

Historical Highlights

Official Publication of the Sand Lake Historical Society

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Our 42nd Year

Winter 2016

From the editor/publisher

Life is what happens while you are busy making other plans. (John Lennon). *Anything that can go wrong, will go wrong.* (Murphy's Law) Put the two of these together, and you'll have the closest thing we can offer to an excuse as to why your Winter issue of *Historical Highlights* is reaching you in early February 2016 rather than late November or early December 2015. We sincerely apologize for the delay. — Ed.

TR-SL DVD from SLHS



You will remember that, in April, Teddy Roosevelt (a.k.a. Joe Wiegand) “revisited” Sand Lake to a sold-out crowd at The Old Daley on Crooked Lake. That April event was filmed and was shown in its entirety in November. Also shown was a 1989 interview with Al Coons (then-owner of the Crooked Lake Hotel) that was made by a video club at Algonquin Middle School. Westfield Production Company is generously providing the DVDs (with both features), which are for sale for **\$15** to the general public and \$10 for members of Sand Lake Historical Society. This is a great gift idea for local history buffs!

We hope to have copies available at membership meetings. You may also purchase copies at the Sand Lake Town Clerk's office during normal business hours. Or write to us and enclose a check for \$10.00 plus \$3.00 shipping per copy. Please allow up to four weeks for delivery.

Upcoming Programs

- † **February 9:** Local artist and performer Clifford Oliver Mealy recreates the persona of Solomon Northup, a free African-American New Yorker kidnapped into slavery before the Civil War, whose story is also a 2013 Academy Award-winning motion picture. 7:30 p.m. at Sand Lake Town Hall.
- † **March 8:** Averill Park? The Averill family and its descendants lived in Sand Lake from its earliest days. Was it named after the family? Where did Park come from? The answer may be found by looking at the Averill family's history in the Sand Lake area. Who were they? What did they do? Joan Fuess will present Jennie Averill and reflect on the Averills and their influence on Sand Lake. Learn about Moscow the Civil War horse, the Averill Park Improvement, the Troy and New England Railway, Averill Park Hotel, Interlachen Park, Sunset Lodge, Crist Crape's Central Hotel and, last but not least, the family tie to runaway slave Charles Nalle. 7:30 p.m. at Sand Lake Town Hall.

Recent Past Programs

- † **December 8, 2015:** The annual Christmas party of the Sand Lake Historical Society. Ron and Barbara Neuberti graciously shared their magnificent home on Schumann Rd. in Sand Lake.
- † **January 12, 2016:** “Parker Francis Dunn: A Boy, His Bravery and a Bridge.” More than 35,000 motorists drive over the Dunn Memorial Bridge each weekday, and it's a safe bet that few know anything about the person for whom it is named. Who was Parker Francis Dunn? Where was this young man from? Why is this span over the Hudson River named for him? The presentation included many photos of Parker Dunn from a toddler to a young man and images of the bridge before, during and after construction of each of the two bridges named for Dunn. Speaker Mark Bodnar enlightened us on local history that's been lost to today's world, and revealed the life and bravery of a young hero from Albany whose name is only known today in the bridge that bears his name.



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 **now only \$12.00** (including tax). *Sand Lake*, our first book, is also available for **only \$12.00** (including tax); add \$3.00 shipping, for each copy. Both together may be had for only **\$20.00!** Copies of both books are for sale at the Town Clerk's Office for the Society. Robert J. Lilly's book *The Wynants Kill: a small stream, but mighty* is now sold out, but 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).

A set of 6 note cards for \$7.00 (tax included) is available, including: Carousel at Crystal Lake Park; Parade at Younghan's Race Track and Fairgrounds; Summer campers "roughing it" c. 1915 at Methodist Farm at Crooked Lake; Hikers dressed 1928 style at Camp VanSchoonhoven; Victorian lady rowing her dog on area lake; and Family relaxing on their porch at lakeside cottage. The note cards are available from the Town Clerk's office.

Order information is also available on our web site. You may send an order to Sand Lake Historical Society, Box 492, West Sand Lake, NY 12196 for any of the above items.

Sand Lake: Then and Now!

The free Smart Phone app, *Sand Lake: Then and Now*, is available to users of i-phones as well as droid devices. Simply go to the app store and search *Sand Lake: Then and Now*. The app gives you the chance to see what Sand Lake, West Sand Lake and Averill Park looked like in the 1800s. Images are being added continually!

