



Historical Highlights

Official Publication of the Sand Lake Historical Society

Volume 38, Number 1

Fall 2011

From the president

On behalf of the officers and Trustees of your Sand Lake Historical Society I hope that you have had a wonderful summer filled with memorable experiences.

All of us are part of history. What happened a few seconds ago is now history and all is interconnected. With modern media and technology, we are truly connected with all time and all space (on this planet and beyond). **Local history** is a good way to relate to others in this area and with the world.

Please visit the Sand Lake Historical Society web site for information: <http://sandlakehistory.org>

To contact us, email us at sandlakehistory@aol.com

Our constitution and bylaws are available at: <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nyslhs/bylaw0903revision.pdf>

We have another year of interesting and varied programs planned for you during 2011-12. Unless otherwise publicized, **our monthly programs begin on the second Tuesday each month at 7:30 pm at Sand Lake Baptist Church.** Please mark your calendar with the dates and events listed under **Upcoming programs and events.** We value your support and attendance.

Although most of our meetings are on school nights, we encourage you to bring your child or grandchild to our programs. Most programs end before 9:00 p.m.

We continue to work closely with the **Town of Sand Lake Bicentennial Planning Committee** in planning and participating in the several events and activities to celebrate the history of our town from 1812 to the present. For details see the enclosed program publicity. Especially, please join us for the next event in the 2012 celebration on **Saturday, September 17, 2011.**

We also encourage your participation in area events which are part of the observances of the **150th anniversary of the War Between the States.**

Special thanks to our officers and trustees for the voluntary time and creative energy they provide for all our activities.

See the details about the **House History workshop** on Saturday, October 22, from 1:00-4:00 p.m. at Sand Lake Baptist Church, Route 43, Averill Park. — *Rev. Dr. Robert Loesch*

Upcoming programs and events

- ♣ On **September 17** (note date change), the Bicentennial Planning Committee along with the Sand Lake Historical Society will host the 4th Bicentennial Dinner at the Church of the Covenant. Dinner will be anonymously donated. Walter Stock, a musician and historian for East Nassau, will perform Civil War era music on an old square piano and add anecdotes. Please arrive at 5:15pm; program will begin at 5:30pm and dinner will be served at 6:30pm. A gift to the Sand Lake Union Cemetery restoration of gravestones will be appreciated as your donation for the dinner.
- ♣ **October 11:** Joe Ferrannini of Gravestone Matters will present the care and restoration of gravestones.
- ♣ **November 8:** The play "The Sky is Falling," by Barbara Leavell Smith, will be presented at **Church of the Covenant United Methodist** at 7:30 p.m.. What if Chicken Little were right after all? The answer: a romping, stumbling quest to save the world!
- ♣ **December 13:** Dr. George Raneri will present a program on the history of Sand Lake School (now for sale) at Ron Berti and Barbara Neu's historic Knowlson House. This is our covered dish Christmas program beginning at 6:30 p.m. Please also bring nonperishable food items for Doors of Hope.
- ♣ **January 10, 2012:** Cosponsored with the Sand Lake Town Library, Marvin Bubie will present his new book *Celebrating the Revolutionary War Municipal Seals*. The program will be at Sand Lake Baptist Church.
- ♣ **February 14:** Gary Mercer will present a show & tell of his bottle collection from the 1800s and earlier.

Gifts of history

- 1 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 (including tax) and \$3.00 shipping, for each copy.
- 1 *Sand Lake*, our first book, is available for \$20.50 (including 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.
- 1 The VHS of "A Journey by Postcard from Crooked Lake to West Sand Lake" is available for \$18.00 with postage \$1.75 for each copy.
- 1 Robert J. Lilly's book *The Wynants Kill: a small stream, but mighty* is available for \$16.20 (including tax).
- 1 And Marvin Bubie's book *On the Trail of Henry Hudson and Our Dutch Heritage Through the Municipal Seals of New York State* is available for \$27.00 (including 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.
- 1 Just in time for Christmas are the ornaments for \$12.00 (including tax). The note cards and ornaments are available from Town clerk's office or Mary French. Order information is also available on our web site.

