



# Historical Highlights

Official Publication of the Sand Lake Historical Society

Volume 36, Number 1

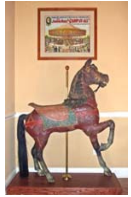
1974 · Celebrating our 35<sup>th</sup> Year · 2009

Fall 2009

## From the president

This is an historic year!!

- 1 Hudson-Fulton-Champlain Quadricentennial events abound. Check these: 9/12, Crailo Harvest Faire [www.nysparks.com](http://www.nysparks.com); 9/19, Return of Half Moon to Albany [www.newnetherland.org](http://www.newnetherland.org); 9/19-9/20, Stuyvesant Quad celebration – Stuyvesant [www.stuyvesantny.us](http://www.stuyvesantny.us); 9/26, Hudson 400 Celebration – Albany [www.albany.com](http://www.albany.com) [See also <[www.exploreny400.com](http://www.exploreny400.com)>]; Sand Lake Center for the Arts programs [see *Highlights* listing or [slca-ctp.org](http://slca-ctp.org)]
- 1 Our Sand Lake Historical Society is 35years old
- 1 Sand Lake Historical Society and the Bicentennial Planning Committee are co-sponsors of the September meeting. Covered dish get-togethers were yesteryear's catering service. Glass Lake and Sand Lake Baptist Church will be the event-featured history places this year
- 1 The Girl Scouts look forward the final stage of the Cotton House project, the placing of the historical marker on the property and unveiling the new sign. Watch the *Advertiser* for the date.



- 1 Our Antiques Appraisal Day will have noted appraiser Mark Lawson, a local sponsor of the PBS series *Antiques Road Show*, and two other appraisers recommended by Mark. (see publicity article)
- 1 The biography of Mascot in our feature article by William "Bill" Benjamin (page 3) is a priceless history of the carousel at Crystal Lake Park. We look forward to your remembrances.
- 1 "Averill Park, Why do I love you so much" by Matt Baumgartner received 45 positive responses by July 25<sup>th</sup> at <<http://blog.timesunion.com.baumgartner/averill-park/1180/>>
- 1 On page 90 in our *Sand Lake* book, we have a picture of the dugout canoe taken from Glass Lake

in 1893, which has been in the NYS Museum since 1917. On display in the former museum, it was in storage for many years and now is part of the "1609" exhibit for the Quadricentennial at the State Museum until March 7, 2010.

[www.nysm.nysed.gov/exhibits/special/1609.cfm](http://www.nysm.nysed.gov/exhibits/special/1609.cfm)

Unless otherwise specified, our programs are at 7:30pm at Sand Lake Baptist Church, route 43 in Averill Park. We look forward to seeing you there. — *Mary French*

## Upcoming programs and events

- 1 The Sand Lake Historical Society's September's "picnic" will be held in cooperation with the Town Bicentennial Planning Committee's annual celebration. It will be a covered dish dinner at 5:45 pm at Sand Lake Baptist Church on Saturday, **September 19<sup>th</sup>** (**note the date change**). The program will be a slide presentation of "Rensselaer (Glass House) Village and Glass Lake Glass" by Judy Rowe and the Town will present a resolution honoring Sand Lake Baptist Church as "oldest public building in the Town of Sand Lake". Please contact Nancy W. Davis 674-2742 or Marilyn Widmer 674-4117 for suggestions of raffle items and for reservations (not necessary but helpful to know). Bring a dish to share; place setting and beverage will be provided.
- 1 On **October 13<sup>th</sup>** Marvin Bubie will be sharing the many municipal seals he has compiled into his book "*On the Trail of Henry Hudson and Our Dutch Heritage*". He will also be presenting this program through the Quadricentennial Committee in Troy in September.
- 1 **November 10<sup>th</sup>** will be Walter (Wally) Wheeler, Senior Architectural Historian for Hartgen Archeological Associates presenting a program on 17th century New World Dutch buildings. Archeological excavations of the past 40 years have brought to light remains of several 17<sup>th</sup> century structures located in the vicinity of present-day Albany, revealing the building methods, materials and technologies used in the construction of these structures. These results combined with information culled from contemporary documents and historic graphic materials give a clearer picture of the development of a regional New World Dutch vernacular.

