

THIS GREAT COUNTY

Falconer

Falconer, New York is located in the southern tier of Chautauqua County, directly east of Jamestown. While Falconer is considerably smaller than Jamestown (less than one tenth of the size,) Falconer holds its own as a community that is literally attached to a much bigger one. Falconer was never called "The Furniture Capital of the World" (what many used to refer to Jamestown as,) but it has been consistently carving out its own identity and community for over 200 years. And their furniture isn't bad either.

Purchased from the Holland Land Company in 1807, the town was originally called Worksbury, until Robert Falconer purchased the land, and renamed it in 1874. Falconer was officially incorporated as a village in 1891. By then, many things in the town were well established, including a railroad that ran through the center of town and a slew of prominent businesses.

Fancher Chair Company, which excels today at producing a number of different chair designs and distributing them throughout the country, has a rich history in Falconer. The building has long been used for production, and started churning out bee-keeping supplies in the mid eighteen-hundreds. The building and company went through many evolutions in management until they were eventually producing kitchen tables and chairs in the middle of the 20th century.

Today, Fancher Chair Company is a competitive company that offers state-of-the-art machinery as well as finishing touches by human hands. Fancher Chair Company is just one example of the how Falconer's history is undeniably bound to their businesses. Another example would be the Falconer Public Library.

Founded in 1910, the library was formed when each member of the "Society of the Hall in the Grove," donated one book that they thought was essential, as well as one dollar. From there,

donations were solicited from the public. It is fair to say that no one at that time could have predicted the success the library would have, being named one of America's Star Libraries by The Library Journal in 2013.

However, the jump from 1910 to 2013 was not a simple one. Nowadays, information storage is primarily done digitally. This has caused many to wonder how libraries will progress into the 21st century. Libraries around the country are closing in light of this evolution. Falconer Public Library is flourishing.

"Summertime is a busy time for the Falconer Public Library," says Sue Seamans (Library Director.) "We have a number of different types of events going on." Their ability to throw events is just one of the things that prevents Falconer Public Library from being an establishment full of hard-cover books, collecting dust. Their work often jumps out of the physical building and into the community.

"One of the biggest things we have going on is annual outdoor concert series at Davis Park," says Seamans. "Every Thursday in July we book music in the park as a way for people in the town to bring a lawn chair, come and relax." But the library's community involvement doesn't begin and end with a concert series.

Throughout the year, the Falconer Public Library offers educational classes, displays that highlight local quilters, a story-hour program for preschoolers, reading clubs and many more worthy activities. Not to mention they just finished "Going Live," which will shoot them into the 21st century of cataloging. This process has made them part of a broader network of libraries, which makes browsing their materials an activity that anyone in the general public can do from the comfort of their own home.

Falconer is not just an extension of Jamestown. They have their own businesses and their own sense of pride for the work they do. The town is also marked by their ability to keep up with modern demands and modern technology. Several of their businesses existed at a time when Falconer was a different city entirely. And perhaps this is the most impressive quality that the town possesses: Their ability to keep one foot firmly rooted in the past, while still moving in a progressive direction.