If you'd like to share photos or if you have any questions about the app, call Town Historian Bob Moore 674-2026 x20 or bmoore@sand-lake.us

AP schools video discovery program

This past September, Member and Town Historian Bob Moore talked about the Averill Park Schools Video Discovery Program (1985-1991) and showed some of the videos produced by the students, including an interview with High School English teacher Tony Butler, a "tour" of the Adirondacks in a sea plane, highlights of a July 4 Big Thunder Day celebration in Hoag's Corners,

and the 1989 interview of Al Coons, then the owner of the Crooked Lake Hotel.

Over the six-year period, nine hour-long programs were produced, highlighting Local History, Business in Our Community, Averill Park District Arts Programs, Historic House Tours, Miller Hill School Reopening, and Crooked Lake Hotel Tour with Al Coons. These programs also include numerous interviews with teachers, principals, superintendents and people from the Sand Lake community. Starting in September 2015, the Sand Lake Town Historian, Bob Moore scheduled these programs to be broadcast before the Sand Lake Town Board Meetings each month on Time Warner Cable Channel 17 or 116.1. DVD copies of the programs will be available for loan at the Sand Lake Library as well as the High School and Algonquin Middle School libraries. 1980s. (*More about the Video Discovery Program at: <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nyslhs/ap-video.htm>*)

"Fulton History" and memories

If you're not familiar with Fulton History, you're missing out on lots of fun and a great resource. <http://fultonhistory.com/Fulton.html> is a web link to, among other things, over 30 million US and Canadian newspaper pages scanned and searchable. It's where I found the "*Teddy Roosevelt Reported Once Sand Lake Visitor*" article quoted in the Spring 2015 issue of

Historical Highlights. That article was just a small part of a full-page feature of that *Times Record* newspaper for August 12, 1958, devoted to "**Sand Lake Is Town Of Many Beautiful Homes, Popular Beach Resorts.**"

We featured the ads in the Spring issue, but in addition

to the little bit about Teddy, there were several other articles of interest, and we will feature those in the Spring 2016 issue!



Hamlets of the Town of Sand Lake: Then and Now



**Hamlet Signage
Project – Step One
Completed! November
2015: Sand Lake’s
Planning Oversight
Committee (POC) is a
group of committed**

volunteers working collaboratively to move the town forward. Perhaps you have noticed the new signs in the hamlets of West Sand Lake, Averill Park, and Sand Lake. These are the

result of a project that was initiated by the Sand Lake Business Association when then president Val Balga and Frank Mantha met with the POC to deliver a detailed signage proposal that

addressed several of the recommendations of the Sand Lake Comprehensive Plan. The Plan, prepared with significant community input,



emphasized the need for enhanced gateways to our town and the hamlets, town wide beautification and branding, and

encouragement of economic development. These signs, made by local resident and artisan J. Edward Vigeant



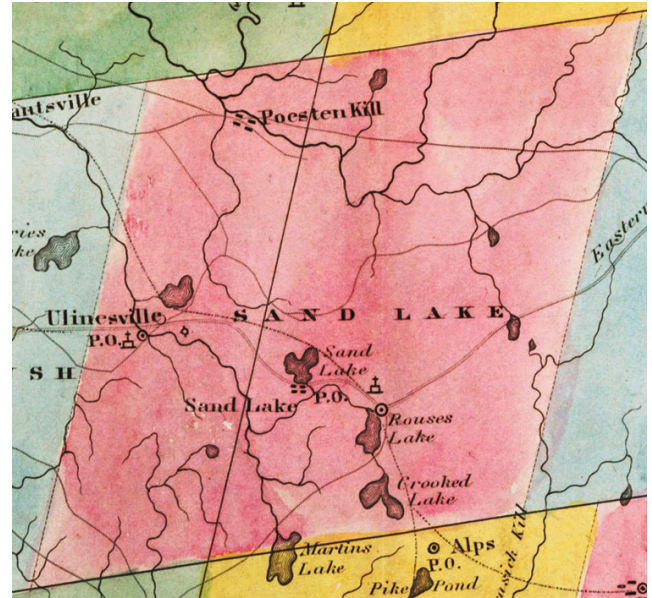
III, hit all three areas. The SLBA will be offering local businesses the opportunity to help with the funding of the next phase which involves gateway signage on the major routes into the Town of Sand Lake. — Fred Erickson, POC Chairman

This writer personally finds these new signs to be very tasteful and understated, well designed and well located; in other words, a very attractive addition to the Town. But (and you know there’s always a “but,” right?) seeing these signs raises some questions. For one, are these the only “hamlets” in the Town of Sand Lake? For another, have these hamlets always carried the names shown now? The answer to both questions, of course, is NO! Let’s look into that a bit.