1 On **December 8<sup>th</sup>** we will again enjoy the hospitality of Barbara Neu and Ronald Berti at their beautifully restored Knowlson House on Schumann Road. This is a covered dish dinner. Our program will be Kathy Sheehan, Rensselaer County Historian who will explore the history of the towns and cities that border the Hudson River from Schodack to Schaghticoke using historic maps, photographs and letters.

#### Other events:

1 The Sand Lake Historical Society's **Antiques Appraisal Day will be September 26<sup>th</sup>**, at Miller Hill School, junction of NY Routes 43 & 66 from 10am-2pm. Appraisers with their specialties are: Mark Lawson, WMHT Antiques Road Show sponsor, from Saratoga - jewelry, watches, coins, currency and oriental rugs; Nancy Toomer of House of Rose Antiques in Niskayuna - glassware, china, table linens and silver; Dennis Holzman of Holzman Antiques in Albany - rare books, maps, prints, paintings, furniture and decorative accessories. Objects will be identified, described and given a verbal evaluation for \$5 per item or 3 for \$10. Large items may be left outside where they will be viewed in place or you may bring a clear photo of the article to be appraised. For more information, please call Nancy W. Davis at 674-2742.

1 New York State Archives Month Exhibit will again be a cooperative effort between the Sand Lake Historical Society and Town Historian. Featuring "The Glass Factory and Rensselaer (Glass House) Village" in the Town Hall, will be three show cases of pictures, glass workers' tools and hand-blown glass pieces from the Rensselaer Factory, as well as a display of Glass House buildings. Judy Rowe will be speaking on this topic at our September meeting and the display will be available in September as well as during the NYS Archival Month of October.

## SLCA celebrates 400 years of history

**Celebrating 400 Years of History  
with the Hudson-Fulton-Champlain Quadricentennial  
Sand Lake Center for the Arts**

- ✚ September 12, 2009 - 8pm - \$18: Music Favorites of Hudson River School Artists, by the Musicians of Ma'alwyck
- ✚ October 4, 2009 - 2:30 pm - no cost: Remembering Life in Albany and the Hudson River Area; Readings by William Kennedy
- ✚ October 10, 2009 - 8pm - \$16: Folk Songs and Lore of the Hudson River Valley by Rich Bala and the Barefoot Boys
- ✚ November 1, 2009 - 2:30pm - free: Remembering Life in Albany and the Hudson River Area; Lecture and Discussion by Fred LeBrun
- ✚ Scenes of Early Life in Albany and the Hudson River Area by Len Tantillo: Gallery Show of historical prints runs November 14 - December 31 - free. Reception 2:30pm - November 22 - free.

Slide Show Presentation 2:30pm, December 6, 2009.  
Adults - \$10; Under 18 - \$5

## 2012 Bicentennial Planning Committee

Please (see Historical Society programs) for publicity on the co-sponsored Covered Dish /Bicentennial Dinner on September 19<sup>th</sup>.

Plans for a **trolley tour on August 25, 2012**, are underway.

The **Salute and Scoot fund raiser** 5K run/walk at Algonquin School add to the excitement. Watch for announcement of the September or October Saturday date. You are encouraged to participate and/or volunteer for this event.

The town board is kept informed of BCP planning and has agreed to an **addition to the town logo**. It will now be *Porches, Picnics, Progress & Preservation*. — Nancy W. Davis, co-chair— *Nancy W. Davis*

## Gifts of history

Have you found someone to give a copy of *Sand Lake Revisited*? The Society realizes a 50% profit from their sales and receives a 10% royalty for sales in other venues. The cost of *Sand Lake Revisited* is \$21.60 (inc. tax) and \$3.00 shipping, for each copy. *Sand Lake*, our first book, is available for \$20.50 (inc. tax). Copies are for sale at the Town Clerk's Office for the Society. You may also contact Mary French (674-5710) or send an order to Sand Lake Historical Society. The VHS or DVD, "A Journey by Postcard from Crooked Lake to West Sand Lake" is available for \$18.00 with postage \$1.75 for each copy. Robert J. Lilly's book *The Wynants Kill: a small stream, but mighty* is available for \$16.20 (inc. tax). You may contact Mary French (674-5710) or send an order to Sand Lake Historical Society PO Box 492, West Sand Lake, NY 12196. Order information is also available on our web site.

