



# COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

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**TOWN CLERK:** Marie Cronin  
8102 Dock Street, Montezuma, NY 13117  
Phone: (315) 776-8844. Ext. 1, or Dial Direct:  
315-776-4776  
Email: [montezumaclerk@tds.net](mailto:montezumaclerk@tds.net)  
Fax: (315) 776-9943

Hours: **Mon., Tues.** Thurs., Fri. — 11 AM - 4 PM

**DEPUTY CLERK:** Candis Cook  
Hours: Wed. 11 AM-2 PM

**TOWN BOARD MEMBERS** - Supervisor: David  
Corey - Office Direct Line: 315-776-4779  
Councilman & Deputy Town Supervisor: Thomas  
Hitchcock, Jr., Councilmen: Thomas  
Fitzsimmons, Chris Howard,  
Marvin King

**BOARD MEETING** - Third Tues. of Month 6 PM

**TOWN HIGHWAY DEPT** - Ken Cook, Deputy  
Supt., Chapman Road  
Phone & Fax: 315-776-4315  
Email: [montezumahighway@gmail.com](mailto:montezumahighway@gmail.com)

**HOURS:** 5 AM–3:30 PM Mon.-Thurs; on duty as  
needed for weather conditions

**TOWN ASSESSOR** - Jeff Lowe Office Direct  
Line: 315-776-8781; **Cell:** 315-783-4104; Hours:  
Wed. 5:00-8:00 PM or by appointment

**CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER** - John E.  
Greer; Office Direct Line: 315-776-4777; Cell  
315-730-2408. Hours: Tues., 4-6 PM

**HISTORIAN**- Cheryl Longyear; 315-776-4656

**PLANNING BOARD** - Leah Corey, Clerk 2ND  
TUES - 7 PM, or as posted on monthly schedule

**TAX COLLECTOR** - Donna Burleton; Phone:  
Office: Direct Line: 315-776-4774; Home  
315-776-8583

**COURT CLERK** - Dawn Bisgrove, Clerk Hours:  
Effective 4/1/23-Mon. & Thurs. 3:30-6:30 PM  
Court Extra Phone: 315-776-4785

<http://townofmontezuma.org>



Can anyone identify who this gentlemen is sitting on the Richmond Aqueduct at the turn of the 20th Century?

## *Richmond Aqueduct Turns 175*

The Erie Canal was the longest human-made waterway and the greatest public works project in North America at the time. Now as we approach the 200th year commemoration in 2025, its being recognized as an engineering marvel and one of the country's greatest technological achievements. One of the engineering marvels was the Richmond Aqueduct built as part of the Enlarged Erie Canal in Montezuma. Construction on the structure began on September 4, 1849. Now, 175 years later it remains as a testament to the ingenuity and innovation called for to accommodate the growing needs of the canal and expansion of our country.

Van Rensselaer Richmond from Lyons, NY was the canal engineer in charge of the middle section of the canal. He made plans to radically change the canal by building a high embankment and aqueduct that would carry the canal over the river and wetlands, eliminating the troublesome crossing. Wooden pilings were driven 190 feet deep to create a "mattress" built of logs some as long as 30 feet. The floor created a level surface for the masons to work and build the stone arches, piers and towpath. The arches were 22 feet wide and 11 feet tall and there were 31 in total crossing the river. Once the stonework was finished, the wooden trunk, containing over a million board feet of wood, was built. When the canal was completely rebuilt from 1905 to 1918 to make way for motorized boats and large commercial shipments it lead to dismantling the Richmond Aqueduct in 1917, to make way for the Barge Canal in the Seneca River being dredged in this section of the canal.

Currently National Grid is working to remove the power line tower from the Aqueduct's structure. This will help preserve the seven remaining arches on the Montezuma side of the river. Access to the Richmond will be closed on Trails 2, 4, 5 and 10 while the work is being completed. During the next year Old Mentz Heritage Center will be partnering with other Erie Canal sites along the Middle Canal region with a new Guidebook to showcase and feature events to celebrate the canal's legacy today as a designated a National Historic Landmark.

## Water Department

### Water Billing Clerk

**Heather Tanner**

Office Hours:

Mondays 4:45 - 5:30 PM

Wednesdays 4:45 - 5:30 PM

Office Direct Line: 315-776-4773

Email:

montezumawaterclerk@yahoo.com

### Payments:

Please mail or use the drop box outside the Town Hall for the safety of our customers.

### Montezuma Water District #1

PO Box 357

Montezuma, NY 13117

### Billing Information:

Water Meters are read quarterly. Bills are due 30 days from billing date; 10% penalty added to bill after thirty (30) days. Water bills **not paid after 60 days**, the water will be shut off. Full payments (ONLY)

### Emergency Water Contacts

#### Water Operator: Stan Longyear

315-406-6572 (cell); 315-776-4656 (home); if not available, call:

#### Highway Suptintendent: Ken Cook

315-776-4315 (garage); Cell: 315-224-7759

**Deputy:** David Ware

#### Water Committee Chair, Councilman

**Tom Fitzsimmons** 315-776-5222 (home)

Water Committee meetings are held monthly. Please contact the Water Clerk during office hours for date & time of the

Let us know if you have a community event to promote.

It can be placed in this newsletter, on Facebook and the Town website.

Cheryl Longyear, Editor

315-776-4656

Email: cml115@tds.net

## Upcoming Meetings

Meetings are open to the public and held at the Town Hall, 8102 Dock Street unless otherwise specified. Please sign-in when entering the meeting room and save public comments for time given at the end of the meeting.

- **Regular Town Board Meeting**  
**Tuesday, September 17, 2024 at 6 PM**

## Announcements:

- Water Clerk, Heather Tanner will be out of the office from: Saturday, September 7; returning Thursday, September 26th.

## Remembering the Laboring Garden Farmers of the Montezuma Muckland



The Labor Day holiday honors workers and their contributions to society and national prosperity. It is a "celebration of the hard-won achievements of America's labor movement," (USA TODAY).

In the late 1800s, "the average American worked 12-hour days and seven-day weeks in order to eke out a basic living," according to [History.com](http://History.com). "Children as young as 5 or 6 toiled in mills, factories, fields and mines across the country."

As we celebrate Labor Day we can recall the crude laboring methods and hours of toiling labor it took to clear the surrounding Montezuma marshes into cultivated lands. The dredging of the Barge Canal in 1918 lowered the water levels as much as two feet in the Seneca River basin. This allowed access to a large portion of Montezuma marshes for muck farming. Shares of 1-5 acre parcels along with larger 500 acre parcels were developed and eventually owned by several larger farming operations.

Over 100 years ago mucklands of the old Montezuma Marshes were beginning to yield a crop of plentiful garden products. By September of 1925 crops were valued at \$800,000. At the height of the harvesting over 1500 acres were being worked with one thousand men, women and children engaged in the operations. Women were making the same wages as men — \$3.50/day. A number of agricultural experts from several states visited the area to study methods used in intensive truck farming practices.

The labor intensive crops gradually dropped and those who invested in expensive harvest machinery demanded more acreage to justify the larger machinery costs. The vegetable crop farmers dwindled from 45 in the 1940s to six large family farms by the 1980s. A book written by Bob Mead published in 2007 covers the Howland's Island and Muckland Farming History of the area. It is available for purchase from Old Mentz Heritage Center. ([old-mentz.org](http://old-mentz.org))