First, some “definitions” if you will. Various dictionaries and other sources describe a hamlet as: a small village [or group of houses]; in New York state, an unincorporated community that is within a town and is not a part of a village; (in Britain) a village without its own church. Feel free to choose whichever definition suits you.

Now for a brief bit of history. From *Landmarks of Rensselaer County New York, 1897*: “The town of

Sand Lake was formed from Greenbush and Berlin June 11, 1812. In 1843 a part of Greenbush was taken off, and in 1848 the northern half was set off as a separate town under the name of Poestenkill. Sand Lake is south of the centre of Rensselaer county. It is bounded on the north by Poestenkill, on the east by Berlin, on the south by Nassau and Schodack and on the west by East Greenbush and North Greenbush.



[The above map, not from the Landmarks... book, shows the original Town, including what is now Poestenkill. You might be able to make out some interesting historical names, such as Martins (now Burden) Lake and Rouses (now Glass) Lake, among other curious details.]

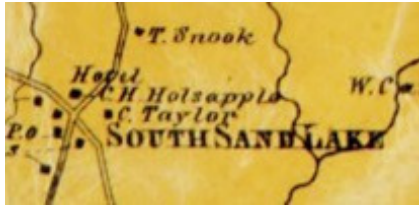
“None of the hamlets in Sand Lake are very large. Of these Sand Lake village, as it is commonly known, is in the central part of the town, and is the centre of several small hamlets, all known under the general name of Sand Lake. From time to time several small mills and manufactories of various kinds have been located there, the principal ones being woolen mills, a cotton-warp mill and a paper mill.

“It is also well supplied with stores and hotels and the usual complements of small villages. Probably the first postmaster was Dr. Uriah M. Gregory. The industries of the place have enjoyed quite a boom in recent years, and it is also becoming a favorite summer resort with many inhabitants of Troy, Albany and other cities. The village is located in a picturesque spot, and the lake, well stocked with fish, is an increasing attraction to the summer guests.

“Averill Park, formerly West Sand Lake, is really an independent and comparatively new hamlet located within a short distance of the original West Sand Lake, which still bears its own

name. The place is picturesquely located at the southeastern terminus of that part of the Troy & New England railroad which has been constructed since 1895, and is rapidly growing. It was named in honor of the Averill family, of whom Hon. James K. Averill has become a most conspicuous member. Through his efforts the Averill Park Land Improvement company was organized a few years ago, since which time the hamlet has been greatly improved. Averill Park has excellent hotels and a few small industries. The post office was established a few years since and is located near the terminus of the Troy & New England railway.

This portion of an 1861 map shows "South Sand Lake" where we currently accept Sliter's Corners as being, namely the intersection of State Route 150 (coming South from West Sand Lake) with County Routes 50 and 55.



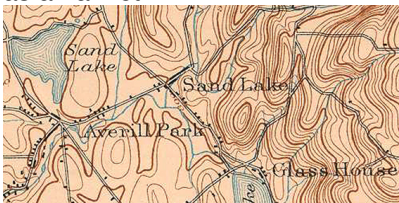
"West Sand Lake is located a short distance from Averill Park and is a picturesque hamlet. It has several manufacturing industries, four churches and a number of stores. The post office was established

about 1840 with Frost Myers as postmaster. The place was formerly called Ulinesville, in honor of Earnhardt Uline, the first settler.

"Sliter's Corners is located about three quarters of a mile east of Sand Lake village, and received its name from the Sliter family, pioneer settlers. Its industries are small and not numerous.

"South Sand Lake, as its name implies, is located in the southern part of the town, not far from the Schodack line. The post-office was established there about 1860.

This portion of an 1893 map continues to show "Glass House" as a hamlet.



