



Courtesy Onondaga Historical Association

A FARMERS MARKET in the late 1800s fills Clinton Square in Syracuse. The photo was taken looking west across the square. The buildings at center-right are the Clinton block, which has since been torn down. The former U.S. Post Office-federal building was built on that site. It's now the headquarters of The Pyramid Cos.

FARMERS MARKET HAS ITS ROOTS IN SQUARE

I think it's time for a change.

Tuesday was a grand day for opening a new season of the Downtown Farmers Market, which has been a downtown feature close to 40 years, believe it or not. The market is in Clinton Square as a "temporary" measure.

The usual lot, one block south, is being refurbished by Onondaga County to make it more green.

Tuesday, the sun was out, the temperature modestly warm. Shoppers swarmed over the market in its new relocation. They sat at the picnic tables in the square and looked to be having a good time.

The market needs to stay in Clinton Square.

I talked to Laurie Reed at the Downtown Committee, which runs the market. She was careful about what she said; obviously, it's much too early to make a decision about a change in venue.

But, based on Tuesday's successful run, the matter is under consideration.

"If people like it there . . ." Laurie explained. That would mean picking a spot that satisfied the vendors and their customers. It's very much up in the air just now.

Laurie reminded me that the market used to be in Clinton Square, back in the 1970s. It was started in 1973 by the Syracuse Chamber of Commerce. The Downtown Committee took over in 1975. The market was moved to the parking lot next to Lincoln Bank.

Way back, more than a century ago, outdoor markets flourished in our town. Yes, according to Dennis Connors at the Onondaga Historical Association, there was a market on the north side of the Erie Canal in West Genesee Street until about 1899, when the area was converted to a park.

This anticipated raising the Soldiers and Sailors Monument, which was dedicated in 1910, exactly 100 years ago this month.

After that, the market was moved north to the area across from Columbus Bakery that's now a city parking lot.

The market is a great fit for Clinton Square. It should stay there.

Monument salute

Kevin Kennedy, of the Syracuse Ancient Order of Hibernians, is coordinating a celebration that notes the centennial of the Soldiers and Sailors Monument, which was put up to honor local men killed in the Civil War. The program honors all of America's veterans and is co-sponsored by the city, Onondaga Historical Association and the Commodore John Barry Division of the AOH.

It's scheduled for 10 a.m. June 21, the anniversary of the original dedication. Geordy Austin, a Hibernian historian, is looking for pictures and docu-

ments relating to Hibernian involvement in the Civil War. Contact Geordy at 446-1153.

Solvay mansions

This weekend we'll have a chance to peek into a sheltered world: the mansions and gardens of Piercefield, a very nice place to live, in Solvay. The self-guided tour of the historic neighborhood runs 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, sponsored by the Onondaga Historical Association.

Tours begin at 200 Piercefield Drive, the home of Edward Pierce, a former president of Solvay Process Co. Pierce came to our area from Boston in the 1890s and bought 31 acres. He put up Piercefield in 1902. Piercefield now is the home of Jane Verostek and Walter Miller.

Visitors for the \$10 tour get to go into the house, where Miller will show off his collection of local historical materials. Dennis Connors, curator of history at the OHA, calls the Miller collection the most significant he knows of outside of a public museum.

Miller sells automobile memorabilia for a living. He used to run the Museum of Automobile History on North Clinton Street.

The neighborhood once held the estate of the Hazard family, called Upland Farms. The Hazard mansion was torn down in 1939. Both Piercefield and Upland Farms were marketed as upscale housing tracts. The tour includes seven properties.

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