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 2011 you're due and we thank you for renewing your membership on the form in this issue. **You may also receive *Historical Highlights* online. Beginning in May 2012 individual dues will be \$10.00 and family dues \$15.00.**

Sand Lake Bicentennial Planning Committee events

- 1 Please note our cosponsored program with SLHS on September 17th in remembrance of the 150th anniversary of the beginning of the Civil War.
- 1 On October 8th Joe Ferrannini of Gravestone Matters will give a Cemetery Workshop at Sand Lake Union Cemetery. The Key Club members will be attending and members of the community are also invited to attend and work on cleaning gravestones. Please bring elbow grease and a soft brush, one which does not "hurt your hand" when you rub against it.
- 1 The Historical Society is sponsoring a House History Workshop Saturday, October 15th from 1-4

pm at Sand Lake Baptist Church, led by Rev. Dr. Robert Loesch. This will be a practical workshop on how to research the background of your house, property and community. If you or someone you know would like to present information about how to seek and find information about one's private residence, please contact Pastor Bob as soon as possible (rkloesch@aol.com, 518-674-8204). Also suggestions of any homeowners in the Sand Lake area who might be willing to share some of their experiences in researching the history of their own house, should contact Pastor Bob as he plans the workshop. The workshop is free with voluntary donations being accepted.

- 1 S.L.B.P.C. has received a repeat invitation to participate at Schuyler Flatts on August 20 and 21 for their Civil War Reenactment. Glad to be represented there with information from the Town Historian's Office and our Civil War Encampment on October 1 and 2. Coinciding with Encampment is the dedication of the Veterans Memorial on October 1. — Nancy W. Davis, co-chair

Scholarship acknowledgements

Dear Ms. Kronau (& Everyone at the Sand Lake Historical Society),

Thank you so much for the award! History has always fascinated me & it is beyond nice to receive some recognition for all of my hard work. I must say, your generosity is unparalleled. The night of the ceremony the girl sitting next to me asked, "So, how much you got?" The question puzzled me but she proceeded to tell me that many of the awards had checks in them. When I opened yours & pulled one out for five hundred dollars I was blown away. Next year I will be taking a Gap Year as an exchange student in Switzerland, perhaps I can put that money to good use over there. After that I'm not 100% sure where I will attend college but wherever I end up, there is a strong case to be made for majoring in history. My cousin recently graduated from West Point & won some history awards. It seems fitting that I follow in his foot steps & continue this family tradition of study in this splendid subject.

Peter Kiley-Bergen

Dear Ms. Kronau,

I would like to thank you for presenting me with a Sand Lake Historical Society Memorial Award. I was very surprised and very grateful to hear my name called at the Senior Awards Night, and I'm so thankful that it was given to me. I really appreciate the work that you and your society do for our community.

Sincerely

Alison Schaefer

The Spanish-American War and Camp Hardin at Crystal Lake

We have to thank Rensselaer County Historical Society Librarian Elsa Prigozy, who found a reference in the NYS Historian's Annual Report of 1903 to a Camp Hardin being

**GREETING THE SECOND.
TROY'S ROYAL WELCOME.
REACHED TROY AT 3:30 O'CLOCK.
THE RECEPTION AND PARADE.
A REMARKABLE DEMONSTRATION.
THOUSANDS IN THE HAPPY THROG.**

Arrival of the Second New York Volunteers---On the Way to Camp Hardin, Averill Park---One of the Largest Crowds in the History of Troy Honor the Brave Boys---The First Section of the Regimental Train Reached Albany at 10:40 O'clock---Met by a Committee from Troy---All Reached this City Early this Afternoon---A Rousing Reception for the Soldiers---Preparations Made by the Citizens and Civic and Military Organizations---More than 1,100 Men Fed at the Armory---The Decorations and Contributions---Thousands at the Depot---The Regiment as it was Mustered in---The Death Roll---Observed Along the Line. j

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Newspaper article on August 28th headlines Troy's Royal Welcome!

at Sand Lake. Oral history in the town turned up no leads. Another reference was found in the RCHS's four scrapbooks of newspaper clippings on the Second Regiment of the National Guard of the State of New York. The story of Camp Hardin had now come to light and is presented from these two detailed resources. Now there will be a source of oral history albeit 113 years later!!!