We have a new set of note cards available, which includes: I.N. Wright's Drug Store, Troy & New England Railway Station, Minahan's Wendell Inn (Crooked Lake House), the Butts House (now Cumberland farms site), the Fox Mansion and the Knowlson House. The set of six costs \$8.25 (inc. tax) and may be purchased from Chris Kronau, Ways & Means chair.

## SLHS on the Internet

**Our web site address is:** <http://sandlakehistory.org!>  
**Our e-mail address is:** [sandlakehistory@aol.com](mailto:sandlakehistory@aol.com)

## Dues are due!

The number after your name on this issue of *Historical Highlights* is your membership date. Dues are for the year June 1 to May 31. If the number is 2009 you're due and we thank you for renewing your membership on the form in this issue. Not renewing will mean your subscription to *Historical Highlights* will stop.

## Did you ride “Mascot” on the Carousel at Crystal Lake Park?

William (Bill) Benjamin emailed the Sand Lake Historical Society’s web site for information on the carousel at Crystal Lake Park. Pictures printed from Charles Viens’ negatives were shared with him. Continued correspondence kept us in the loop until the article “History of Mascot on the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Louis Bopp–Charles Loeff Carousel” was published in the June 2009 issue of *The Carousel News and Trader*. We have Bill’s permission to share his excellent history of the carousel from the late 1890s until 1978 in this issue of *Historical Highlights* and have indicated those quoted sections with some minor changes. And however big a thank you we can extend to you, Bill, it is humbly and gratefully given.

Bill Benjamin had obtained “Mascot, an early Loeff Stander.” Was this merry-go-round horse, which had been severely charred in a house fire, one of those many hand-carved pieces made by Charles Loeff? With utmost care and patience Bill removed Mascot’s burned exterior and coats of paint down to his original beautiful coat. [*Right: Mascot restored to his original magnificence*]. Now came many questions. How old was Mascot? Who did make him? When and where did Mascot receive riders?

The article in the September/October 1999 issue of *Reminisce* by Robert Kolb, whose grandfather Edward Henry Kolb owned and operated the carousel at Crystal Lake, had the picture of the Louis Bopp – Charles Loeff Carousel. Bill found Mascot with his “distinctive whorl-like pattern mane. The presence of the 45-star flags dates the photograph to be as early as July 4, 1896.”

Mascot’s biography now began in earnest. Robert Kolb’s brother, Henry (Hank), provided Bill with information that “the Louis Bopp-manufactured carousel began its life at Sulzer’s Harlem River Park, New York City. Following the refurbishing and conversion of the stationary carousel, to include jumpers on alternating 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> rows, the Kolbs relocated the carousel in 1908 to New Rensselaer Park in the Lansingburgh section of Troy.



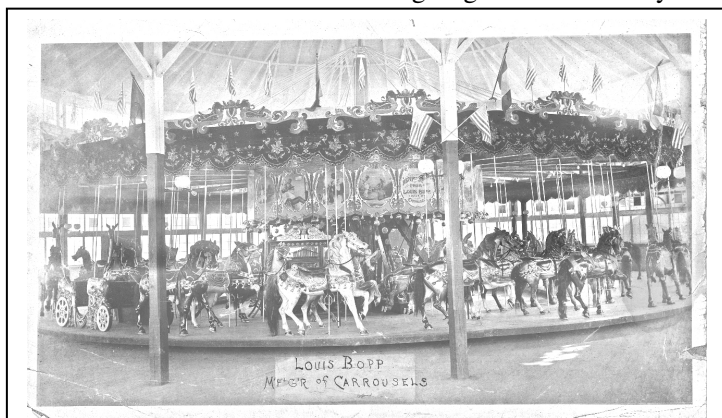
the time the carousel was at Ford Park in Green Island ca. 1922 – 1926.”

“Robert Kolb has indicated that the carousel and the building were moved the 20 miles to Averill Park via the United Traction Company trolley line.” The Troy and New England Railway was “no longer providing public transportation so perhaps it was contracted with specifically to move the carousel.”

