



Historical Highlights

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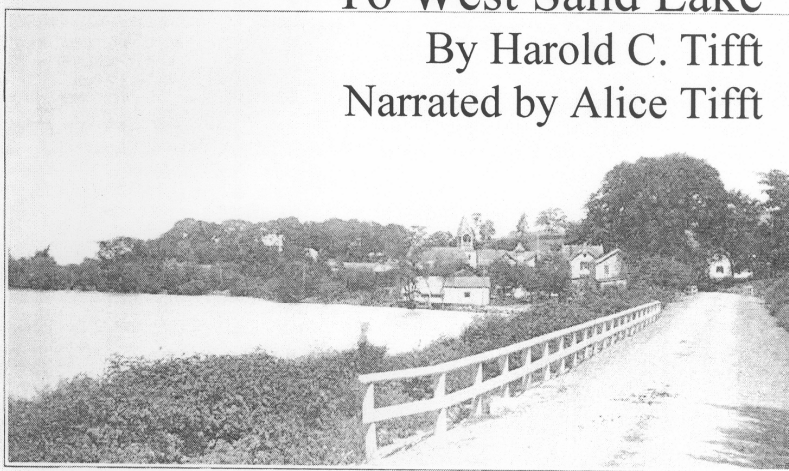
A Journey by Post Card...

from Cooked Lake to West Sand Lake — a series of 121 postcards with accompanying script by first town historian Harold Tiffit and narrated by his wife Alice Tiffit. We again say thank you to Alice and her daughter Linda Matlock for their help in making this historical gift to our community possible.

A Journey by Postcard

From Crooked Lake To West Sand Lake

By Harold C. Tiffit
Narrated by Alice Tiffit



GLASS LAKE, SAND LAKE, RENNELAER COUNTY, N. Y.

A Journey by Postcard - From Crooked Lake to West Sand Lake

Digital Presentation Courtesy of
Sand Lake Historical Society 2006



DVD and VHS versions are available through the Sand Lake Historical Society for \$18.00 with postage \$1.75 for each copy. Copies have also been given to the Town Library. Contact Mary French (674-5710) or by mail. Here's a one-of-a-kind gift for the holidays. ☺☺

Upcoming Programs

December 12, 6:30 p.m.: Our meeting will again be the scrumptious covered dish Christmas Party hosted by Ron Berti and Barbara Neu at their historical home, the Knowlson House. Marieke Leeverink from Holland will speak about her work/research on Dutch barns. Bring your favorite dish to share and nonperishable food items for Doors of Hope.

January 9, 2007: Allen Fuess will discuss and display his collection of walking sticks.

February 13: Geoff Stein of the New York State Museum will talk about two generations of the creative Weeber family and their 67-year relationship with the NYS Museum. Christian Weeber was a pioneer auto inventor and builder, and his daughter Marion was a designer.

Sand Lake Revisited

The Sand Lake Historical Society will be publishing another book: *Images of America: SAND LAKE REVISITED*. Mary D. French and Andrew St.J. Mace are the co-authors. The book will be an update on events since our first book in 2001 and will expand on organizations, recreation, businesses and services that have been or are within the town. Our community was so generous before and we are asking you again to loan us pictures, postcards and information and suggestions for us to consider including in our new book. Please think that *whatever you have* is possible for inclusion. We are interested in looking at it. Contact Mary French (674-5710) and/or Andy Mace (766-5413) or e-mail sandlakehistory@aol.com.

Can you help with these questions that have come up as we have been working on our new book?

- Where was Harry Ostrom's Sinclair Gas Station?
- Who were the Larkin Brothers in the Funeral Home business in 1904?
- Does anyone have a picture of Rendert's Garage, particularly during their time as a Ford dealer?
- Where did Dr. Reichard have his office? Did he live in Averill Park village, on Glass Lake, or both?
- Does anyone know about a jug breaking ceremony? At Olive Chapel M.E. Church (now Church of the Covenant) on March 17, 1886, there was a Grand Concert and Jug Breaking and prizes were awarded. There are a couple of Biblical references to jug breaking.
- Although not located within the Town of Sand Lake, does anyone have a photograph of the roadside sign advertising the Park Pharmacy with the legend "Jerry Lewis Worked Here"?

Contact Mary and/or Andy if you have any answers!