On May 2, 1898, the Second Regiment of the National Guard of the State of New York was mustered in and stationed at Camp Black in Hempstead, Long Island, under Colonel Edward Hardin. The historian's annual report noted, "Notwithstanding almost incessant rain the entire time at Camp Black, the Regiment received great benefit from the drills in their camp and the men hardened down into real soldiers. It was jocosely remarked by some of the men that the physical examination to which they were subjected was unnecessary, as any man who was alive at the time the Regiment was mustered must be without any doubt physically sound."

From Camp Black they received orders and left on May 18th for Chickamauga, Georgia. Because of the intense heat and bad water, sickness quickly developed. Orders came for them to move and they arrived in Camp Tampa, Florida, on June 1st. Further illness of typhoid and malaria ensued. The regiment being sent to Santiago, Cuba, was cancelled because yellow fever had broken out among the

troops there. They were disappointed at not being able to help with the war effort. Camping at Tampa did more to demoralize the regiment than any battle could have done. Hopes were lifted upon hearing they would be leaving Camp Tampa for Camp Ferandina, Florida, on July 27th. However increased illness followed them and extra tents for sick calls were added; a local hospital was also used. That camp did have one advantage. The men of the regiment took advantage of permission given them to bathe and they went in squads and companies almost daily to the beach, a distance of about a mile, to take a dip in the salt water of the ocean. By August 19th it was decided they would be transferred to Troy and a more healthy camp near home. A telegram sent by Colonel Hardin further emphasized, "This regiment has got to get out of the fever district or be unfit for duty - Improvement very little, if any - People evidentially expecting epidemic."

A site visit for a suitable camp near Troy was made to the area north of Sand Lake (now known as Crystal Lake). They were met by J.K. Averill and visited other familiar places on that trip: Sliter's Corners (hamlet of Sand Lake), Knowlson's place (Berti's residence on Schumann Road), and the hotel (probably the Lake View). All were in agreement that it was an appropriate location.

The camp was named Camp Hardin, thus paying a well-deserved compliment to the colonel of the regiment, "who had from the first been untiring in his efforts to add to the comfort and welfare of his men." It was established on a high hill overlooking Sand Lake. It had a complete system of water-works from the lake, which included tank (*next page*), pump and pipes. Each tent had a board floor. (From the pictures with the tents it can be seen that the land was very clear.)

The Second Regiment arrived on August 28th amid a tumultuous welcome to Troy. A sumptuous meal was fed to

TROY DAILY RECORD.

TROY, N. Y., AUGUST 29, 1898.

fusion owing to the lack of teams to draw the camp baggage up the hill. The regiment had hitherto had their own wagon train, but when they left Ferandina they left them behind them. The men engaged by Mr. Murray did the best they could, but their unfamiliarity with the material and the manner of handling and distributing it, and there was much confusion.

**REGIMENT AT
CAMP HARDIN**

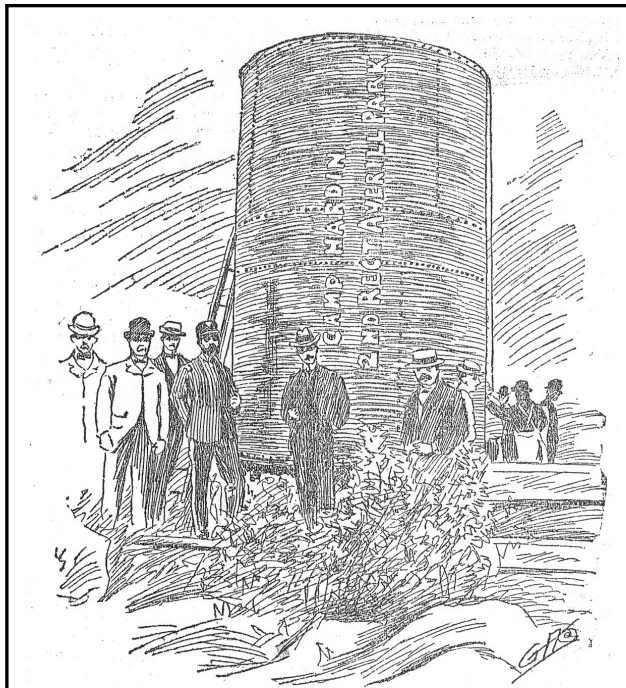
After a Magnificent Welcome the Soldiers
Journey to Averill Park and Go
Into Camp.

WORK WAS WELL DONE

Citizens of Troy Had Performed Their Mission
So Well That Nothing Was Left
to be Desired.

