

# Reader Follow-Up: The Canisius Passion Plays

**A**s part of my editor's letter in the Spring 2016 issue, I asked you – our readers – to dig through your collections and submit photographs focused on some aspect of Western New York's history. I am happy to report that several of our readers stepped up and did just that – in a big way!!

In the coming Fall issue, we will devote the pages of our Another Look feature to one of the submitted images, but another image allows us to add to one of the articles that we ran in the spring. A number of years ago, Canisius College alum Sam Tramontana purchased a photo from the early 20th century that depicted a man in theatrical costume standing next to a Curtiss JN-4 "Jenny" aircraft. Emblazoned on the side of the aircraft were the words:

THE PASSION PLAY  
CANISIUS COLLEGE CAMPUS  
BUFFALO, N.Y.

Mr. Tramontana had all but forgotten about the photograph until he read Jack Wysocki's article on the Canisius College Passion Plays in our Spring 2016 issue. The story prompted him to search for the photo and, upon finding it, he sent it to the author, to be donated to the college.

At Western New York Heritage, these are the kinds of stories that make all we do worthwhile. Thanks to Jack's story and to Mr. Tramontana's generosity, the photo will become part of the Canisius College archival collections, where it will be preserved for future generations. Kathleen DeLaney, archivist at



COURTESY SAM TRAMONTANA

Canisius, was extremely helpful in the preparation of the article, and now – thanks to Mr. Tramontana – we have the opportunity to “give something back” to one of the many organizations who share their stories and collections with us, by adding this unique and important image to their collections.

Readers of the Spring issue will recall that, as part of the publicity effort in advance of the 1920 production of the Passion Play, a pilot and plane was secured from the Curtiss Aircraft Company. Over a 10-day period, the Curtiss “Jenny” made about 16 flights across the

region, from Silver Creek to Warsaw. In addition to the pilot, the airplane carried a “courier,” dressed as an ancient Roman, who would dramatically invite audiences to attend the upcoming performances.

Thanks to the quick thinking and generosity of Mr. Tramontana, we are now able to share a photograph documenting this unique marketing effort. Stay tuned for our Fall issue, where we will share the story behind another reader-submitted photo. In the meantime, help us to share more of our region's fascinating history – keep those photos coming! 📷