 1851 it was called Volusia Methodist Episcopal Church (Westfield Republican, April 12, 1912: 2, Patterson Library Vertical File). The other church in the Volusia area was the First Universalist Church at Haight's Corners (corner of Parker and Pigeon) constructed in 1842 (Young, 1875: 618).

The Volusia post office was abandoned when rural free delivery was established at the turn of the twentieth century. Today the identity primarily endures as the name of the cemetery established in 1858 on land that belonged to Abel Holcomb, located on the northwest corner of Douglas and Pigeon Roads (Volusia Vertical File, Patterson Library).

The other area of dense nineteenth century settlement outside of the Village of Westfield was the hamlet of Barcelona, on the lakeshore near where Chautauqua Creek empties into the Lake Erie. First known as Portland, this unincorporated settlement served as the town's harbor. In 1828, the United States Congress empowered the Secretary of the Treasury to erect a lighthouse at Portland Harbor and establish it as a U.S. government port of entry. It was the first lighthouse constructed on the Great Lakes. Natural gas, discovered three-quarters of a mile away, fueled the lighthouse making it the first public structure in the United States to utilize natural gas for illumination. The name of the lighthouse changed to Barcelona when the Town of Westfield was incorporated, and by that time, it was already a substantial settlement. While the lake trade flourished, Barcelona was an active business center. It was the location of a lake-going steamship line established in 1831 between Buffalo and Barcelona (Young 1875:37-38). By the mid-nineteenth century, Barcelona had about 30 houses, a hotel, a school, a brickyard, and a plaster mill (1867 *New Topographical Atlas of Chautauqua County*).

The arrival of the Lake Shore Railroad in 1852 decreased lake trade, slowing the growth of Barcelona. However, the new means of conveyance resulted in cheaper transportation options and proved advantageous to Chautauqua's agricultural production. Previously, limited transportation options had prompted farms to grow for local consumption or focus on steers, which could be driven to market in Philadelphia. Both Chautauqua steers and butter were well known for their quality and commanded a higher price at market than others. Area settlers had produced potash, pearl ash, and black salt, as well as lumber for export, because they could be shipped to distant markets via the river system and Great Lakes. With the arrival of the railroad, farmers could ship perishable crops and so expanded their crop production. This led to a transition in farming from steers to fruit. Because of the expanded market options, the 1850s were especially prosperous for Westfield, as well as Chautauqua County. Land rents corresponded to a rise in farm production (Longiaru et al. 2000:37).

The most important crop for the Lake Plains area of Chautauqua County, which includes the northern sections of both Westfield and Ripley, was the Concord grape. Wild grapes were first introduced to Chautauqua County near Brocton in 1818. During the mid-nineteenth century wine grapes were grown in this region, known as the Chautauqua Belt, an area extending three to sixteen miles inland from Lake Erie, from Erie County south to the Pennsylvania Border (Adams, 1973: 114). Along this narrow band, cold arctic air masses that have been warmed by the Great Lakes are trapped against the foothills of the Allegheny Plateau to the south, protecting the vines from extreme temperatures ([www.uncorknewyork.com/](http://www.uncorknewyork.com/)

winecountry/lakeerie). The northern latitude of the area results in long hours of summer light. In addition, the land has well-drained gravel and shale soils ideal for grapes ([www.johnsonwinery.com/estate.asp](http://www.johnsonwinery.com/estate.asp)).

In 1849, Ephraim Wales Bull developed the Concord grape in Concord, Massachusetts. This sweet and palatable grape resulted from thousands of crossbreeding experiments ([www.welchs.com/company/company\\_history](http://www.welchs.com/company/company_history)). ConCORDs were introduced to Chautauqua County in 1859 and a table grape industry developed. The nascent industry benefited from the “dry crusade,” which was strongest in Jamestown and Fredonia, where, in 1873 the first unit of the Women’s Christian Temperance Union formed. This group encouraged local farmers to plant ConCORDs instead of wine grapes. During the 1880s, table grapes sold so well in eastern cities that they were over-planted in Chautauqua, and the excessive supply produced a crash in the Concord grape market (Adams, 1973:115).

