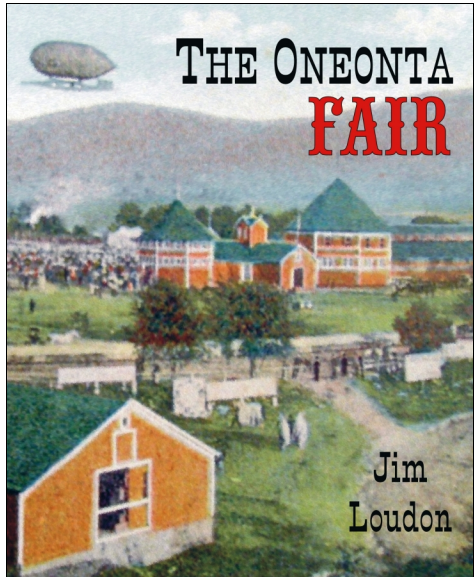


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The Oneonta Fair

by Jim Loudon

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Book Summary: In 1873 a pair of Oneonta businessmen initiated the Oneonta Fair, an endeavor that would grow into the second largest fair in the State and become known as the Central New York Fair. For one week in September thousands of visitors would fill Oneonta streets and hotels, coming from as far away as New England and Pennsylvania. The Fair offered acrobats, wild animals, midway rides, public weddings, parachute jumpers, horse races, and even the Golden Globe of Death! The most popular attraction was the Floral Parade, a procession of horses and floats decorated with hundreds of thousands of flowers, and which drew crowds of 30,000 in a single day. The Fair always tried to provide sensational new attractions, featuring an airship in 1906 and the first airplane in 1910. But, due to the increasing popularity of the automobile during the 1920's, fairgoers began staying only one day, and attendance began to drop off. In 1927 the Fair was canceled, its iconic and beautiful buildings torn down, and the fairgrounds developed into building lots to create what is today the Belmont Circle neighborhood.

Peppered with colorful characters and a sense of nostalgia, the story of the Oneonta Fair has been recovered by author and historian Jim Loudon, who has collected images, facts, and personal memories from those who can still recall this fond chapter in Oneonta's history. Illustrated and indexed.

About the Author: Jim Loudon is a native of Otsego County and currently resides in the West End of Oneonta. He graduated from the State University of Oneonta in 1972 with a BS in Liberal Arts, majoring in art and history. In 1982 he organized the Leatherstocking Railway Historical Society which currently operates the Cooperstown and Charlotte Valley Train Ride, on which he has worked as Brakeman and Conductor. Jim has written three books on local history: *The Oneonta Roundhouse*, *Leatherstocking Rails*, and *Electric Lake*.

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