

## CHAPTER SIX--THE WAYNE POWER STATION

## CHAPTER SIX

### THE WAYNE POWER STATION ON KEUKA

HISTORY OF THE POWER STATION AND HYDRO POWER IN THE KEUKA REGION--E.L. PHILLIPS

WATER QUALITY CONCERNS

CORRESPONDENCE WITH NYSEG

LICENSE WITH NEW YORK STATE AND FERC (FEDERAL REGULATORY COMMISSION)

# Wayne Power Station

Ellis Laurimore Phillips, Sr., son of Richard and Rhonda McConnell Phillips, was born in 1873 and grew up on the family farm bordering the boundary line of the Town of Prattsburg and the Town of Italy. He died in 1959 in New York City. His ancestors came from England about 1635 settling in Connecticut and later moving to Western New York in the early 1800s. Relatives had fought at the Battle of Bunker Hill in the Revolutionary War and his father was wounded at the Battle of Gettysburg in the Civil War. (His father's home still stands in Prattsburg.) Ellis grew up on the farm with his twin sister Eva and his elder brother and sister Edwin and Rosina who were also twins. His older sister Rosina and his Aunt Tryphena were the driving force behind his entering Cornell University in 1891 for his sister and aunt had already graduate in the late 1880s. This shows the determination of the family's desire and drive for women to attend university at this time. Ellis graduated from Cornell in 1895 with the first electrical engineering class. His thesis was on the design of an armature winding motor – this thesis is on display at the Cornell Rare Books and Manuscript Library.

His first job upon graduation from Cornell was with DeLaval Separator in Poughkeepsie and later for Westinghouse, Church and Kerr, which eventually became Westinghouse Corporation. At that time Westinghouse was one of the largest engineering and contracting firms in the United States, largely engaged in the design and construction of electric power plants. It was the need of cheaper and more abundant electric power for the public that gave him the idea of developing a plan for supplying electricity more efficiently and cheaply to meet the ever growing demand.

In 1904 he founded his own company E. L. Phillips and Company, 50 Church Street Street in New York City, which eventually became the Long Island Lighting Company in 1910. After the first world war, Ellis began creating what was to become the Lamoka Power Corporation. Its goal was to construct a hydroelectric project which would have produced 150- to 200-million kilowatt hours of electricity per year. The officers of this newly formed corporation were Robert O. Hayt and Dr. George F. Showers of Corning, New York. From 50 Church Street, directions put Hayt in as Chief Engineer. Original construction, surveys, bid contracts and other documents for the construction of this project survive in the Town of Wayne Archives.

If their creation of this power corporation had come fully true, the Lamoka Power Corporation project would have been one of the largest hydroelectric power producers in the nation at that time. It would have channeled water from the entire lake from the entire lakes of Lamoka and Waneta from Savona through Bradford, connecting with a Penstock Pipeline around Wayne and a power house at Keuka on energy transmission and distribution facilities for the entire Central New York. The power house still survives in Keuka as does the vintage operating turbine.

Soon after, Ellis began consolidating power companies in Western New York. In 1924 Ellis incorporated the Empire Power Corporation which consisted of three major subsidiaries and over seventy independent power companies, many of which were hydro plant generators. Included were Steuben County companies Dansville Gas & Electric Company, Hornell Electric Company, Corning Light & Power Corporation, Aulls Electric Corporation, Village of Arkport Plant, Addison Electric Light & Power Company, Hammondsport Electric Light Company and Village of Savona Plant. The successful result of

these consolidations ultimately created the modern-day Rochester Gas & Electric (RG&E) and New York State Electric & Gas (NYSEG).

Throughout life when he was asked to what he credited his success, he replied “others.” Because “others” had contributed to his success, he gave recognition and appreciation of them by giving generously of his personal interest and financial support – one in particular was the Phillips Engineering Building on the campus of Cornell University. This building was dedicated in 1955.