Fortunately for Chautauquans, in 1897, a New Jersey dentist named Dr. Charles Welch was attracted by the abundance of cheap Concord grapes and built the world’s first large grape juice plant in Westfield. His father, Dr. Thomas Bramwell Welch, had successfully pasteurized Concord grape juice in 1869 to produce an “unfermented sacramental wine” for churches to use in communion services. This grape juice was introduced to a national audience at the Chicago World’s Fair in 1893, producing widespread demand ([www.welchs.com/company/company\\_history](http://www.welchs.com/company/company_history)). By the second decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there was an entire Welch Block in Westfield Village and Dr. Welch was its most prominent citizen. Other grape juice plants and canning factories joined Welch’s, and Westfield became known as “The Grape Juice Capital of the World” (Adams, 1973:116). This prosperity is reflected in the density of residences constructed in the village during the early twentieth century.

Welch’s grape juice continued to prosper, while the prohibition era nearly eliminated wine grape horticulture in Chautauqua County. However, in the 1930s, wineries returned to the area on a small scale. In 1945, the proprietor of one of these wineries, Jacob Kaplan, purchased control of the Welch Grape Juice Company from the syndicate that had acquired it after Dr. Charles Welch’s death in 1926. In 1950, Kaplan began producing wine under the Welch Company label. It was sweet kosher wine made from Concord grapes with extra sweetening added, a very popular wine at that time. However, “Welch’s Refreshment Wine” failed to be competitive with the major kosher wine producers Manischewitz and Mogen David, and it was discontinued by 1959 (Adams, 1973: 117). The Welch Company became part of the National Grape Growing Association in 1952, headquartered in Connecticut. It continues to have extensive production facilities in Westfield ([www.welchs.com/company/company\\_history](http://www.welchs.com/company/company_history)).

Westfield and the Chautauqua-Erie Grape belt expanded as a wine-producing region during the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In 1960, Fred Johnson endeavored to grow wine grapes on the Concord vineyard land in Westfield he had inherited from his father. His Frederick S. Johnson Vineyards Winery was the first to make estate-bottled wines in the Chautauqua District. The 200-acre vineyard located along US Route 20 also produces grapes that are sold fresh (Adams, 1973: 117).

The Mogen David Corporation of Chicago established another early winery in Westfield in 1967. Previously, the company purchased wine grapes from the Chautauqua District. Mogen David is one of the largest producers of kosher Concord wine and primarily grows Concord grapes, but it

also planted experimental plots of *Vinifera* varieties on its 500 acres in Westfield. The winery is located on Bourne Street. (Adams, 1973:118-119).

A third winery in Westfield is Vetter Vineyards Winery, on Prospect Station Road. Today, Chautauqua is the largest grape-growing county outside of California. It has about 20,000 acres of vineyards with a grape production of 121,697 tons. This resurgence of wineries in the late twentieth-century has produced wine trail tourism, as visitors travel through Chautauqua visiting the wineries and tasting wines. ([www.uncorknewyork.com/winecountry/lakeerie](http://www.uncorknewyork.com/winecountry/lakeerie)). The Village of Westfield remains the center of the grape processing industry in the Westfield area, with a large Welch's facility located on the north edge of the village adjacent to the railroad tracks.

According to historic maps, the village developed first along the primary travel routes of Portage and Main Streets, with commercial buildings concentrated on Main Street east of Chautauqua Creek. The area west of the creek was more sparsely populated than the core of the village on the east side. The highest concentration of houses through the 1860s was between Main Street and the railroad tracks to the north. Union Street was also developed down to Third Street by this decade. Other streets southeast of Main Street were not completely developed until the early twentieth century (1867 *New Topographical Atlas of Chautauqua County*).

The center of the village is the intersection of Portage and Main Streets, and features a village common, Moore Park, where the McClurg Mansion is located. James McClurg, a Scots-Irish merchant, built the mansion in 1818. William H. Seward occupied it from 1836 through 1838 when he was the agent of the Holland Land Company. The First Presbyterian Church is also located on the village common. It was constructed from 1878 to 1879, and is in the High Victorian Gothic Style. This Presbyterian congregation was the first in the county. Its church was built to replace an earlier one, dedicated in 1874, which was destroyed by fire. St. Peter's Episcopal Church located nearby was built in 1833 in the Early Gothic Revival style (Dibble, 1994: 4). The Methodist Episcopal Church on Main Street was consecrated in 1872 (Young, 1875: 618).

