

Keuka Outlet



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# Keuka Outlet

- Time before European settlers, a stream tumbles from Keuka to Seneca Lake, through virgin forests, among wolves, bears, moose, elk, and even buffalo
- Today, that same stream follows a similar path through a forested land, with a mix of wildlife and recreationists
- It's the years in between that are pretty interesting!!

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- Earliest white settlers in late 1700's
- 1790 census shows 260 people in Jerusalem, largest town in western NY at that time
- First mill opens July 4<sup>th</sup>, 1790
- By 1820, 7 grist mills, 14 saw mills, 4 carding machines, 2 trip hammers in operation
- Later on-asheries, plaster mills, tanneries, and then factories for tools, wheel spokes, shingles, .....
- 30 or more mills operating at any given time in the early 1800's

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- Erie Canal finished in 1825, and by 1833 the Crooked Lake Canal is ready for operation
- 27 locks in its short distance, with a 6 hour passage time
- Opened Keuka Lake farms to markets east (Albany, NYC)
- Canal heavily used, but never made enough to cover operating costs
- Closed by the state in 1877

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- Fallbrook railroad built to replace transportation need
- Opens in 1884, and leads to a paper manufacturing boom
- Mills make paper from straw, with the rail line moving large quantities of raw materials and final product
- By 1894, paper production from the area mills at 60 tons per day!
- Mills eventually abandoned after the 1930's
- Railroad damaged in 1972 flood, and abandoned

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- Manufacturing continued to proliferate in the early 1900's
- Various chemicals for pesticide and herbicide use were manufactured
- Hydro electric power generation in the early 1900's- Yates Electric Light and Power Company

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- The Outlet today shows traces of the many uses and reconfigurations that it's endured
- The Outlet watershed today is largely made up of agriculture, forests, and residential areas, with some light manufacturing
- Penn Yan is the only city in the watershed
- The Penn Yan Waste Water Treatment Plant discharges into the Outlet, under a DEC SPDES permit