*Copy for Bill Weber*

# Keuka Lake Association

**Keuka Lake Shore Property Owners, Inc.**

Post Office Box 232 \* Penn Yan, New York 14527

Telephone Area Code 315 536-8519

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**  
Don A. Smith  
1188 E. Bluff Drive  
Bluff Point, N.Y. 14417

August 27, 1970

Wa-Ont-Ya Regional Water  
Resources Planning Board  
435 Exchange Street  
Geneva, New York 14456

- PRESIDENT**  
James E. Personius
- VICE-PRESIDENT**  
John T. Andrews
- SECRETARY**  
Kenneth L. Shull
- TREASURER**  
G. Merlin Drumm
- CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD**  
Dr. Harold J. Palmer

Gentlemen:

At a meeting of our Board of Directors held the 14th of August, considerable discussion was had regarding the water that is drained from Lakes Waneta and Lamoka, through the N.Y. State Elec. & Gas Co's. Power Plant at Keuka, and into Keuka Lake.

This plant is operated by water which is carried thru a pipe running down the hillside from Waneta. The water provides power to run the turbines which generate power for the company. This not a continuance use plant and is only operated for short periods of time each day. We have been told that they run it an hour or two at "peak load" times when extra power can be used.

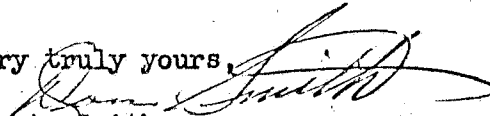
The problem, so far as this association is concerned, is the quality of the water coming out of Waneta and Lamoka and ending up in Keuka. We believe it to be poor and don't want it in with our "AA" water that we strive so hard to keep clean.

We know that Waneta and Lamoka have used weed poison, which ends up in Keuka, they have large quantities of algae which break up and wind up in Keuka and one of our board members along with a member of your board, investigated the outlet of Waneta and found it to be a "filthy looking mess".

In summation, we request your Board to conduct a study of Lakes Waneta and Lamoka and the feasibility of diverting their outflow toward Bradford. The only other solution would be for them to clean up their lakes so that their water was equal to or better than Keuka's.

Thank you for your attention to this request and we will be happy to cooperate with you in any manner concerning this situation.

- CC: F. Keller
- W. Moorehouse
- F. Davenport
- J. Personius
- H. Palmer
- P. Rutan
- J. Evans

Very truly yours,  
  
Don A. Smith  
Executive Director

**DIRECTORS**

- |   |  |  |   |   |   |   |
|---|--|--|---|---|---|---|
| <b>URBANA</b><br>John W. Kuller<br>Richard D. Smith | <b>WAYNE</b><br>Guy S. Shoemaker<br>Kenneth Taft | <b>BARRINGTON</b><br>Phay B. Rutan<br>Kenneth L. Shull | <b>JERUSALEM</b><br>George F. Gleason<br>James E. Personius | <b>MIL0</b><br>William D. Holcomb<br>Paul C. McMaster | <b>PULTENEY</b><br>Mrs. Helen Jane Bartron<br>G. Merlin Drumm | <b>AT LARGE</b><br>Dr. Harold J. Palmer |
|---|--|--|---|---|---|---|

D R A F T

Mr. Robert F. Flacke  
Commissioner  
New York State Department  
of Environmental Conservation  
50 Wolf Road  
Albany, New York 12233

Dear Commissioner Flacke:

SUBJECT: NEW YORK STATE ELECTRIC AND GAS CORPORATION - POLLUTION  
OF KEUKA LAKE

The New York State Electric and Gas Corporation has its office in the town of Dryden and has made application to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission for a license for its generating plant on the shore of Keuka Lake.

The generating plant is a source of pollution to the waters of Keuka Lake in that it is powered by waters from lakes of inferior quality which are at a higher altitude and connected by a power canal. The generating plant jettisons these waters in Keuka Lake in a random fashion making the waters so murky as to preclude seeing the bottom in two inches of water.

In New York State Electric and Gas Corporation's environmental assessment, they state: "Although no check is made on discharge water quality at the project plant, it is believed to be substantially unchanged from inflowing water. There is no source of water pollution at the project plant." \* I wonder what New York State Electric and Gas's definition of pollution is. If they mean that if you drink the waters without becoming seriously ill, I might agree. However, if one were to follow Webster's definition that to pollute means "to make impure or unclean," then indeed there is pollution directly attributable to New York State Electric and Gas's generating plant on the shore of Keuka Lake.

