

# Historical Highlights

Sand Lake Historical Society

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Fall 1998

## 150th Anniversary of the SAND LAKE ASSOCIATION FOR MUTUAL PROTECTION AGAINST HORSE THIEVES

By Mary Pat Hart

### NOTICE

The legislature of the State of New York having passed an act incorporating Jacob Hegeman, Andrew Link, Burton A. Thomas, Coonrad Snyder, Henry D. Uline, John I. Vosburge, Harman Westfall, Philip C. Hayner, David Fellows, George Uline, William Hegeman, Wynant Younghans, and such other persons as may hereafter be associated with them into an association for mutual protection against horse thieves, NOTICE, therefore, is hereby given to those mentioned in said act of incorporation, and to all others who may wish to become members of said association, that a meeting of said association will be held at William Sliter's Inn, in the Village of West Sand Lake, in the Town of Sand Lake, County of Rensselaer, and State of New York, on Saturday, the 28th day of April, 1849, at 2 o'clock P.M. for the purpose of electing officers of said association, receiving members, making by-laws and regulations, and transacting such other business as may legally come before the association.

[signed]

Jacob Hegeman

Burton A. Thomas

Dated at West Sand Lake April 14th, 1849

The Sand Lake Association for the Mutual Protection Against Horse Thieves was incorporated by an act of the Legislature of New York on April 7, 1849. Notices announcing the first meeting were posted at several public places throughout the town. That meeting, called to elect officers, was held on April 28, 1849, at 2 o'clock at William Sliter's Inn in West Sand Lake. The purpose of this organization was to help recover stolen horses of its members and the apprehension of said thieves.

The original boundaries of the organization included what is now Sand Lake, North Greenbush, East Greenbush, Poestenkill, the City of Rensselaer, and parts of Nassau, Scho-dack, Brunswick and Troy.

Following are highlights of the meeting minutes:

■ "On the 29th of October, 1863, Alonzo Thomas, a member of the Association, notified the President that, during the evening, his mare was stolen from his stable, and riders were duly appointed to go in pursuit of her; and on the 30th of October, the officers of the association met and offered the following reward. viz.: Fifty dollars for the recovery and delivery of the mare to the owner, and \$25 for the apprehension of the thief, to be paid upon conviction."

■ "November 10th, 1863. George Miller notified the Association that his father, Jacob Miller, a member of this Association, had one of his horses stolen during the previous night, whereupon:

The officers offered (by hand-bill) \$50.00 reward for the recovery of the horse, and \$100 for the apprehension of the thief, to be paid upon conviction."

■ "December 5th, 1863. After the Association had made long and diligent searches for Alonzo Thomas's mare and Jacob Miller's horse, without success — a meeting of the Directors of the Association was held for the purpose of

appraising and paying for said mare and horse, according to the by-laws, rules and regulations of said Association.

After hearing testimony in reference to the ownership, loss and value of said mare and horse, the Directors unanimously decided to pay Alonzo Thomas \$100.00, being two-thirds the value of the mare stolen, and to pay Jacob Miller \$100.00, being two-thirds of the value of the horse stolen."

■ *January 10th, 1865. The annual election and meeting was held at William Sliter's Inn, in the village of West Sand Lake, pursuant to notice.*

*The mare of Alonzo Thomas, formerly stolen from him, having been found, was returned to him, and he paid back the money (\$100.00) that he had received from the Association for her.*

*Also, Henry D. Uline and Samuel D. Seymour, having found out that one Sidney M. Ballard had had the Jacob Miller horse and sold him into the United States Army, reported the same to the Association, and the Association being about to prosecute Ballard for the horse, he [Ballard] settled by transmitting a draft to the Association for \$100."*

■ *"July 13th, 1865, Eugene Russell, a member of the Association, gave notice that he had a horse stolen from his pasture on the night of the 12th or morning of the 13th, whereupon:*

*The Association offered a reward of \$25 for the horse, and \$50 for the apprehension of the thief, to be paid upon conviction.*

*On the 18th of the same month, Mr. Harden of the Capital Police of the city of Troy, notified the Association that he had found a horse in Troy answering the description of Mr. Russell's horse. The horse was returned and the reward paid."*

