

## FEATURED EXHIBITION

In addition to the permanent historical exhibits, temporary Featured Exhibitions in the Aurora History Museum highlight unique aspects of our community's history with artifacts and documents from the collections of the Aurora Town Historian's Office and Aurora Historical Society.

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**This Featured Exhibition,  
"The Early Days of Emery Park,"  
will be on view through  
May 30, 2025.**



# *The* **Early Days** *of* **Emery** **Park**

**E** MERY PARK OPENED near the hamlet of South Wales **100 YEARS AGO** this summer.

With the purchase in August 1925 of 175 acres from Helen B. Emery, Erie County established Emery Park as part of its newly formed county parks system. The land in the southeast corner of the Town of Aurora had been in the Emery family since Josiah Emery purchased his farmland nearly a century earlier.

These original photographs, taken by photographer Warren L. Inskip shortly after Emery Park opened to the public, come from a binder titled “Photographic Views of County Parks, 1927.” Preserved in the archives of the Aurora Town Historian’s Office, this collection of photographs also contains images of Erie County’s other early parks, including Chestnut Ridge, Ellicott Creek and Como Lake. The binder was donated to the Aurora Town Historian’s Office by Richard S. Persons, Sr., who served as chairman of the Erie County Parks Commission when Emery Park opened in 1925. He later served as Aurora Town Historian.

These images offer a unique glimpse into what was likely a Sunday afternoon in the park in the 1920s. With Erie County’s purchase of additional land over the years, Emery Park has grown to more than 450 acres.

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## EMERY FARM SELECTED FOR A COUNTY PARK

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The Board of Supervisors has adopted the program of the county park commission for the acquisition of property in various parts of the county for parks and public places of recreation.

The Emery farm of 194 acres is one of the places selected. This is on the Emery road between South Wales and Center street and is well-known to many residents of this locality.

The supervisors have appropriated funds for the purchase of the property and only the final approval of the County Park commission is needed to complete the deal.

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Emery Park opened a few weeks after Chestnut Ridge Park in the summer of 1925.

## FIRST COUNTY PARK IS OPEN NEAR HAMBURG

### Grace-Graves Farm Ready for Automobile Parties and Pic- nics; Emery Farm Next.

Announcement of the opening of the first of the county parks was made last Friday at the office of the Erie County Park Commission. It is the Grace-Graves farm, near Orchard Park. The park is about sixteen miles from Buffalo and may be visited by going to Hamburg and from there direct out Knowlton street to the park entrance, less than four miles. Another route is to go to Orchard Park to the golf course and there take the road south for one mile to the park.

The present facilities on the farm are temporary, but good for the summer. Two wells have been sunk to supply water. These wells have been tested by the city bacteriologist and the water pronounced pure. Sanitary facilities have been provided. There is a large parking place for automobiles. Tables and benches have been set up. A caretaker and help will give directions and assist visitors.

The farm contains 300 acres and much natural scenery. From one of the high points a view may be had to Lake Erie, 40 miles. There is a glen, which it is expected, will be the mecca for picnickers and here a well, tables and benches have been provided.

Because of the short distance from Buffalo, the Commission expects that this park will be a popular place for those who seek a day's or an afternoon's outing. Another park soon to be opened is the Emery farm at East Aurora.

## EMERY PARK OPENED

Emery Park near East Aurora was opened to the public last Sunday, in memory of the anniversary of the death of Justice Asher B. Emery. The title has not yet passed to the Erie County Park Commission and the arrangement to have the park open to the public was made through the courtesy of Mrs. Emery. Mr. Richard S. Persons, chairman, announces that the Park Commission will meet at the park on Friday.

Emery park is the second to be opened in the Erie County Park system. Chestnut Ridge Park near Hamburg was opened several weeks ago and already has a record attendance of 600 in one day.

Emery Park contains 200 acres and is situated about five miles south of East Aurora on the Emery road. It has many natural attractions. Charles Robinson is caretaker. Temporary but suitable arrangements have been made for picnickers. These include good water, sanitary facilities, parking space for automobiles, tables and benches. There are ovens in one of the cabins.

The park is twenty-two miles from the Buffalo City hall. It may be reached from East Aurora by going out Center street to the Emery road or out Olean street to Emery road.

*East Aurora Advertiser, August 13, 1925*

*East Aurora Advertiser, July 9, 1925*



## **Emery Park Inn**

Among the interesting Emery Park-related items preserved in the archives of the Aurora Town Historian's Office are these plates from the Emery Park Inn. Who remembers dining there? The logo at the top of the plate features an outline of Erie County, signifying the inn's location within the county park. Once the home of the Emery family, the house was converted to an inn and restaurant shortly after the park opened. After several failed attempts to rehabilitate it after the inn's closure, the building was demolished in the early 2000s.