I have been on Keuka Lake for almost twenty years within 100 yards of the generating plant. Twenty years ago you could see the bottom of the lake at six feet. Today, if the generating plant hasn't run in a day or two, you might see the bottom at two feet.

Discussions with New York State Electric and Gas have fallen on deaf ears. They admit that the generating plant provides a miniscule amount of power to its customers. Hence, logic would indicate termination of its functioning would have a negligible impact upon customers.

\* THE STATEMENT IS TRUE, BUT IT AVOIDS THE PROBLEM. THE PLANT IS OPERATING ON WATER DIVERTED FROM ITS NATURAL FLOW AND MANIFESTLY OF VERY INFERIOR QUALITY AND HAS NO JUSTIFICATION FOR BEING DUMPED INTO THE AA WATERS OF KEUKA LAKE

May 11, 1977

FROM: William G. Mahrt  
Watershed Inspector  
Pollution Control  
Penn Yan Municipal Board

REF: Pollution in Sylvian Beach  
Waneta Lake  
Town of Wayne  
County of Steuben

Dear Property Owner:

This office has been advised that there is a severe pollution problem in the Sylvian Beach area of Waneta Lake. We have had numerous complaints of sewage running into road ditches & over the surface of the ground. A serious problem with the contamination of water wells in this area. The privy's that were allowed to be used, are not being properly maintained, and as time goes on these summer users have extended there use to year round use. I have personally made several inspections and a gross negligence does exist in this area. Some changes are necessary to control the pollution.

As we all know, Waneta Lake drains into Keuka Lake and it must be controlled to end the contamination of both lakes.

I find it necessary to take time this summer to call on each dwelling, and make an inspection of property, the water supply, and type of sewage disposal that is being used.

After an inspection is made, if the owner is in violation of the rules and regulations, Sec. #137 of the State Sanitary Code, and does not comply within three (3) days to make the necessary changes, they are subject to a \$100.00 fine, and a \$10.00 fine each day, and or eviction until the violation is corrected.

Your cooperation will be appreciated in cleaning up this area.

Sincerely yours,



William G. Mahrt  
Watershed Inspector



Charles F. Kennedy  
Chairman and  
Chief Executive Officer

August 12, 1982

Mr. William A. Weber  
Chairman of the Board  
Keuka Lake Association  
443 East Lake Road  
Penn Yan, New York 14527

Dear Bill:

Thanks for your compliments about the new look of our Keuka Station.

We can't do much to add to the beauty of an already beautiful area but we can at least keep our property up so it doesn't detract from it.

Best regards.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Charles".

Charles F. Kennedy

CFK/pf



KLA

July 16, 1980

Mr. Charles Kennedy  
Chairman of the Board  
NYSEG  
Binghamton, NY 13900

Dear Charlie:

You may recall we spoke of this organization and its interaction with NYSEG.

At our annual meeting, our Board reported to the membership that NYSEG has performed admirably in its maintenance of the Waneta-Lamoka diversion leading to the Keuka Power Station.

While we would very much like to see the drainage of Waneta-Lamoka into Keuka close, we fully understand your company's position and responsibilities.

It was requested by our membership that I ask your company to examine the possibility of improving the appearance of the power station from the vantage point of the lake. I have no idea whether it is possible to simply add some facade trim and paint, but if it were possible, I can assure you it would be gratefully received by this organization and other users of Keuka Lake.

I hope to see you again at the City Club and send you my personal regards.