"Glass House is located at the point where the old glass factories were established, a short distance southeast of Sliter's Corners, near Glass lake. It was originally

called Rensselaer Village."

From *Troy and Rensselaer County, New York: A History*, by Rutherford Hayner, 1925:

"Villages and Hamlets – The town, although largely given up to agricultural pursuits, contains

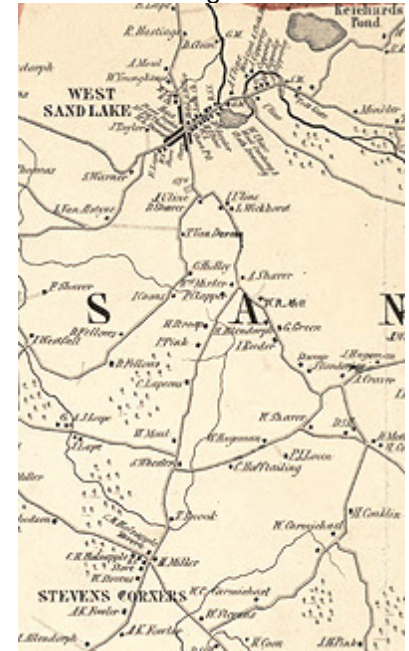
the several villages and hamlets of Averill Park, Sand Lake, Sliter's Corners, Glass House (Rensselaer Village), West Sand Lake (originally called Ulines in honor of Bernhardt Uline, who built the first dwelling at this point). South Sand Lake and Taborton."

The City of Troy and Its Vicinity, written in 1886 by Arthur James Weise, notes that "Sliter's Corners, a local name for the eastern part of the village of Sandlake, has been the location of the post-office since 1815....West Sandlake is a village in the western part of the town. In 1828, when the post-office was established there, Martin Rysedorph, postmaster, it was called Ulinesville. South Sandlake is in the southwestern part of the town. A post-office was established there about 1852."

So, a bit of confusion amongst the historical accounts and some possible inaccuracies, not to mention some places you may or may not have thought of as hamlets. And then there's this from the current *Wikipedia* article on the Town of Sand Lake: Averill Park – A hamlet near the center of the town; Crystal Lake – A lake north of Averill Park; Crooked Lake – A lake hamlet in the southeast corner of Averill Park (south of Glass Lake); Glass Lake – A hamlet southeast of Averill Park next to a lake called "Glass Lake"; Maple Grove – A

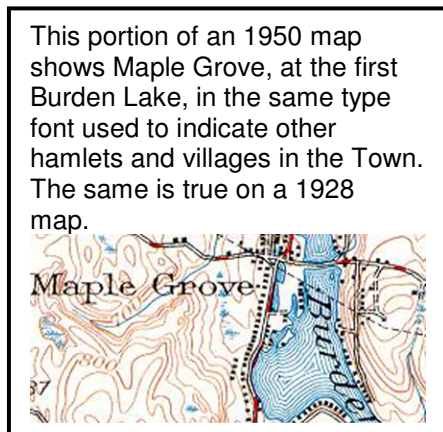
hamlet southwest of Averill Park; Sand Lake – The hamlet of Sand Lake is east of Averill Park; Sliters (usually referred to as Sliters Corners) – A hamlet in the southwest part of the town on Route 150; Taborton – A hamlet in the eastern part of the

This portion of an 1854 map shows "Stevens Corners" instead of "South Sand Lake" but where we currently accept Sliter's Corners as being.



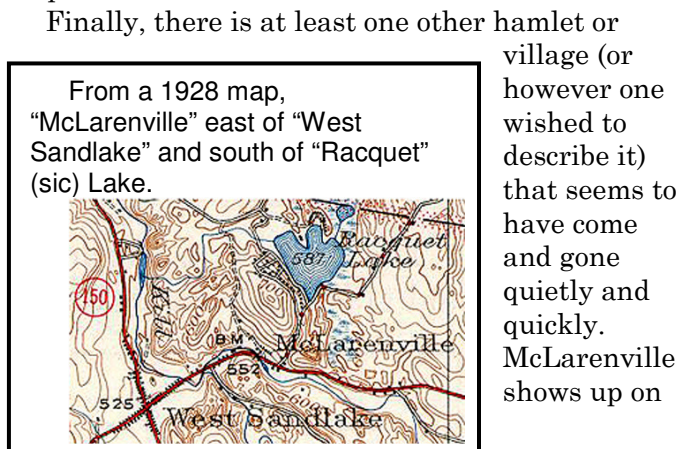
town; and West Sand Lake – A hamlet in the northwest corner of the town.

