



Historical Highlights

Official Publication of the Sand Lake Historical Society

Volume 43, Number 1

Our 43rd Year

Fall 2016

Upcoming Programs

- 1 **Tuesday, September 13:** Join Sand Lake Town Historian Bob Moore for an update on what has been going on in the Historian's office this past year and a preview of what's coming up. The main program will be devoted to the Chautauqua movement that began in western N.Y. in 1874. Chautauqua was an adult education movement that was highly popular in the late 19th and 20th centuries. Bob has been going to Chautauqua for 25 years and will discuss the life-changing programs the Institution still offers. A short film will be part of the program.
- 1 **Tuesday, October 11:** Local author and member Gloria Waldron Hukle will debut her 4th historical novel! *Souls of the Soil* takes place in New York's Rensselaer, Albany and Saratoga Counties. The novel spans centuries following the lives of two sets of American fathers and their sons—all four of whom share the same DNA. The story was inspired by an actual murder in New York in the year 1756 and driven by the discovery of a small family cemetery plot hundreds of years later. This is the fourth and final of Hukle's American Waldron Series novels.
- 1 **Saturday-Sunday, October 15-16** (rain dates 10/22-23): ***Amazing Graves; Ghosts of Sand Lake***. (SLHS is proud to co-sponsor this event!) Details elsewhere in this issue!
- 1 **Tuesday, November 1 (please note change from our usual 2nd Tuesday):** Jack Casey will talk about Alexander Hamilton. Mr. Casey has published four novels about New York State, three historical and one political satire. He began a novel about Hamilton in 1982 and was so enamored with Hamilton's legal and political career that he put the novel aside to enroll in law school himself. Graduating with honors from both Yale University ('72) and Albany Law School ('87), Jack has practiced law in the Capital District for 28 years while also serving in governmental and political positions in both Rensselaer County and the New York State Capitol. As he sought to bring his Hamilton project out, the Broadway musical hit. Jack and his partner Victoria Wright attended *Hamilton* (An American Musical) the same day as Barack Obama; with renewed interest in Hamilton's life, Jack has edited his manuscript to embrace only the final two and a half years of Hamilton's life, focusing on the inexplicable tragedy of his death.

Recent Past Programs

- 1 **May 10:** Our Annual Dinner/Meeting was held at *Zion United Church of Christ in Taborton*, beginning at 6:00 p.m. After a brief annual meeting with election of Trustees (*Sharon Dawes, Wayne Evancoe, Jackie Tremont*, all new; *Anna Church, Dee Erickson* named to second terms) and other matters, Phyllis Chapman, dba "Vintage Visitors," brought to life Susan B. Anthony, covering the great suffragist's early years as a Quaker in Massachusetts and New York, and her collaboration with Elizabeth Cady Stanton.
- 1 **June 14:** We learned about **arts letters & numbers**, a new arts education organization here in town. In addition to a school to provide artist-in-residence opportunities and allow a wide variety of disciplines to cultivate a space that encourages collaborative and individual creation, they are preserving "The Mill," one of the former mill buildings, as well as "The House on the Hill" (on Burden Lake Road, formerly Burton's Golden Years Rest Home, a National Register designee).

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

TR-SL DVD from SLHS



You will remember that, in April 2015, 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.

SLHS and Facebook

If you haven't already done so, look for us on Facebook! It's a great place to get the most up-to-date news on meetings and events, along with other items of interest from us and from other places and groups in the Capital District.

We're rapidly developing quite a following beyond our members, and our Facebook page proved a "lifesaver" when our web site provider had server problems that prevented us from updating our web site just as we were beginning to promote the "Big Band Gala" earlier this year.

From <https://www.facebook.com>, just type Sand Lake Historical Society in the Search Box at the top of the page. Then just "Like" us...and enjoy!

What is history?

History is what happened in the past, right? Well, of course, but it's also happening right now. A great example of that occurred recently on our Facebook page. In the midst of upcoming events and old photos and such, we recently reposted a message regarding a "gathering" taking place in Averill Park.

That "gathering" consisted of literally hundreds of people packing the Lakeview on Crystal Lake to watch Averill Park native Rudy Winkler compete in the Olympic hammer throw competition in Rio. Unfortunately, Rudy did not make the finals, but he made history for himself and our Town by competing in The Olympics! Arguably not since baseball great El Roy Face has there been as famous an athlete from our area! And Rudy's young; there's a pretty good chance we'll see him in a future Olympic competition again!

Notice of this on the Facebook page brought more traffic to the page than anything since the Big Band Gala. With that traffic also comes awareness of who we are, just as it did for the Gala. And anything we can to increase awareness of the Society and its goals is a good thing, indeed!

“Big Band Gala at Crooked Lake”

Over 150 people attended our Big Band Gala on Crooked Lake, Saturday, April 9. Dancing, music and great desserts were part of this event to honor the 75th anniversary of United Service Organizations – the USO.

So many truly dressed for the occasion as well! We had a Winston Churchill, two women dressed as “Rosie the Riveter,” a number of men in uniform, and many “gals” with hairstyles and clothes of the 1940s!

We also attracted some very talented dancers and many people from out of town, introducing them to our town and the historic Old Daley on Crooked Lake, for an evening that reflected the dances and big band radio broadcasts from Crooked Lake “back in the day”! We were able to make a \$500 donation to USO @ Ft. Drum.