■ *"August 9th, 1865; Andrew L. Weatherwax, a member of the Association, by his son Frank, notified the Association that he had a mare stolen from his pasture on the night of the 8th. After a diligent and unsuccessful search for said mare having been made, the officers of the Association met and offered a reward by hand-bill of \$50 for the recovery of the mare, and \$50 for the apprehension of the thief, to be paid upon conviction.*

■ *On the 16th of November, 1865, the mare not being found or heard from, a meeting of the directors was held to appraise and pay for her. After swearing and examining several witnesses, the directors decided to pay Andrew Weatherwax \$133.34, that being two-thirds the value of the mare, and \$9.73 for expenses for the searching for the mare.*

*Also, audited \$7.40 to H.D. Uline for hunting for her."*

*The minutes continued to record many lost, stolen and found horses.*

During the first 49 years: "This Association by vigilance and effort all of the nineteen horses stolen from members, excepting two, have been recovered; and these two were promptly settled, in accordance with the By-Laws."

In the minutes of the Sixth Edition of the Association, published by order of the Association, dated January 11, 1898, there were approximately 325 members listed. Some of the more than 1,500 past and present members included many local families — Shavers, Rescott, Miller, Hart, Swartwout, Besch — to name a few. The present Secretary, Mary Pat Hart has old records, if any one would be interested in checking former or current members.



50 YEARS AGO: Members of the Association that were over 80 years old in 1948. left to right, seated, John Schuman, 92, Elmer J. Hogle, 85, Adelbert S. Reichard, 88, and standing, J. Henry Lerch, 83, and Albert H. Clippert, president of the organization, who was 80. [From the Sorenaco Sun, January 6, 1976.]



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The Association continues to meet annually. Our 1998 (150th Annual) Meeting, will continue on for mostly nostalgic reasons. The meetings are on the Sunday afternoon prior to Election Day. This year November 1, 1998. The time and location to be announced, so watch your local paper. In addition to the "normal" order of business, "current events" fuel and gas prices, temperature, news events, etc. are reported in the minutes. The traditional distributing of cigars at the end of each meeting has been dispensed with, since most attending members are nonsmokers. At the 1997 annual meeting the horse census of the active membership was 32 horses and 2 donkeys (ass). The oldest horse belonging to a member (the Besch's Hobo) died during 1997 at the age of 31 years. Our most senior member is Stanley Motilage, who joined in 1943. Our youngest members are infants Jonas Christianson and Justin Clark. Our membership roster indicates five generations of families in our 150-year history. Other current members are George Tashjian, Jr. President and Donna White and Louis Besch, Directors. New members are always welcome. Contact Mary Pat Hart, Secretary-Treasurer, at (518) 283-2705. ↴

## THE SAGA OF THE SAMPLER

By Eva Gemmill

A little girl named Amanda Reichard carefully cross-stitched a sampler at her home in Sand Lake in the 1840s. Creating such exquisite embroideries of alphabets and aphorisms was a popular occupation for early 19th century girls like Amanda. It was thought to teach them patience and other virtues, as well as needle skills. Amanda finished off the piece with her name, address (Sand Lake), and date of birth (1833).

By the spring of 1998, Amanda's sampler, framed and still very beautiful, had attained a market value that would have astounded her family. Somehow, in the ensuing century and a half, the sampler had found its way to Tennessee and was on the verge of being sold to a collector in Atlanta. Fortunately the owner very thoughtfully gave first choice to the sampler's place of origin.

Her letter of inquiry to the Town of Sand Lake, with a photo of the treasure, was forwarded to Bea Danks, president of the Sand Lake Historical Society. Not finding Reichards in Sand Lake, but knowing of Poestenkill Reichards, Bea phoned a Poestenkill friend, Eva Gemmill. Meanwhile the deadline on the



Atlanta sale was imminent. One Reichard whom Eva contacted agreed with her that the proper repository for Amanda's sampler was the Rensselaer County Historical Society, where he would subsidize its cost.

So moving briskly forward, Eva approached Rensselaer County Historical Curator Stacy Draper. Delighted with the find, Stacy quickly consummated an arrangement with the owner of the Amanda's sampler. The sampler is now in the collection of the Rensselaer County Historical Society. Now all persons who are interested in the skilled needlework of a little girl from Sand Lake (or possibly Poestenkill, since the two towns were not separated until 1848) can request to view it. Please call in advance of your visit.