Sincerely,

KEUKA LAKE ASSOCIATION

William A. Weber

cc: Mr. Bruce Roloson - NYSEG, Penn Yan  
John E. Kelly, President KLSPO  
John T. Andrews, Vice-Pres. KLSPO

C  
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Y

**COPY**

STATE OF NEW YORK  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

MEMORANDUM

September 24, 1979

To: Eric Seiffer - Environmental Quality Office - Region 8 - Att: Paul Schmied  
From: Laurence R. Keefe - Assistant Sanitary Engineer - Hornell District Office  
Subject: Keuka Lake Hydroelectric Plant  
Wayne (T) - Steuben County

On August 31, 1979, persons representing the Wayne Town Government, New York State Electric and Gas, Assemblyman Charles Henderson's office, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, New York State Department of Health and the citizenry of the Town of Wayne attended a meeting at the Wayne Town Hall.

The meeting was called by Mr. Charles M. Morris, Supervisor, Town of Wayne, to discuss the effects of water passing from Waneta Lake to Keuka Lake upon the water quality of Keuka Lake. It is apparent that the water which passes from Waneta Lake through the penstock owned by the New York State Electric and Gas Corporation into Keuka Lake is having some deleterious effect upon Keuka Lake north of the point of discharge.

Mr. Morris and residents of the affected area wish to know the degree or extent of contamination upon Keuka Lake that has resulted from the use of this hydroelectric plant. Is this continued contamination going to cause Keuka Lake to become filled with growing weeds or has the situation stabilized with no further deterioration anticipated?

Has your Department conducted studies on Keuka Lake, and, if you have, is that data available? Do you have suggestions as to what might be done to initiate a study?

I would appreciate any assistance or advice that you might offer concerning this matter.

cc: Charles M. Morris, Supervisor, Town of Wayne  
Assemblyman Charles D. Henderson

(over)

*Keuka Lake Shore Property Owners, Inc.*

*Post Office Box 232 \* Penn Yan, New York 14527*

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
Garth A. Shoemaker  
1064 E. Lake Road  
Dundee, N.Y. 14837  
Tel. 607 292 3127

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY  
Mrs. Helen S. Lamont  
R.D. #3  
Penn Yan, New York 14527  
Tel. 315-536-9459

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John E. Kelly

VICE PRESIDENT  
John T. Anderson

SECRETARY  
Kenneth L. Shull

TREASURER  
Robert E. Strick

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD  
William A. Weber

March 9, 1981

*Letter to Comm*  

---

*DICK CAIRO*  
*Same Address*

Mr. Robert J. Bielo  
Executive Director  
Susquehanna River Basin Commission  
Commission Headquarters  
1721 North Front Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17102

Dear Sir:

This letter is offered with the intent of having its contents included in the public hearing to be held March 12, 1981 at 10:00 a.m. at your headquarters.

This association was founded many years ago to assist property owners along the shores of Keuka Lake in matters regarding water level control, water quality, safety and general conservation. (Please see the enclosed brochure.) We have also worked closely with local governments, New York State Electric and Gas Corp. and the Corps of Engineers to achieve our stated goals and also to pursue two long term objectives:

- 1) Better lake level control by reconstruction of the outlet gates owned and operated by the Village of Penn Yan.
- 2) Better water quality control by elimination of the discharge of Waneta-Lamoka Lakes into Keuka at the NYSEG hydroelectric power station in the Town of Wayne.

This hydroelectric power station was constructed in 1923 after the New York State Legislature granted the power company rights to divert Waneta and Lamoka through a canal into a piping system, down the hill and into a turbine system that produces about 1500 kw at peak output

DIRECTORS

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Samuel K. Wolcott, Jr.

PULTENEY  
Wayne W. Wagner  
William A. Weber

AT LARGE  
John E. Kelley



**Charles F. Kennedy**  
Chairman and  
Chief Executive Officer

August 12, 1982

Mr. William A. Weber  
Chairman of the Board  
Keuka Lake Association  
443 East Lake Road  
Penn Yan, New York 14527

Dear Bill:

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Best regards.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Charlie".

Charles F. Kennedy

CFK/pf

SUPERVISOR  
**Town Of Wayne**

Silsbee Rd., P.O. Box 182  
Wayne, N.Y. 14893  
607-292-3450

December 24, 1984

NYSEG

Mr. John T. Schiefen  
480 Border City Road  
P. O. Box 313  
Geneva, New York 14456

Dear John:

I am writing to you about the meeting we held last fall in regards to the operation of the NYSEG hydro plant on Keuka Lake. You will recall there were many questions raised about the operation of the channel between Lakes Lamoka and Waneta to Keuka Lake, and its effect on the residents of Lake Keuka, and the lake itself, from the resulting discharge into Keuka Lake.