SLHS on the Internet

Just a reminder that we're on the Internet at:

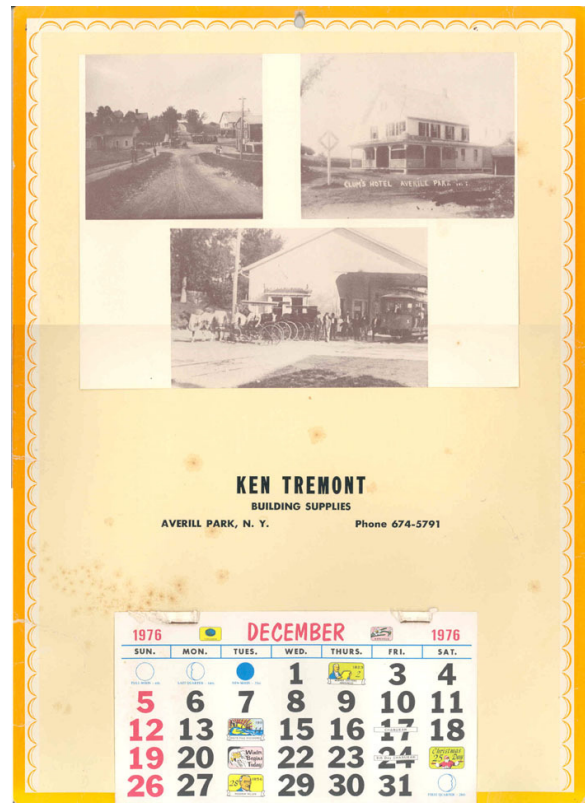
<http://members.aol.com/sandlakehistory/>

See a schedule of upcoming meetings and events as well as a number of feature stories of our Town's history!



Tremont calendars

We have two more of our missing Tremont calendars, thanks to Gladys Larkin.

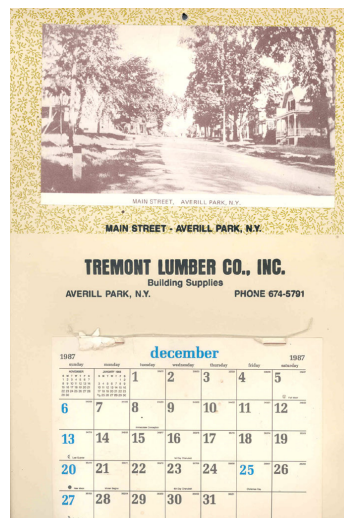


The 1976 calendar had three small pictures at the Troy & New England Railway. The bottom picture shows the horses covered and waiting for the trolley which has just arrived. As soon as they are loaded, the last phase for the passengers getting off the trolley will soon be underway. The upper left photo show a distance view of the trolley coming into the Averill Park station and Clum's Hotel, the white building on the right. The picture in the upper right shows a close up of Clum's Hotel, which is still standing and is an apartment house.

The 1987 calendar is a view of Main Street, Averill Park looking west from the corner of Routes 43 and (old) 66 and Eastern Union Turnpike towards the current Jiffy Mart; the trees are no more.

See larger versions of these calendars soon on the Sand Lake Historical Society web site:

<http://members.aol.com/sandlakehistory/>



The Wooden Structure Located on the Corner of Burden Lake Road and Routes 43/66 in Averill Park, NY

Our feature article is the building generally known as the Averill Park Variety Store and now known as Island Bob's General Store. Clare Radz shares her memories and Robert Phaneuf and Diane DeBlois add the restoration and new focus of today's re-creation of that landmark. On this page is a photo of the building as it appeared in the early 1900s.

Memories from Clare Radz

My first memory of this building is in the mid-1930s. The entrance to the building was then located in the front facing Routes 43/66. The side entrance used at present was not in existence at that time.

The front half of the building was used as a United States Post Office. The Postmaster was Pierce Kane. He

In the rear half of the building there was a dry goods store operated by two maiden sisters, Elsie and Edith Werger. The entrance to that store was near where the present door is located in the side toward the rear of the building. The store was stocked with hundreds of items. Some items I remember: shoes, overshoes, sweaters, sewing thread, and supplies, lace, costume jewelry, hair ribbons and accessories, gloves, mittens, hats, embroidery materials and baby items. I remember especially buying a pair of silk baby shoes for my newborn brother in March of 1943. By the year 1943 the post office had been relocated and the space it had occupied in the front was now being used as a drug store. It was operated by Benjamin Silberg. I recall it as being well stocked with health related items and personal care items such as hot water bottles, tooth powder, shaving needs, etc. I don't recall any food items being sold in that store. Out-of-town doctors usually gave pills or cough syrup, etc., along with an office call or home call.

