

# Fredonia Valley Views

## A look back at history from the Fredonia Valley

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### SUMMER IS HERE!

Summer is upon us. Fredonia is a busy place in the summer with activities, events, and of course, baseball! Baseball in the Valley will be our main topic for this article, but before delving into that, we want to mention some upcoming summer events.

- An exciting upcoming event in Fredonia being planned by the Fredonia Valley Heritage Society is “Hayride Through Fredonia’s Past.” This event will consist of a hayride tour through Fredonia with historical reenactments. It will take place on the evening of Saturday, June 21<sup>st</sup>, beginning at 5:00 p.m. We will visit Crider Tavern, John Rice Home, Location of Burning of Rice Tobacco Barn, Wilson-Blair One Room School Memorial, Robbery of the Fredonia Valley Bank, and the Annexation of Kelsey. The tour will be narrated by Pam Faughn, Andrea Clement, and Casey Baker, who will tell the history of Fredonia. The cost is \$5.00 person, with children 12 and under free. Text 270-832-8272 for reservations. Please join us for an evening of fun and adventure, and you just might learn something, too!

- This summer the Fredonia Valley Heritage Society and Fredonia American Legion Post 103 also has plans to build a pavilion at the Fredonia Valley Veterans Memorial.

- A new piece of playground equipment will be installed at the Fredonia Woodmen Park this month. The park has a wonderful, large pavilion with picnic tables, lots of playground equipment, a pickleball court, and basketball court. Please take time to visit the park this summer!

- Our 9<sup>th</sup> annual “Thunder in the Valley” will take place on Thursday, July 3<sup>rd</sup>, at the Buddy Rogers Park. Come early and enjoy local talent, giveaways, and recognitions, and an amazing fireworks show at 9:00 p.m.

- The 60<sup>th</sup> annual Fredonia Lions Club Summer Festival will be held on Saturday, August 9<sup>th</sup>, at the Buddy Rogers Park. It is a time of homecoming for many Fredonia Valley residents. There is something for everyone, including good food, music, giveaways, pet show, washer pitch, children’s activities, and more. Don’t miss it!

- The 2025 season of Fredonia Little League will begin the third week of June. There are teams for tee-ball (ages 4-6), minor league baseball (ages 7-10), major league baseball (ages 11-13), and slow pitch softball (ages 14-17). All leagues are co-ed. Come on out to Buddy Rogers Park and enjoy the games.

There are lots of things to do and enjoy in Fredonia this summer. Come on out and join the fun!

### BASEBALL IN THE VALLEY

Baseball has always been a favorite pastime in the Fredonia Valley during the summer. Since it was first purchased by American Legion Post 103 in the 1930’s, the American Legion Ballpark, now known as the Buddy Rogers Park, has been the hub of activities in the summertime.

Dean Akridge recalls that Fredonia had a baseball team as long as he can remember. His dad, T.R. “Ruble” Akridge played in the late 1920’s and 1930’s. Some of the managers were Roy Boisture, Euc Quertermous, and Dave Perkins. Some of the players that Dean recalls are Willis Butts, Ted Crider, J.B. Quertermous, “Big” Lewis, Ed Phelps, Wilford and Clifford Baker, Ted and Eldred Boisture, Bob Fraliex, Henry Peek, and Dock Baker. The games were played on Sunday afternoon. You knew the game was ready to start when you heard Byrd Guess, local auctioneer, yell “BATTER-UP!” They played other communities like Crider, Mexico, Tiline, Dycusburg, etcetera.



The photo above was made in the 1930’s. The Fredonia baseball players pictured, left to right, are Brice Catilla, Ruble Akridge, J.E. Crider, and Elbert Beck. They are standing in front of Valley Grocery Company. It was owned and operated by Wm. M. Young. Ivan Bennett was manager of the team for several years.

A 1939 baseball score book for local teams lists the following players for the Fredonia team: J. Quertermous, T. Crider, J. Crider, W. Butts, J.B. Quertermous, B. Moore, John Perkins, Dave Perkins, E. Phelps, E. Quertermous, W. Moore, and Dalton.