You will also recall the meeting was held as a result of my receiving many complaints and a petition of over 500 names demanding that the water from the hydro plant be of equal quality as that of Keuka Lake.

I believe you agreed to get some answers on several questions and/or recommendations made at the meeting. It is imperative that we convene again to review your answers before the busy lake season arrives. This problem has not gone away and will not go away until a satisfactory solution is reached.

I would like to suggest a meeting in March. Would you please send me several dates which are acceptable to you and I will make arrangements for the meeting.

Sincerely,



CHARLES MORSE, Supervisor

cc: John Kelley, Pres. KLPO Assn.  
Fuller Allen, Exec. Dir. KLPO Assn.  
Robert Canfield, Zoning Officer  
Richard K. Charsky, NYSEG  
David Napier, NYS Dept. of Health  
Lawrence Keefe, State Dept. of Health, Hornell  
Bill Mahrt, Watershed Inspector  
Thomas Persons, DEC; James D. Howell, Jr. Schuyler Co. Dept. Health  
John K. Kuhl, NYS Assembly  
William Smith, NYS Senate



February 19, 1985

Charles M. Morse, Supervisor  
Town of Wayne  
Silsbee Rd., P.O. Box 182  
Wayne, N.Y. 14893

Dear Mr. Morse:

This letter is in regard to our meeting of September 1984 and your subsequent letter of December 24, 1984, concerning operation of the Keuka hydro plant located on Keuka Lake.

I would like to propose that we arrange for a meeting on March 20 or 27, whichever is more convenient for you and other interested parties.

This meeting would be to discuss questions and recommendations which were made at our September 1984 meeting.

Please contact me by telephone if one of those dates is agreeable to you. I can be reached at 315-536-2306.

Very truly yours,

Richard K. Charsky

cc: John Schiefen

ec/g

*The above meeting has been set for March 29th at 10:00 AM at the Wayne Town Hall.*

Special Meeting

March 29<sup>th</sup> 1984 --

A meeting was held on March 29th with representatives of the Keuka Lakeshore Property Owners Association, town officials, watershed inspectors, representatives from N.Y.S.E.G., N.Y. state Dept. of Health and a chemist from KLSPO.

Fuller Allen, chairman and executive director of the Lakeshore Property Owners Association, chaired the meeting. The association has a membership of 1300, with 12 directors ( 2 from each township represented).

A meeting was held at an earlier date with concerns of the association and Lake Keuka residents about pollution of the lake caused by operation of the Power Plant. Answers and solutions were addressed at the previous meeting and a continuation of solution to be sought at this time.

It was established that the Power Plant operates under a license, the present license expiring in the year 2002. N.Y.S.E.G. representatives feel that it is probably a 20 year license. The operation is monitored by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. It is believed that the water going into Keuka Lake from the Power Plant is not being tested by the Federal Energy Commission.

It was furthered established by N.Y.S.E.G. that the level of Lamoka and Waneta Lakes were maintained at 1098.0 and 1099.0 feet above sea level under ordinary circumstances. The Plant usually does not operate during midsummer months because of lack of water.

As a result of the discussions N.Y.S.E.G. agreed to monitor the quality of water, produce yearly records of operation and a current operations schedule.

N.Y.S.E.G. has furthered <sup>agreed</sup> to leave 4" by-pass open when not operating. Water samples to be taken once a day each day for one week, once a week for the duration of the closing. Sampling is to be a N.Y.S.E.G. responsibility. Environmental engineers will discuss with D.E.C. as to testing.

It was suggested that N.Y.S.E.G. contact the Penn Yan Municipal Board on releasing water. It was also suggested that written agreements be made for dates of closing and opening of production.