One year, Mr. Silberg decided to boost business by running a contest especially for the young people of the



was father of Helen Kane, later Postmaster at another building in town serving as post office. He was also father of Mary Kane O'Donnell who was a librarian in the Averill Park School system. My parents got their mail there. After a few years Averill Park was given an R.F.D. #1 (Rural Free Delivery) and we had the standard metal mail box near our own home on Burden Lake Road.

town. He displayed many items on a high shelf along one wall of the store. The prized item was a shiny red bicycle. There were many lesser items such as baseball gloves, skates, cameras, toy air planes, dolls and lots more. Each item was assigned a number of points. Those who wanted to earn one of the prizes could do so by selling items Mr. Silberg supplied. I remember specifically lovely smelling face soaps, Christmas cards

and packets of garden seeds. I really wanted that bike and did a lot of hard work going door to door. My dad even drove my brother and me to Nassau and we knocked on doors there also. I didn't earn the bike but I did get a bakelite Brownie camera. I used that camera a great deal until Kodak stopped making film size 127.

About 1943, Mr. Silberg relocated his drug store to the building that had housed Frank Sowalski's Ice Cream Shop on Main Street.

The structure at Burden Lake Road and Routes 43/66 was purchased by John and Elva Shaudt. In about 1946 I began working there. They utilized the entire building as a Variety Store. There was a marble ice cream fountain and four high backed wooden booths along the left wall. The opposite wall was floor to ceiling shelves where all sorts of grocery items were displayed. In the center were several oak and glass display cases where "variety" was displayed. They stocked all sorts of gift items such as jewelry, lace collars, perfumes, hair adornments, knick knacks and boxed candy. There was a meat counter. They sold beer and soda also — no beer until noon on Sunday and no kids were allowed to purchase beer or cigarettes for dads. They also stocked bread and bakery items.

The store was kept immaculately clean. I worked from approximately 1946 through 1948 when I graduated from High School. One of my duties was dusting some areas of the store everyday using a feather duster. My other duty was manning the ice cream fountain and being a waitress. The Schaudt's niece Barbara was an orphan and lived with John and Elvira. She worked at the fountain also. The family lived upstairs. It was one huge room with a few curtain partitions.

Some time after 1948 the building was sold to Ray and Vera Eastman and Ray's father. Sometime during the Eastman tenure the front entrance was removed and the present side door was installed. I don't know exactly when the fountain and tables were removed to make room for more of the items needed day to day such as yarn, table oilcloth, window shades, school supplies, magazines, etc. I believe the Eastmans concentrated more on meat business also as the senior Mr. Eastman was a butcher. I worked there at the cash register briefly in 1957 but found that I was needed more at home with my then three children. The store remained this way for many years.

Building history and the current *Island Bob's General Store* from Bob Phaneuf and Diane DeBlois

The building that is now *Island Bob's General Store*, is not recorded on F.W. Beers' 1876 map of Sand Lake, but was probably built soon thereafter on the site of a structure owned by blacksmith James G. Payne. It shares several architectural features (dentil molding;

scallop shingles; mansard roof with Philadelphia gutters) with the large mansard-roofed house on Burden Lake Road built by Nicholas T. Kane after 1880 when he took over the management of the James Aken Hosiery Mill.

The proud edifice has housed many businesses over the years including: the post office in the front half with a door onto Route 43 and a dry goods store in the back opening onto Burden Lake Road. Elsie and Edith Werger and Jake Wargar, ran the dry goods half at different times. When the post office was moved, the front became Benjamin Silberg's Drug Store before he opened Park Pharmacy down the street. John and Elva Shaudt then operated the whole building as a variety store (ice cream parlor, groceries, notions, clothing) and lived upstairs. They sold to Ray and Vera Eastman and Ray's father, who was a master butcher.

When Bob and Renee Phaneuf bought the building last year their first concern was to restore the handsome mercantile structure which had become quite dilapidated — a labor of love more costly and time-consuming than they'd anticipated. Outside, from the top down, they rebuilt the glass cupola-style skylight, and made extensive repairs to the slate roof with its tricky, integral Philadelphia-style gutters. Many of the wall clapboards needed replacing, as did hundreds of the scalloped cedar siding shingles, which had to be cut by hand. Several of the old windows had been boarded up, and they opened them again, replacing glass and replicating the original moldings. Modern doors were replaced with a handsome oak set rescued from an Albany school. A paint scheme in two colors of sage green plus ivory was chosen to set off these architectural details while being historically correct.