In the village are two cemeteries associated with St. James Catholic Church congregation, whose current church building was built in 1915 on Union Street. The Old St. James Cemetery, est. 1886, is located at the south end of Union Street and is no longer in use. The current St. James Cemetery, est. 1940, is located on East Main Street. The Westfield Grove Cemetery est. 1814 is on Main Street within the village. The Westfield-Portland Cemetery, also called the Union Cemetery, est. 1830, is on Main Street east of the village. Both are still in use (Barden, Barris and Barris, 1992:np).

### **3.3 Historic Trends and Themes - Town of Ripley**

The Town of Ripley is located in the southwest corner of the county and is the last township before the Pennsylvania border along Lake Erie. Created from Portland in 1817, Ripley contains about 31,100 acres. In 1801, prior to its division into lots, James McMahan contracted for a tract of 4,074 acres in the area that would become Ripley. His tract was located in the eastern section of the present township from its east line to within a half of a mile of the village. Most of the earliest settlers in Ripley purchased their land directly from James McMahan, making records of these purchases unavailable. The first purchase recorded by the Holland Land Company was Alexander Cochran, a native of Ireland, who arrived in 1804. The upland area of the town was settled later than the land along the lake (Young, 1875: 512-515).

The settlement in the Town of Ripley centered in the community of Quincy (now Ripley), located at the intersection of the main road, now US Route 20, and State Street, Route 64, roughly equidistant from the east and west boundaries of the township. Other hamlets developed at the Pennsylvania line, called State Line Station, and near the intersection of the main road with Barden and Cemetery Roads, called East Ripley.

Early settlers first cleared the land for farming and, like other settlers in the county, produced black salts as a byproduct of timber burning and sold them for greatly needed cash. Inns and taverns were established, first at the state line around 1807, then one in the village of Quincy and at the East Ripley settlement. Postal service began in 1815, with an office in the house of Robert Dickson in East Ripley near Barden Road. The first sawmill was built in 1817 on the east branch of Twenty Mile Creek south of Quincy near where the creek crosses State Street/Route 64. Gristmills and later the construction of steam saw-mills followed (Ripley Sesquicentennial, 1966: 6).

The opening of the Erie Canal in 1825 produced both an outlet for western New York products and a wave of westward migration, both of which impacted the development of Ripley. The tide of immigrants traveling west from Buffalo produced a constant stream of covered wagons passing through the village of Quincy along the Main Road. Livestock was driven the opposite direction through this region to eastern markets. The demand for grain to feed the livestock, blacksmiths, and overnight shelter impacted local businesses and soon there was a string of inns and taverns between the state line and Westfield (Ripley Sesquicentennial, 1966: 8).

By the 1830s, the land along the Main Road and along the Lake Road (Route 5) was substantially cleared of timber except for the borders of farms. The first brick house in the town Charles Forsyth built in 1834 to replace his log cabin from 1808 located just west of the township line along the main road. By that time there were brickyards in both Westfield and Ripley. In 1837 a panic slowed settlement of the area and it did not pick up again until the railroad arrived in the 1850s (Ripley Sesquicentennial, 1966: 10).

The Buffalo and State Line Railroad arrived in Quincy village in 1852 bringing an influx of people to the town. For a short time, the rails ended in Quincy until the connection was completed to the New York-Pennsylvania Line. Trains stopped and turned around at Quincy and passengers were taken to their next railroad connection via stagecoach. This situation provided an opportunity for Ripley entrepreneurs while it lasted. (Ripley Sesquicentennial, 1966:12)

Historic maps show the growth of Ripley and Quincy village during the railroad era. The rails ran roughly parallel to Route 20/Main Street one block south of the village. A hotel and depot were located at the railroad crossing on State Street. On the 1867 Atlas, about 75 houses are located in the village, along with two churches, Methodist built in 1842 and Presbyterian built in 1853, a school, and businesses including a tannery, foundry, shoe shop, 2 harness shops, and three stores. Quincy village was renamed Ripley in 1873. The first Methodist Church was replaced with a new brick church in the same year. By 1881, more buildings appear south of the railroad tracks to Side Hill Road. (The 1867 *New Topographical Atlas of Chautauqua County* and 1881 *Beers Illustrated Historical Atlas of Chautauqua County*). The Baptist Church in the village was built in 1893 (Ripley Sesquicentennial, 1966: 35).