And many thanks to the Tennessee antiquarian and Stacy Draper!

*[NOTE: Efforts have been made to trace Amanda. It was first assumed that she would be the granddaughter of Michael Rykert who had a farm of 159 acres on today's Reichard Lake in the 1790s. This couldn't be verified in local records. But it's a nice thought.]*



## SLHS MEMORIAL AWARDS

Winners of this year's Historical Society Memorial Awards are Erin Wilbur and Michael Callagan of the class of 1998. The awards were given this year in memory of Velma K. Bushell and Irving H. Edwards. The awards were presented to Erin and Michael during the awards program for seniors and their families on June 25, at Averill Park High School. Erin is the daughter of Kelvin Wilbur of Burden Lake Road. Michael is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Vincent Callagan of Booming Grove Drive.

In addition to our Society history awards, three other history awards were presented. The Daughters of the American Revolution, Fort Crailo Chapter, Award was presented to Katherine Metzger. The Limars Akots Memorial Award to Stephen Grogan; and the Helen Radz Memorial Award to Rachel Perkins.

## SEPTEMBER 8, 1998, MEETING: THE JOY OF QUILTS

Our new year begins with the program "The Joy of Quilts" on September 8th at 7:30 p.m. at the Sand Lake Town Hall. The program is presented by Claudia Kingsley, an antiques dealer located in Malden Bridge. Claudia's love of Quilts began with an old quilt at her parents' camp and an interest in the artistry and history of the women who made them. She recognizes quilts one of one of our first recycling projects in the home.

Ms. Kingsley will bring some unique quilts from her own collection and invites to you to bring your favorite to show. She will talk about some of the history of quilts as demonstrated by her quilts and then answer questions you have in general or about your quilt. Come and bring a friend.

Watch *The Advertiser* for news of future meetings and programs!



## OFFICE HOURS

The office of the Town Historian now has expanded hours. For the convenience of the public, the office will be opened Tuesdays from 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., Wednesday from 5:00-7:00 p.m., and by appointment.



## TOWN HISTORIAN RECEIVES AWARD

Judy Rowe, our Town Historian, has recently received the Sons of the American Revolution Medal of Appreciation. The medal was presented at a luncheon meeting of the Saratoga Battle Chapter of the SAR. Among her many activities such as the Daughters of the Revolution, Glass Factory historian, local genealogy research and underground railroad studies, she found time to be a constant booster of the SAR and the Saratoga Battle.



## SAVE YOUR FAMILY'S MEMORIES

In a joint project between Circle Theatre Players and the Sand Lake Historical Society, we are asking you to share with us those sayings, legend, tales and short stories that have been passed down in your family from the period when your ancestors immigrated from Europe, Russia, China, Africa, South America, et.al., to the towns of Sand Lake or Poestenkill. Your story can be sent to Joan Fuess, 65 Schumann Road, Averill Park, New York 12018. The deadline is September 15th.

The works will be displayed at the Church of the Covenant in October to coincide with the Circle Theatre Players production of *Becoming Memories*. This play with music follows five families through five generations in a small town in the West. Production dates are October 16-17 and 23-24 at 8:00 p.m., and October 18 and 25 at 2:30 p.m. Call 674-2154 for information.

## ULINESVILLE

Barent Uline, one of the early settlers of the Town of Sand Lake, had a 525-acre farm prior to 1788. On April 5, 1793, he renewed his lease with Stephen Van Rensselaer with an annual payment of a number of bushels of wheat, 4 fat hens and 1 day service. The farm was located in what is now West Sand Lake and was bisected by the Wynantskill Creek. It was the site of the earliest saw mill, Carpenter and Lockwood. The Uline family operated a grist mill and fulling mill.

On August 23 of this year, the descendants of Barent Uline returned to West Sand Lake for their first family reunion, held at the Salem Methodist Church in West Sand Lake.



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*FORWARDING/ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED*

Sand Lake Historical Society

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**Historical Highlights**

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**FIRST CLASS MAIL**