Headlines of August 29th Troy Daily Record document arrival at Camp Hardin.

approximately 1,100. The newspaper that day stated, "It was confidently expected that the regiment would face the Spanish Army in Cuba or Puerto Rico before its return home. Today the regiment comes back with its ranks diminished by sickness and death, not as the result of service on foreign battlefields, but due to the combat with tropical climate in the summer amid unhealthful surroundings, which brought untold suffering. They have served the country as truly as if they fought in the trenches of Santiago. Honor is due them as surely as to their comrades of the Seventy-first." The Regiment arrived at Averill Park via Troy and New England Railway on August 29th. "At every farmhouse along the way from Albia to



BIG WATER TANK AT CAMP HARDIN.

"Through the munificence of the people of Troy, a complete system of water-works, with pumping stations and tank had been provided."

Averill Park people stood in the doors and waved a greeting to the soldiers as they flashed by, and were gratified by answering cheers. There was a large crowd at the station to welcome the boys. As fast as the companies left the cars they were formed in line and marched to the camp grounds. The way is a long winding road which leads to the lake and the foot of the plateau." Colonel Hardin was highly pleased with the location of the camp and stated that he thought it admirably adapted for the purpose.

Hardly had the Companies been assigned to their tents and place within the camp, when from early morning to late at night the camp was crowded with "thousands of visitors," who came to see "how the soldiers lived". "They came in droves and inspected everything to their heart's content. Some came to camp in carryalls, some on foot and hundreds on bicycles. There were many from towns north and west of Troy. In nearly every company street long lines of bicycles could be seen leaning against the tent ropes,

while their owners conversed with soldier friends. In the tent of Captain Anderson of Company E (Schenectady) was a small tent containing several lizards, brought from Ferandina. Quite a crowd collected before the tent to look at them."

"The visitors were greatly interested in the shelter tents. The quartermasters' headquarters were critically examined by the women visitors and the operation of cooking the food for the men was watched with interest. The cooking is done at the end of each company street." A guard had to be set over the hospital tents to keep onlookers from annoying the sick men. The change of air from the heat of Florida required warmer clothes, additional blankets and Sibley stoves (*see sketched drawing below*) to heat the tents. (In July 2011 several nights have had temperatures in the 50s.) Short drills to maintain discipline were attempted but so few were physically able to do any such duty, that it was difficult to get one full company together. Then on September 13th the last parade was held.

The historian's report stated, "It is doubtful if the scene witnessed at Camp Hardin on the morning of September 14th ever has been duplicated. That day the guard was mounted without rifles, belts or other equipment. The men felt silly and foolish and they looked it. All the rifles, belts and ordnance (except mess kits and cutlery) had been turned in to the ordnance officer. The sentinels that day and the next carried sticks and stones as their insignias of office." The evening of the September 14th was the last time they messed together. Colonel Hardin bade his men good-bye and God-speed. On September 15th the men entered their thirty day furloughs granted by the War Department.

Companies were reported leaving camp in the following order: Company M of Hoosick Falls, Company I of Whitehall, Company K of Glens Falls, L of