A Methodist church built in 1880 was located at State Line Station, and the South Ripley Methodist Church was built in 1885 on Sinden Road to serve the rural area south of the

escarpment. Three cemeteries are located in Ripley. The Quincy Rural Cemetery est. 1854 on Shaver Street, the East Ripley Cemetery est. 1812 on US Route 20 at Cemetery Road, and the South Ripley Cemetery est. 1840 on Sinden Road. (Barden, Barris and Barris, 1992: np)

As in Westfield, Ripley has prime grape-growing land along the lake. In 1869, H.A. Burton planted the first grapes in quantity in Ripley. Concord grapes were planted soon thereafter by Jedediah Johnson, and by 1907, Ripley had 5,700 acres of grapes. Today there are two wineries active in Ripley, Schloss Doepken on Old Route 20 established in the 1980s, and Blueberry Sky Farm Winery on Northeast Sherman Road south of Ripley village. Blueberry Sky, however, makes their wines entirely from fruit other than grapes, which are grown on the Heinert family's 70-acre farm. They grow four acres of blueberries in addition to raspberries, strawberries, plums, peaches, apples and blackberries ([www.blueberryskyfarm.com](http://www.blueberryskyfarm.com)). This business is testament to the fruit-producing heritage of the area, as the climate and soil conditions are ideal for grapes and are also beneficial for growing other types of fruit. Though other fruit growing has been eclipsed by grape production, the Ripley area was formerly home to such businesses as the Lansmith Cherry & Fruit Company, which used local cherries in the production of maraschino cherries (Ripley Vertical file, Patterson Library).

Ripley was also the home or birthplace of a number of figures of national stature, one of whom left his mark on the village in the form of a fine residence. Charles Mann Hamilton was an Assemblyman, State Senator and Congressman. He was born in Ripley in 1874 and made his fortune in oil. He and his wife Bertha built a mansion in the village of Ripley on West Main Street in 1924 that had a gold painted great hall and a hanging black Italian marble staircase. When the Hamiltons died in the 1940s, the mansion was willed to be "A Home for Friendless Animals." It was later used as a library and a bed and breakfast and still stands in the village (Ripley Sesquicentennial, 1966: 57).

Other prominent citizens who are connected to Ripley include General John Bidwell, founder of Chico, California, Political Economics Professor Dr. Richard Ely, and Benjamin Franklin Goodrich, founder of the BF Goodrich Company and the first rubber factory in the US in Akron, Ohio in 1870 (Ripley Sesquicentennial, 1966: 54). A centennial memorial to Goodrich was dedicated in Ripley in 1941 (Patterson Vertical File, Ripley).

In the late 1920s through the 1930s, Ripley gained distinction as the place where couples from nearby states went to get married quickly. Pennsylvania and Ohio had enacted marriage laws requiring couples to wait three days before a license could be issued. New York required no such waiting period. Ripley, as the first municipality across the state line along a major travel corridor, hosted many quick marriage ceremonies, keeping the village's justices of the peace and visitor accommodations busy. This short-lived boom ended in 1937 when the marriage laws were changed. (Ripley Sesquicentennial, 1966: 24-25)

The landscape of Ripley was altered by a number of events in the mid-twentieth century. The Thruway running parallel to Route 20 north of the village officially opened in August 1957, and a number of businesses located along the Shortman Road interchange west of the village. Farms began to decrease in number and increase in size, leading to the abandonment of older farmhouses as the surrounding land was consolidated into larger farms. In 1958, the New York State Highway Department removed numerous trees that lined the village streets over the protests of locals. Then, on New Year's Day, 1965, a fire destroyed three large buildings on the

north side of West Main Street, the Randall Block, Mason Block and Mackey building. (Ripley Sesquicentennial, 1966: 27-28)

### **3.4 Historic Trends and Themes - Town of Chautauqua**

Dr. Alexander McIntyre's purchase of a Holland Land Company tract at the head of the Chautauqua Lake is the first recorded land transaction in the Town of Chautauqua (Young 1875:264). Early nineteenth century settlement around the tip of the lake developed into the prominent village of Mayville, which had been designated the county seat in 1810. The Village of Mayville is noted for: its role as the county seat, its association with the Holland Land Company, the development of the Chautauqua Institute and seasonal recreation; and its contribution to Western New York agriculture and livestock production (Longiaru et. al 2000:52). Because of its complex topography and location south of the Lake Plain, Chautauqua does not share the rich grape growing history of the neighboring towns of Ripley and Westfield.