The 1941 Fredonia Baseball Team is pictured above. On the front row, from left, are Raymond Moore, score keeper; Jim Nelson, Dago Perryman, Doc Moore, Teddy Crider, and Wilford Baker, coach. On the back row are Rex Adams (team sponsor), Paul Rushing, Willis

Butts, Euclid Quertermous, J.B. Quertermous, Clifford Baker, and Carlton Tabor. In front is Billy Harmon, the bat boy.



The above photo was taken in 1949 in front of the old grandstands at the American Legion Ballpark (now Buddy Rogers Park). The players are, front row left to right, Buddy Rogers, Eldred Boisture, Keith Rogers, Bob Fraliex, Elwood Dorroh, and Euclid Quertermous. Back row, left to right, unknown, coach unknown, Henry Peek, Bill Fraliex, Charlie Quertermous, and Ted Boisture.

After the Korean Conflict and the boys came back home, the American Legion sponsored a team in the Twin States League. Some of the names of those who took part in this were Ted Boisture, Eldred Boisture, Bob Fraliex, Steve Fraliex, Keith Rogers, Buddy Rogers, Henry Peek, Dommer Fraliex, Charlie Quertermous, Pedro Faught, Mac Nelson, Bill Rogers, Carl Rogers, Buck Travis, and probably others.

Dean Akridge recalls playing on the men’s team in the 1950’s. They competed in the Twin States League that had teams from Princeton, Murray, Grand Rivers, Lola, Calvert City, and Salem. The American Legion sponsored the team then, and before that Rex Adams’ Fredonia Cheese Factory was the sponsor. Home plate was down by the railroad track in the early years, but was moved to its present place in about 1949 or 1950.

Jimmy Riley and Dean Akridge told about a team called the “Red Hots” that played there one summer. They were Jimmy Riley, Dean Akridge, Tom Jones, Elwood Dorroh, Sam Goheen, Clifford Baker, Jim Tom Hearod, Edwin Moore, and Dick Rice.

A fast pitch softball league existed in about 1950-52, as lights had been installed. Some of the teams were: Brockmeyer’s Drug Store, Valley Grocery, Ruble’s Grocery, Lafayette Mines, and Enon (Walnut Grove).

The men’s baseball teams ended about 1957 or 1958. But as that era ended, a youth program was started that has remained active through the years. Boys and girls softball and baseball teams and teeball teams have involved many youth each summer. The Fredonia Lions Club and the Fredonia American Legion Post 103 were sponsors of this very successful program until recent years. Buddy Rogers spent many years with the youth program and maintaining the field, and in 1992, the American Legion Ballpark was renamed the Buddy Rogers Park.



The Fredonia Pony League Team from 1960 is pictured above. Pictured in front row, left to right: Billy Baker, David “Butterball” Fraliex, Jack Story, Jimmy Brasher, Stevie Baker, Donnie Phelps, Dennis Traylor, and Van Yandell. In the back row are Richie Burton, manager; Danny York, Jimmy Baker, Larry Riley, Gene Brasher, Tandy Easley, Rondall Cooke, Edwin Story, and Pete Peters, manager. Van Yandell shared that this Fredonia team was in a four team league, including three teams from Princeton. This Fredonia team won the league championship that year.



1961 Fredonia Little League Baseball Team. The picture above was taken at Old Eddyville Ballpark before Barkley Dam. This park is now under water. Pictured in the front row, left to right, are Roy Rogers, Donnie Boone, Larry Fraliex, Wayne Fraliex, Lowell Green, Macky Fraliex, and Earl Fraliex. In the back row, left to right, are Robert “Peanut” Fraliex, Roy Boisture, Larry Belt, Mac Boone, Dewayne Davis, Jerry Fraliex, Bobby Fraliex, and Joe Yates.



