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**History of the Oneonta Fair just published;  
“Central New York Fair” was once the second largest in New York State**

ONEONTA, NY – A detailed account of one of Oneonta’s most cherished memories has just been published. *The Oneonta Fair*, authored by Oneonta-area historian Jim Loudon, covers the heyday of the Fair, from the later decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century through the 1920’s. In addition to Loudon’s informative text, the book includes historical photographs, news clippings and ephemera from the popular event, and is supplemented by memories and stories about the Fair from area residents. The book is scheduled for release on May 11 by Capital Region publisher Square Circle Press. It will retail for \$17.95 and will be available at the Greater Oneonta Historical Society, local bookstores, online retailers such as Amazon.com, and on the publisher’s web site ([www.SquareCirclePress.com](http://www.SquareCirclePress.com)).

In 1873 a pair of Oneonta businessmen initiated the Oneonta Fair, an endeavor that would grow into the second largest fair in the State and become known as the Central New York Fair. For one week in September thousands of visitors would fill Oneonta’s streets and hotels, coming from as far away as New England and Pennsylvania. The Fair offered acrobats, wild animals, midway rides, public weddings, parachute jumpers, horse races, and even the Golden Globe of Death! The most popular attraction was the Floral Parade, a procession of horses and floats decorated with hundreds of thousands of flowers, and which drew crowds of 30,000 in a single day. The Fair always tried to provide sensational new attractions, featuring an airship in 1906 and the first airplane in 1910. But, due to the increasing popularity of the automobile during the 1920’s, fairgoers began staying only one day, and attendance began to drop off. In 1927 the Fair was canceled, its iconic and beautiful buildings torn down, and the fairgrounds developed into building lots to create what is today the Belmont Circle neighborhood. 1949 saw an enthusiastic effort to revive the Fair, only to end in disappointment and disgrace.

Peppered with colorful characters and a sense of nostalgia, the story of the Oneonta Fair has been recovered by author and historian Jim Loudon, who has collected images, facts, and personal memories from those who can still recall this fond chapter in Oneonta’s history. The book is heavily illustrated and indexed.

*The Oneonta Fair* will be officially released on May 11, 2013 at a reception held the History Center of the Greater Oneonta Historical Society. The event is being held in conjunction with an exhibit about the Fair, which opened on May 4 and is scheduled to run through July 27. The event is free and open to the public. For more information, visit the GOHS web site at [www.oneontahistory.org](http://www.oneontahistory.org).

Any libraries or retailers interested in the book are encouraged to contact Square Circle Press or one of its distributors.

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