Bill continues with Mascot’s biography. “Hank and Robert Kolb have provided a wealth of history about the carousel at Crystal Lake Park. Crystal Lake was referred to as ‘the upstate Coney Island’; as a teenager Hank Kolb worked there at the carousel from the late 1930s to the mid-1940s. Based on his account, Crystal Lake Park was owned by the Wagstaff family. His grandfather, Edward, rented the property and paid a portion of the ticket proceeds to Mr. Wagstaff.”

“Rides at Crystal Lake were 5 cents each or six for 25 cents. Hank would play two 78-rpm songs per ride on a Victrola record player. Hank admitted that he would often give ‘pretty young girls’ free rides. In the mid-1940s, ticket prices were raised to 8 cents. The carousel had a total of 58 figures and two chariots at this time. Like his father before him, Edward Kolb had names for many of the horses. The names were usually painted in small block letters, which also explains the continuation for Mascot’s name for an extended number of years.”

“‘Kitty’ and ‘Five Star’ were the names for two of the horses according to the Kolbs. Edward often painted the



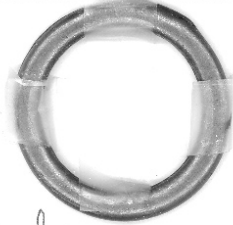
**This original picture of the Kolb’s Louis Bopp–Charles Loeff carousel at Sulzer’s Harlem River Park was given to the SLHS by Robert Kolb.**

Advertised as a monster carousel, it remained there until the park closed in 1920. Little information is known about



saddles red, which accounts for the remnants of red paint discovered on Mascot's saddle during conservation."

"According to Hank the carousel had a 'Ring Game', an arm filled with rings and an occasional brass ring. Riders



The old brass ring found over by the old merry-go-round site at Crystal Lake.

Donated by George Wright in April 1991.  
M.V. Carpenter

**The old brass ring found over by the old merry-go-round site at Crystal Lake. Donated by George Wright in April 1991. M.V. Carpenter**

on the outer figures would pull out the rings and return them to a bushel basket. The rider that pulled the brass ring would win a free ride. Hank recalls picking up many rings that missed the basket."

"Hank Kolb relates that Crystal Lake Park had a number of entertainment attractions during the 1940s. One building housed a variety of games, including a ring toss and a milk bottle game. An ice cream parlor and a dance hall that opened on Saturday nights for round and square dancing were also present. A hot dog stand and restaurant were adjacent to the bathing beach. Many church, fireman and Odd Fellows picnics and clambakes were held at the park. The amusement park did well financially until 1941.

As with so many parks, once World War II began, business decreased considerably. Robert recalls that in 1945, shortly after the war, Edward Kolb decided to sell the carousel to Steve Krause for \$3,500."

"Rich Castle of Waterford, NY, age 69, worked for Steve Krause at Crystal Lake Park in the 1950s. Rich recalls that there was a Wurlitzer band organ at the carousel that was broken at the time. According to Steve Krause, Jr. a son of the last owner, during his time, the music was provided by 78-rpm records and then 45s. Krause kept the central housing panel paintings as well as the Henry Kolb/Louis Bopp sign and the building's stained glass windows were intact. Two spare horses were kept in a shed to replace any that were broken during use."

"The Kolb/Bopp carousel remained at Crystal Lake Park until 1960 when according to *The Troy Record* article, it was moved by U-Haul truck to Crescent, 20 miles northwest of Averill Park"

"At Halfmoon Beach the distinctive stained glass windows were no longer present and were replaced with colored Plexiglas. By this time the price of a ride on the carousel had increased to 25 cents, and many of the



**Crystal Lake Park Amusements in Averill Park ca. 1950s. To the right of the carousel structure is the building that housed various games. Further right is the Wagstaff's (owners of the park) summer home. Also seen to the left of the carousel are a Ferris wheel and other amusements that were added in the 1950s. The Everet family owned the house in the foreground. Chuck Everet worked on the carousel for Edward Kolb in the early 1940s, but was a casualty in World War II. [Photograph provided by the Sand Lake Historical Society, clarified by Dan Castle, son of Rich Castle; description provided by Hank Kolb]**



**Ferris Wheel ticket at Crystal Lake Park; only 20¢!**

animals' saddles had been painted white." "According to Robert Kolb, who visited the carousel in the 1960s, Krause had painted some of the figures in 'loud chartreuse colors'".