Jeanne Carpenter  
Clerk, Town of Wayne

GENEVA

Office

MAY 2, 1985

*Wanda  
Amoka  
to Keuka*

# LICENSE

TO: R. K. CHARSKY - Penn Yan

RE: KEUKA HYDRO

Attached is a copy of the License for Keuka Hydro as issued to us by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission on March 14, 1983. This License will terminate 20 years from the first day of the month in which it is issued.

At our March 29, 1985 meeting Mr. Fuller Allen requested a copy of this be sent to Charlie Morse. Also, at this meeting Bill Weber requested a net present worth for the Keuka Hydro Plant. At this point, I have been unable to obtain this figure or find out where it is available.

I would appreciate if you could pass this information and a copy of the License to the people that requested it.

*John T. Schiefen*  
John T. Schiefen

JTS:b

Enc.

CC: RS Johnson

JJ Lucia



# Keuka Lake Association

*Keuka Lake Shore Property Owners, Inc.*

Post Office Box 232 \* Penn Yan, New York 14527

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**  
Fuller J. Allen  
443 E. Lake Road  
Penn Yan, N. Y. 14527  
Tel.: 315-536-9436

**EXECUTIVE SECRETARY**  
Mrs. Helen S. Lamont  
Box 118  
Himrod, N.Y. 14842  
Tel.: 607-243-7954

November 7, 1985

Hon. Charles Morse  
Supervisor  
Town of Wayne  
Wayne, New York 14893

Dear Charlie:

Fuller sent me a copy of your clipping and note regarding the serious problem in your part of Keuka caused by the NYSEG hydro power plant.

I am sure you will recall, Charlie, that Fuller, myself, John Andrews, Jack Kelley (dec.) and many others have been supportive of your fine efforts to shut down the power plant.

While progress has not been apparent, I can assure you KLSPO has worked on a strategy of close cooperation of all governmental agencies and personalities.

To this end KLSPO is proud to have John R. Kuhl as it's Secretary. As Randy comes on stream with us, he may well be able to assist all of us with action in Albany to alleviate this horrible discharge into the lake.

I also wish to advise you that KLSPO is in frequent contact with Larry Keefe of the NYS Dept. of Health in Hornell, and I am pleased to tell you that he and others are currently working on a plan to set into law Health Commissioner's regulations for the West Branch and other Steuben County portions of Keuka Lake.

The village of Hammondsport and the Town of Urbana are currently working with KLSPO on this matter and I am personally in contact with Supervisor Wright of Pultney regarding his participation. I am glad to report that the Town of Pultney is supportive of this program.

## DIRECTORS

**URBANA**  
Freeman H. Smith  
William S. Weeks

**WAYNE**  
Lawrence Tallman  
J. Peter Fennell

**BARRINGTON**  
Edward L. Phillips  
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Kenneth Taft

**CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD**

William A. Weber

# Friend Laboratory, Inc.

446 BROAD STREET • WAVERLY, N.Y. 14892-1445

(607) 565-2893

NEW YORK LAB  
#10252

NEW JERSEY LAB  
#73168

PENNSYLVANIA LAB  
#68180

EPA LAB  
# NY 033

October 31, 1986

Mr. Fuller, J. Allen  
Executive Director  
Keuka Lake Shore Property Owners  
443 East Lake Road  
Penn Yan, N.Y. 14527

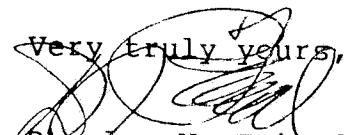
Dear Mr. Allen,

I have examined the chemical report for samples received 8/19/86.  
The results on all the test performed at each location and all results are well within acceptable limits.

Bacteriologically all samples indicate Fecal Coliform. Site 3 and site 7 appear to be quite highly contaminated. I think I would want sites 3 and 7 resampled for Fecal Coli and I would also include Fecal Strep. If these sites are persistantly high, one should examine the area and determine if there is a cause for the contamination.

Although the algae is high, it isn't alarming at that time of the year, I would expect a higher concentration of algae in a body of water.

Very truly yours,

  
Douglas W. Friend

DWF: gwr

#1  
2 <sup>ml</sup> samples were taken  
10 days ago after  
NYSFG start-up.

Will advise

F