In the mid 1980’s, Pam Faughn and Beth Drennan saw the need for a tee-ball league. With permission of the Lions and Legion, a tee-ball league was organized by them. Pictured above is one of the first tee-ball teams after tee-ball was organized in Fredonia in 1986. Coaches of the Gold Team above were Janice Fraliex, Wayne Fraliex, and Steve Faughn. Players are, front row from left, Clint Baker, A.J. Fraliex,

Misty Jones, Trevor Baker, Jonathan Tosh; back row, William Baker, Anthony Tosh, Jason Faughn, Rockelle Gray, Justin Baker, Kimberly Rowland, Trevor Prowell, and James Alan Boone.

The Summer Ball Programs of the American Legion and the Lions Club provided baseball, softball, and teeball for children of the area for about 60 years. For the past few years, the Fredonia Activities Committee and others have stepped up to provide quality teeball and baseball programs for the youth at the Buddy Rogers Park.

### FREDONIA HIGH SCHOOL BASEBALL

The following information concerning the Fredonia High School Baseball teams was written by Don Boone for the “The History of the Fredonia Valley” in 2010. Fredonia High School fielded a baseball team through the years. The first yearbook to mention baseball was the 1958 Jacket which showed several seniors who participated in baseball as listed in their individual activities. Each yearbook thereafter included seniors who listed baseball as one of their high school activities.



Above is a photo of the 1959 FHS baseball team. The coach was Mervil Phelps. Pictured are, front row from left, Coach Phelps, James Thurman, Charlie Phelps, Dennie Woodall, Denny Brasher, Roy Johnson; back row, Wayne McGowan, Richie Blackburn, Jerry Perkins, Larry Yates, and Larry Rogers.



The 1967 yearbook also included the picture above of the baseball team. Shown in the photo from left are Bruce Perkins, Larry Belt, Larry Wayne Yancy, Jerry Fraliex, Joe Yates, Mac Boone, Bobby Joe Fraliex, Douglas Phelps, and Tom Peek. Others not pictured who were on the team in 1967 were Roy Boisture, Lowell Green, Roy Gene Rogers, Johnny Beavers, and Donnie Boone. During a game in the 1967 season, a fly ball ricocheting off a light pole hit Johnny Beavers, breaking his nose, which meant the end of his baseball career.



The baseball team as pictured above in the 1968 yearbook included, from left, Donnie Boone, Joe Yates, Dwight Green, Bobby Fraliex, Lowell Green, Tommy Peek, and Roy Boisture. The coach was Gerald Tabor.

Fredonia probably only fielded a baseball team when there were enough players interested enough to work to play baseball. Playing on the baseball team meant early spring practice. Players had to mow, drag the infield, put the lines and bases down, all before every home game. They had to “work before play.” Donnie Boone remembers Buddy Rogers, Allen “Shorty” Riley, and Dick Tucker umpiring several games for the high school teams.

“Three outs in three seconds” is another memorable FHS baseball story. Fredonia had a triple play during the spring season in 1965. Tommie Baker was a junior and catching, Jerry Yancy would have been at third, Dennis Traylor was at shortstop, Dougie Phelps was playing first base, and Mac Boone was playing in the outfield. The pitcher may have been David “Butterball” Fraliex. Runners were on first and second (no one can remember who Fredonia was playing). The batter hit a sharp line-drive between shortstop and second. Dennis Traylor caught the ball going to his left from shortstop side of second, stepped on second and threw to first. Louis Litchfield would have been the coach. Some of the other players on the 1965 team are believed to be Kenneth Hanks, the only senior, Steve Baker, “Little Charlie” Phelps, Bruce Perkins, Larry Yancy, Larry Belt, and maybe Eddie Taylor.

“As American as baseball and apple pie” is a phrase that exemplifies our American culture. Baseball continues to be “America’s pastime.” It is the sport that generations have grown up playing, remaining a steady, comforting game throughout many times of change in this country. It is played at some level in virtually every American town, on dusty sandlots and in billion-dollar stadiums. While some say it’s not an exciting game to watch on TV, no one would argue that it’s the best sport to watch live with family and friends at the ball park. Baseball is a game of traditions, from the opening song, “Take Me Out to the Ball Game,” to the seventh inning stretch. There are peanuts, hot dogs, catching fly balls, homeruns, and other traditions that continue to make baseball an American pastime. So participate in America’s pastime this summer by heading out to the ballpark in your town!

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