

# TURNPIKE TALES

by Jim Ford

## **"TURNPIKE TALES" #4**

*(Historical items from the "Madison Bouckville Antique Week" region)*

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The Madison-Bouckville area has been rich in history from the arrival of the first settlers to the present day. As an addition to the website, we have decided to share some of that history in order that the patrons who travel to the Madison-Bouckville Show will have a better understanding of our truly unique region.

### **A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE MADISON-BOUCKVILLE SHOW**

For many of us in Central New York, the Madison-Bouckville Antique Show is a highlight of the summer season. The colorful displays of antiques and memorabilia, the delicious foods being sold and the chance to converse with dealers from all over the nation make this a special time.

Since the annual show is about to begin again and it is the 40th anniversary of the event, let's share some facts concerning the history of our wonderful area event.

The origins of the Madison-Bouckville Show go back to the formation of the Madison-Bouckville Antique Dealers Association c.1970 and their idea to hold an antiques show in the area. Many of the original members of the Association included Bruce Wyss, Marvie and Jerry Stone, Virginia Dellinger, Sue Bartlett, Ken and Lori Rifenburg, Max and Effa DePuy, Dick and Jan Ferris, Barb Martell, Brian Palmiter, Rich Enders, Jock Hengst, Dave and Fran DePuy, Elvira Stanton, Stuart and Maxine Barber, Ed and Gina Sakal, Lillian Shoemaker, Ray and Mary Nash, Burt and Dot Rich, Ingrid Pollacek, and Jim and Pat Gerow.

The site of the first show, held in 1972, was on the airstrip owned by Henry Tepolt and located next to Rt. 20, just west of the Village of Madison. At that time, 35 dealers agreed to attend and volunteers from the Association helped with the set-up of the field, sales of tickets and assignment of sites for the dealers. The concept of the show proved to be a successful one and in the next few years the number of dealers had grown to over 100. The show had outgrown its initial site and the efforts of all-volunteer help.

The Association then looked for someone to manage the show and Jock Hengst was selected. A new site for the show was also selected. The antique show was moved to the Wood Farm, located one-half mile west of Bouckville on Rt. 20, just east of the present Dave's Fireside Inn. The following year the show was moved again, this time to a field located in Bouckville, which has become known as the "Big Field" over the years. This field was rented from the Elmer Burkert Farm by Jock Hengst and eventually Mr. Hengst bought the field from the Burkert family. It is located near the eastern end of the community and is also adjacent to Rt. 20.

Jock Hengst continued to operate the "Big Field" while the Association weakened as a unit for a number of years. He promoted the show and did extensive advertising. Food vendors were invited in and area service groups benefited from this annual fund-raiser. Free parking was offered, personnel were hired to set-up the field, direct traffic, carry the purchased items to cars, act as security on the field and do the daily clean-up of the area. It was certainly a well-run field.

Meanwhile, out on Rt. 20, other area dealers were setting up their own fields and inviting vendors. This was true not only in Bouckville itself, but was extending eastward toward Madison. Fields were established on both sides of Rt. 20 in the area towards Troop's Scoops Ice Cream and also in the area across from the Depot Antiques building.

Individual homes along Rt. 20 also offered spaces for dealers and this became more popular with every passing year. Food vendors used these spaces in order to be in high traffic areas. It truly was becoming a total community event.

The show also kept extending eastward into the Village of Madison as more and more people allowed dealers to set up on their lawns along Rt. 20. This created an economic stimulus for Madison as well.

We can reflect back over 40 years of the show and fondly remember:

- The lobster dinners offered by Gary Matteson.
- Little children pulling a wagon along the street selling bottled water.
- The Hamilton Fire Department offering delicious hamburgers and fries at their food tent on the main field.
- Bartering with the dealers for their “best price.”
- Hoping that the weather would cooperate for the week.
- The organizational skills displayed by Jock Hengst on the “Big Field.”
- Cream puffs, kettle corn and snow cones.
- Meeting new friends and conversing with old ones.
- Finding that perfect antique item for a special spot in your home.
- The homemade pies offered by the ladies of the Methodist Church.
- Wondering how the dealers ever located all of their items.

These are just a few of the memories which make the Madison-Bouckville Show a special event for all of us. In this, the 40th year of the show, let’s hope for good weather and continued success for all. Take some time to visit each of the fields and appreciate the work that goes into a successful show of this magnitude. See you at the show!!