Inside, from the bottom up, they removed a mass of garbage and broken fixtures from the basement, cleaned, painted and installed a wonderfully smooth new concrete floor. On the main level, they sanded the hardwood floors, cleaned and restored all the store furnishings and bought historic new pieces from Albany's architectural salvage. The old kitchen area was completely redesigned with a classic black and white tile floor, cleaning and using what old fixtures were possible and buying others. They put in new lighting that harmonized with the old general store feeling. Upstairs, they removed the recent room dividers to restore the meeting hall to its original glory: windows on three sides and bead board wainscoting on walls and ceiling (Dede Neremberg's weaving studio occupies the space now). They sanded the floors, renovated the bathroom and two other rooms for offices.

In restoring the building to its proud place as architectural centerpiece to commercial Main Street, the Phaneufs were also committed to the revival of the old-fashioned general store: a meeting place for the community to buy their essentials (like the daily paper, bread, coffee, beer, milk, cigarettes) and specialties (like pies, muffins, cookies baked on the premises, take-out or

eat-in deli food). Since they opened earlier this year, they have concentrated on offering healthier and more local choices: milk in glass bottles from a nearby dairy, organic meats and cheeses from local farms, a huge selection of imported and micro-brewed beers and much more.

If you haven't been to the store lately, stop in to see what new items they've added – and take pride in one of the most beautiful historic renovations and retail spaces in the state...right in our town.

Clare Radz also provides us with this information and clarifies the location of the place where Jerry Lewis was a soda jerk when he lived in Averill Park.

My husband, Don Radz, attended Averill Park High School from September 1941 to June 1945. He recalls that during his sophomore year Jerry Lewis became a student at the High School. He attended one school year.

Don believes that Jerry's parents were on an overseas tour to entertain troops. We have a friend who was in show business during that period of time and she has



confirmed this. Jerry's mother was a singer and his father a pianist. [Publisher's note: the web site jerrylewiscomedy.com describes his parents: "Jerry's father was the 'total entertainer,' his mother played piano at New York City radio station WOR,

made musical arrangements, and was her husband's musical director." The picture here depicts Jerry circa 1941.]

Jerry lived with an aunt and uncle in Burden Lake area while attending Averill Park High School. There was no connection with Totem Lodge.

Don rode on the same school bus as Jerry and he recalls that he always got off the bus at Silberg's store. He did work behind the ice cream counter. The drug store was then located on Main Street where there is now in operation a pizza parlor. The business was owned by Ben and Irma Silberg. In addition to the usual drug business, Mr. Silberg made all the ice cream sold at the fountain from recipes purchased with the building from Mr. Frank Sowalski.

I have conferred with Barbara Blassberg, daughter of the Silbergs and she believes these are the correct facts. [Publisher's note: here, from a post card, is a photo of the drug store and post office as they appeared in the late 1940s.]

From the president

Be forthcoming! Encouraging speaking about remembrances is a strong part of this message. Recent calls from interested folks contribute to an article about Hyman H. Butler. Questions to people whom I meet at the post office, Miller's and Island Bob's General Store gather bits more. His businesses, farming, horses and philanthropy remain in memories around Averill Park. My seeking continues. Kindly call or e-mail at 518-674-2742 or <nanwd@mailstation.com> to contribute information for *Historical Highlights*.

Appreciation to editor Mary French and publisher Andy Mace for another fine, informative *Historical Highlights*, Fall 2006; and to Andy Mace for establishing and maintaining the Sand Lake Historical Society web site! The dedication of Mary and Andy deserves repeated thank yous.

Looking forward to upcoming programs, particularly December 12 (6:30 p.m.), when Marieke Leeverink from Holland will speak. Our guest at the Christmas Party, Marieke will make this an opportunity to speak about her work/research on Dutch barns before her return to Holland. We extend gratitude to Ron Berti and Barbara Neu for hosting this event again this season. Bring your favorite dish to share for our covered dish dinner and nonperishable food items for Doors of Hope.

Offering wishes to all for safe, healthy and blessed holidays!

Family trees grow; history unfolds, changes yearly and gives pause to us elders to long for the time and place to talk about "it." Your Historical Society can be that place for you. Come, join and enjoy the opportunity!
— Nancy W. Davis, President



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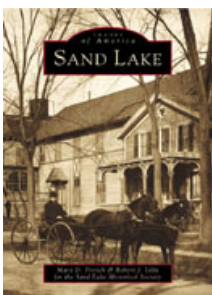
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Historical Highlights
Mary French, Editor
Andrew Mace, Publisher





Sand Lake Historical Society

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