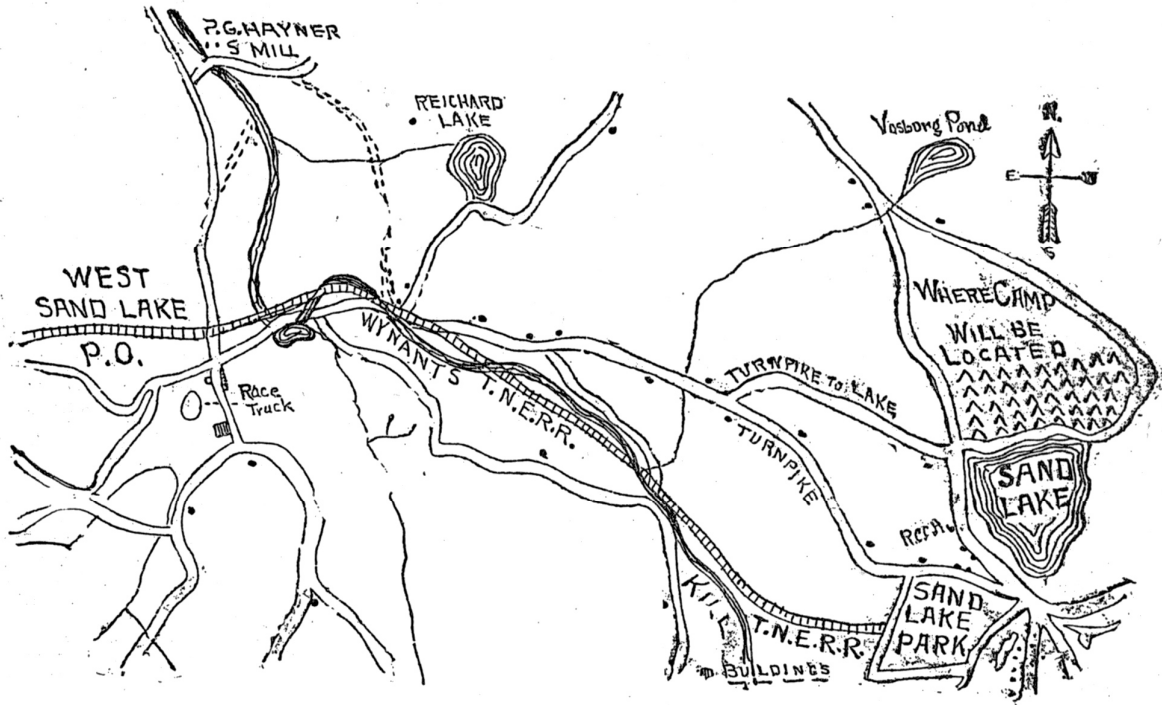
Saratoga, E and F of Schenectady, G of Herkimer, H of Amsterdam, A, C and D of Troy and B of Cohoes. Tents were taken down and all government property turned in. Members of the regiment were to report at their respective armories on October 14th to be mustered out of service.

The *Troy Budget* newspaper for Sunday, September 18, 1898, reported, "The campground has become historical, and in years to come the residents of that locality will point with pride and say, "There Camp Hardin was located and there the Second New York Volunteers camped for nearly three weeks."



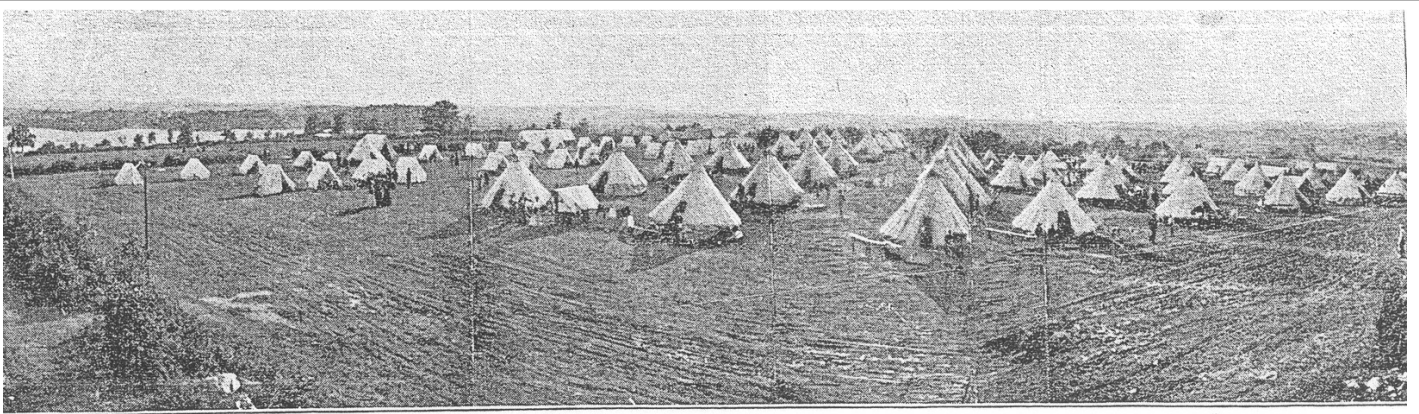
A CAMP STOVE.

The sheet iron "Sibley Stove" was first used for a tent heater in the Civil War and continued to be used until the advent of World War II. They were also used as smudge pots in fruit groves.



View of the Proposed Camp Ground at Sandlake, Showing Turnpikes and Electric Road to the Lake, from Drawings in the Adjutant General's Office.