"The availability of the series of interior photographs has allowed us to identify all 58 figures on the carousel -- 39 horses, 5 goats, 3 camels, 3 giraffes, 3 lions, 3 elephants and 2 teddy bears -- plus two chariots, and to place them in configuration on the 50-ft., 20-section platform."

"The carousel at Halfmoon Beach stopped serving patrons by 1976 and was bought by Gray Tuttle in 1978. Gray sold the figures to various collectors. However, considering that this "carousel treasure" had a working lifespan of more than 75 years and was likely enjoyed by several million patrons, it had a very successful existence. It certainly continues to live in many people's memories and family experiences."

If this were a blog on the internet, we would have a series of responses to the memories any of you have or have heard about Mascot's place-of-honor especially at Crystal Lake Park. We encourage you to do just that at our e-mail address [sandlakehistory@aol.com](mailto:sandlakehistory@aol.com). Or please write us. This is how history is preserved. A copy of William Benjamin's article is available in the Historical Society's reference section at the Sand Lake Town Library and in the Town Historian's office.

## Cemetery stone cleaning

I had received a flyer that Grafton Historical Society was holding a Cemetery Seminar on August 22 and Joe Ferrannini from Grave Stone Matters was the presenter. From the article in the Spring 2009 *Highlights*, I planned to use ammonia and water to keep my promise and to clean my uncle's veteran's marker, but now I noted ammonia is to be used for marble only. A phone call to Joe gave me the information that the grave stone was marble. Then he added he would be in Troy the next day and would come to Sand Lake Union Cemetery to show me how to clean it. What an unexpected surprise? No, for me it was an answer to a prayer I hadn't even requested. Thank you, Lord and thank you, Joe!!

When Joe came he said we could use water and ammonia. We chose instead a newer special biological detergent called Cathedral Stone D/2 that kills algae, lichens and mold. Moss needs to be removed manually. He wet the stone with water first and then sprayed the D/2 from bottom to top and kept the surface wet with D/2 as he used a strong brush (one that doesn't "hurt you" when you rub against it) and brushed and rebrushed from bottom to top. He used the side of a Popsicle stick to scrape the top of the stone and a bamboo stick to clean the grooves of the letters. Then he rinsed the stone with water from a large container with a spray nozzle. Joe said acid rain and other contaminants in the atmosphere caused the stone to turn black. D/2 would kill any algae, mold or lichens on the stone. After the first application the green algae turned a lighter green and Joe said the algae were beginning to die. Look at the difference in the pictures of the grave stone before compared to Joe and me beside the stone after two applications/scrubbings with D/2. This product is available exclusively from Allied Building Products in Albany in a 32 ounce spray bottle for \$17.25 and in a gallon for \$61.25.

Believe me! Watching Joe as he worked and all he explained while we were walking around viewing stones in disrepair, gave Ross and me a great course in "cemetery maintenance 101".

Joe is available to assess the condition of grave stone(s) as well as cleaning, repairing and/or resetting them. His phone number is (518) 424-9562 and e-mail is [gravestonematter@aol.com](mailto:gravestonematter@aol.com). He is more than generous with his willingness to help you get the information you need on "**Grave Stone Matters.**" His company is aptly named.

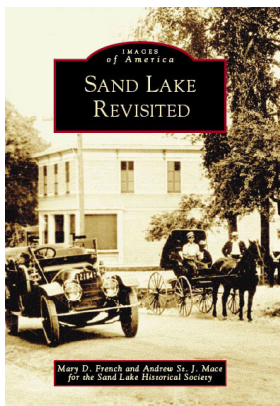




Views of Sand Lake, N.Y.



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Historical Highlights

*Mary French, Editor*

*Andrew Mace, Publisher*



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Sand Lake Historical Society

Post Office Box 492

West Sand Lake, New York 12196



**Sand Lake Historical Society**  
Membership Application

**Membership: Join / Renew**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

\$3 per student (13-22) \_\_\_\_\_ \$5 per individual \_\_\_\_\_ \$8 per family \_\_\_\_\_

**Total enclosed:** ..... \$\_\_\_\_\_

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*Give this slip to someone you know to become a member.*



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