Ok, let's see if we can summarize the "Then and Now" of hamlet/village names. **Sand Lake** used to be what is now **Averill Park** (and, of course, what used to be the body of water Sand Lake is now Crystal Lake). What used to be **Sliter's Corners** is now **Sand Lake** (you know: Cumberland Farms, Miller Hill School, Town Hall and all that). What used to be **South Sand Lake** (or **Stevens Corners!**?) is now **Sliter's Corners**. What originally was **Ulinesville** is the current **West Sand Lake**. What once was considered the Hamlet of **Glass House** is still there at the intersection of Routes 43 & 66 with Teal and Glass Lake roads, but it no longer is referred to as such.



This still leaves us with the possibility that there are or were yet other hamlets. Poor **Taborton** doesn't show on most earlier maps. In fact, we've looked at maps as late as 1953; none has any sign of

Taborton!
Maple Grove does show up here and there, but not in the earliest maps and not on the more current maps. However, **Methodist Farm** shows up on at least one map. Again, this is going by use of the same type font used to identify other hamlets and villages on the map.

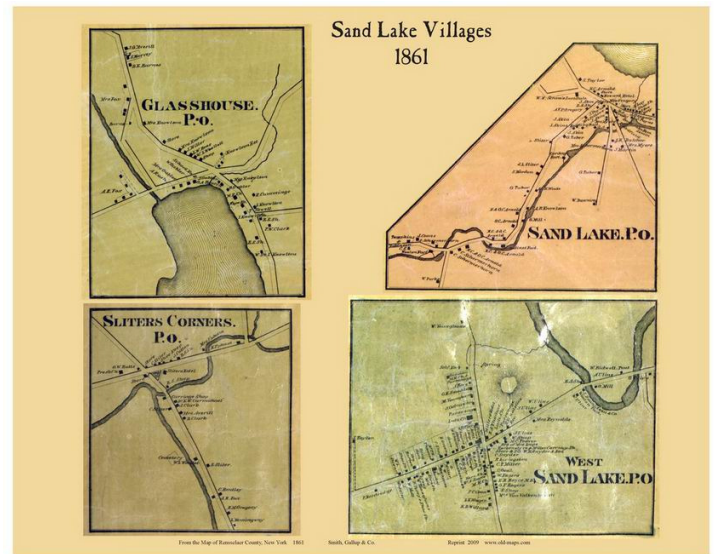


Finally, there is at least one other hamlet or village (or however one wished to describe it) that seems to have come and gone quietly and quickly. McLarenville shows up on

a 1928 map, just east of "West Sandlake."

We make no claim that the above is complete or completely accurate by any legal or other definition beyond what sources were quoted and maps looked at. If anyone would care to help sort any of this out further, please let us know!

NOTE: Eventually, we'll get this article on the web site, which will also feature some full map images and links to other related resources.



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Joan Fuess, Vice President (2017)
Rosemarie Sniezyk, Recording Secretary (2018)
Dee Erickson, Corresponding Secretary (2016)
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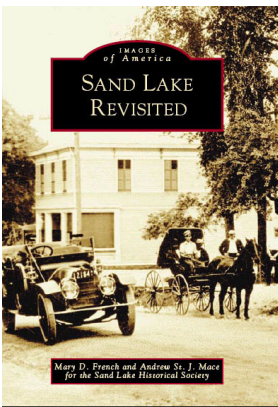
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Winter season and SLHS Meetings

It is possible that, at some point, we will get snow! If that happens on a meeting night, we'll hopefully get word out via the School Closing Network (the one you'll see on most local TV stations and on local newspaper web sites). We'll also do our best to get notice on our Facebook page and possibly our web site as well.

Below is the Sand Lake portion of the 1928 US Department of the Interior Geological Survey map "Troy, NY Quadrangle USGS 15 Minute Series". Originals may be found at <http://docs.unh.edu/nhtopos/Troy.htm>





<http://sandlakehistory.org>
E-mail: sandlakehistory@aol.com
Historical Highlights
Andrew Mace, Editor/Publisher



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