

July 2, 2012

Palmyra Village Hall
144 East Main Street
Palmyra, NY 14522

Ms. Peggy DiPaola,

You asked that I share with you the importance of our 1892 flagpole to the people of Palmyra. Quite simply, it is a piece of our history whose story is shared with newcomers to the community. That story is told, as well, to the many visitors who come to our small village each year. The flagpole tells them about who we were and who we are and what we value. More often than not its story evokes a layered reaction - respect for the local people who wanted and paid for it initially and their reason for doing so - to honor the veterans of the Civil War, General Grant and then President Harrison. Other stories amuse: the competition between political parties for higher and higher flagpoles and the mysterious burning of the competing wooden pole just prior to the dedication of the current pole. The dedication itself and the newspaper account of the 'torch light parade that wound its way through all the village streets' after the community picnic in the Main Street Park.

The flagpole is part of Palmyra's everyday life also. "Meet you at the flagpole" is an often heard direction. Shops identify themselves in relation to it - 'the shop next to (across from, 2 doors down from) the flagpole. And for some Palmyra people, myself included, when you are heading home from any compass point and you see that oversized flag atop the flagpole, it tells you are home. If you are coming into the village from the east on Main Street, there is a point at which you can see the flag and behind it, just two blocks west, the spires of four beautiful nineteenth century churches on the same corner. The church spires and the flagpole define Palmyra and its history. I cannot imagine this village without them.

Very truly yours,

Victoria Daly, Mayor
Village of Palmyra