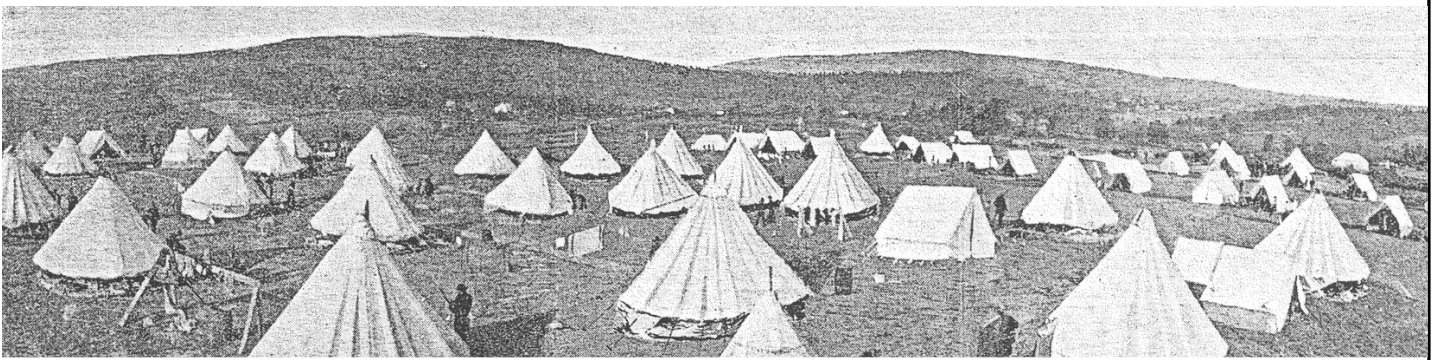
Town of Sand Lake map and Camp Ground at Sandlake. Note: "RCCH" (St Henry's Church); T.N.E.R.R. (Troy & New England Railway); race track (WSL School site).



CAMP HARDIN.
PANORAMIC VIEW OF WESTERN PART OF CAMP
FROM WATER TANK.

Above: Panoramic View of Western Part of Camp. Crystal Lake is near the horizon on the left.

Below: Panoramic View of Eastern Part of Camp.

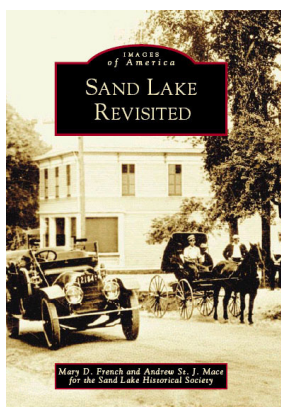
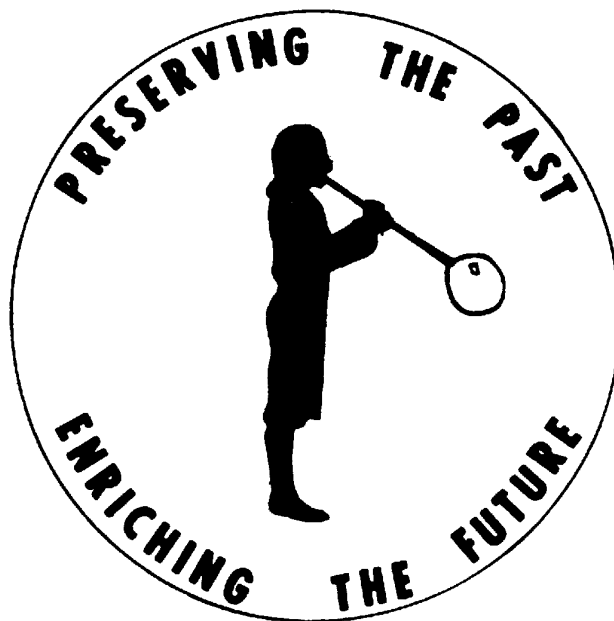


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(term ends)

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<http://sandlakehistory.org>

E-mail: sandlakehistory@aol.com

Historical Highlights

Mary French, Editor

Andrew Mace, Publisher



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Sand Lake Historical Society
Membership Application/Renewal

Name _____

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Address _____

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

Total enclosed: \$ _____

Please make checks payable to *Sand Lake Historical Society*. Mail to: Sand Lake Historical Society, Post Office Box 492, West Sand Lake, New York 12196

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



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