The town's development was initially linked to the Holland Land Company, which moved the Holland Land Company office to Mayville in 1810 under the supervision of surveyor William Peacock. Peacock was a Pennsylvania native who had worked for Joseph Ellicott and the Holland Land Company at the company's Batavia Office for ten years before arriving in Mayville. By 1835, however, Jacob Otto had replaced Joseph Ellicott as the Batavia agent, and the Land Company raised the price of all overdue land payments in order to meet its own financial demands. In addition, the company threatened to sell land if claims were not paid. The new policies resulted in a village-wide panic, and on February 6, 1836 a group of 250-500 settlers congregated at Barhart's Inn in Hartfield to discuss the situation. Nathan Cheney, one of the settlers, incited the crowd to riot, leading an attack on the Land Company's Mayville office and agent's house. The rioters destroyed Peacock's house, burned paperwork and broke the door of the stone vault located outside of the courthouse. The assault was foiled, however, as word of the attack leaked and most of the important company papers had been removed. After the February attack, the Holland Land Company's office relocated to Westfield, while Peacock moved into new brick mansion next to the courthouse, and eventually served as the country treasurer (Longiaru et. al 2000:54; Young 1875:277-278).

In 1811 a courthouse and jail were constructed in Mayville at the intersection of Chautauqua and Erie (French Portage Rd/NY 394) Streets, the principal crossroads of the village. The first courthouse was a frame building constructed in the northeast corner of the town square. It was replaced in 1834 by a brick building and, in 1907, the present courthouse was erected. The jail stood on the southeast corner of the square and in 1834, a new two-story brick building replaced the older structure. At that time, the town clerk's office and surrogate court buildings were constructed on the northwest corner of the square.

Chautauqua's natural resources encouraged the development of several industries, including woodworking, farming and icemaking. The latter was especially successful; Mayville hosted several ice houses on Chautauqua Lake in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. At one point, six hundred local workers were employed by the ice houses during the winter months. Ice was distributed locally and shipped to markets via train. The town's proximity to wood resources, as well as improved rail and water passage, promoted several wood-related trades, including furniture making and lumber. The most important agricultural industry for Chautauqua by the end of the nineteenth century was dairying. One of Mayville's longest-running operations was the Pennsylvania owned Supplee-Alderney Dairy. It was constructed in



1909 along the railroad tracks on East Chautauqua Street. After changing owners and milk-processing operations, the dairy closed in 1976.

The establishment and expansion of rail service in Chautauqua County directly influenced the tourism trade and the role of Lake Chautauqua as a destination. Improved transportation made the lake a feasible vacation spot for residents in Buffalo, Pittsburgh, and other neighboring cities who wished to escape the urban environment. The lake's proximity to the Pennsylvania border made the area particularly attractive for Pittsburgh residents, who could reach their destination via the Pittsburgh, Titusville & Buffalo Railway. As Mayville's role as a business and tourist center grew, so did the number of hotels and inns. One of the most prominent hotels was the Chautauqua House, which was located on the steamboat landing between Chautauqua Lake and the Chautauqua Lake Railroad. The oldest and largest hotel in the village was the Mayville House, located at the intersection of Blanchard and Erie Street.

The appeal of Chautauqua Lake also prompted the establishment of the Chautauqua Institute, a lakeside revival community located three miles south of Mayville's center. Originally called Fair Point, the Institute was started by Ohio schoolteacher Lewis Miller and Alabama native John H. Vincent. Both men were involved with the Methodist Sunday School programs at the respective churches, and co-published a Sunday School teacher's newspaper that had a distribution of 200,000 copies. The pair shared an interest in producing an intensive outdoor school and training session for teachers, and they arrived at Chautauqua with the hope of establishing such an enterprise. By 1878, rail service and steamboat passage to Mayville was well established, facilitating the development of the institute. The community began with a compound of tent houses and grew into a densely populated complex of Victorian and early-twentieth century cottages. Chautauqua Institution is one of the prominent educational and cultural centers in the area, attracting visitors from all over the United States.

Currently, Mayville retains the title of county seat. Seasonal tourism remains a leading industry in Chautauqua. However, a large majority of lakeside cottages have been converted into full-time residences. Rural agricultural areas in Chautauqua now have few active farms. Additionally, there has been a fair amount of modern infill in the previously undeveloped areas of the town.