We are particularly indebted to sponsor Bob LaFleur/Spectra Environmental Group and to our raffle prize donors, including: Barbara New-Berti, Bob Moore, Rev. Robert Loesch, Mary Pierce LaFleur, Kathryn Pierce, P&D Farm Market & Brinery, and Sue Powers.

Photos on this page by Anna Church, Phil Markham and Bob Moore. We'll have many more on our web site soon!



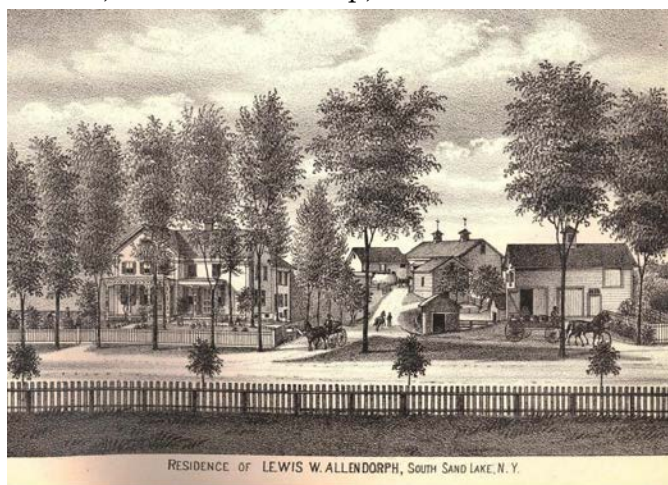
Sand Lake's Rich Agricultural Past and Present -- Part I

Let's take a look back at our agricultural history with a focus on the town's southwestern portion. This is the corner of the town near the Sand Lake Convenience Facility, affectionately known as "the dump" by those of us who frequent it. Here also are the hamlets of Best and Sliter's Corners. The

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

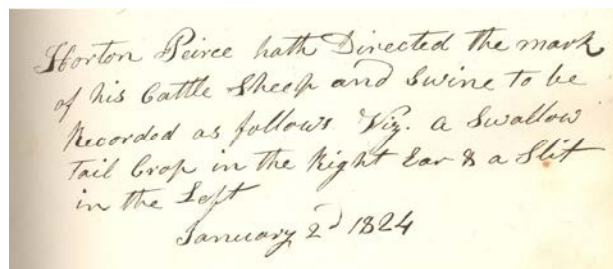


1854 map calls this Stevens Corners, and was at one time known as South Sand Lake. The 1880 edition of *Sylvester's History of Rensselaer County* describes the hamlet as having, "a store, a hotel, a blacksmith shop, and a number of



dwelling houses." One of the most prosperous farms in the mid-1800s belonged to the Allendorph family (image from *Sylvester's History of Rensselaer County*).

In general, the western part of Sand Lake was best for farming. If we go back to the 1778 Van



Allen Survey Map, there are 14 farms listed in the West Sand Lake area, with the smallest being 140 acres and the largest being 325 acres belonging to the Uline family.

Subsistence farming, raising cattle and other farm animals was an important part of everyone's lives in the 1800s. One of the most interesting artifacts in the town historian's collection is a book entitled, *Marks of the Beasts in the Town of Sand Lake*, dated 1813. This book is filled with farmer's instructions on how they have marked their cattle, sheep and swine. In 1824, Pierce Horton, had chosen a "swallow tail crop in the right ear and a slit in the left."

The book *A Resourceful People, A Pictorial History of Rensselaer County* contains many old photos of area farms. It also considers the importance of haying, which many farmers depended on for cash. Hay had many uses, including bedding for horses in area cities as well as New York. Rye straw was used as insulation in ice houses. Many Rensselaer County farms were negatively affected by the coming of the horseless carriage.

A Rensselaer County gazetteer from 1871 lists occupations as, "teacher and farmer; blacksmith and farmer; sawmill and farmer; grocer and farmer; butcher and farmer."

In Part II, we'll get a chance to look at a Sand Lake citizen who could be called a "State Trooper and Farmer"! – *Bob Moore, Town Historian*

Officers and Trustees of the Society 2016-17

Joe Ferrannini, President (2018); *Joan Fuess*, Vice President (2017); *Jackie Tremont*, Corresponding Secretary and Acting Recording Secretary (2019); *Barbara Neu-Berti*, Treasurer (2017). *Anna Church* (2019); *Sharon Dawes* (2019); *Dee Erickson* (2019); *Wayne Evancoe* (2019); *Andrew Mace* (2018); *Bob Moore* (2017); *Sue Powers* (2018); *Mary June Roy* (2017); *Rosemarie Sniezyk* (2018); *Mary Weber* (2017).

Recycling!

We all recycle, right? Cans, bottles, news print, cardboard, plastic? Perhaps even an old car or other scrap metal? Of course we do! ;)

Of course, many other things can be recycled, not the least of which is a residential or commercial structure. In the Capital District in recent years, we've seen any number of old mills, storefronts, factories and banks successfully repurposed. And there are a fair number of these right on our own Town. Let's take a quick look at three of the most recent examples.

If you've been a resident of Sand Lake for any length of time, you've likely driven down Burden Lake Road and passed by the old Faith Mills buildings. One of those structures has been repurposed in a way quite different from its original purpose.



As noted elsewhere, [arts letters & numbers](#) (subject of our June 2016 program) is a new arts education organization here in town. In addition to a school to provide artist-in-residence opportunities and allow a wide variety of disciplines to cultivate a space that encourages collaborative and individual creation, they are preserving "The Mill," one of the former mill buildings, as well as "The House on the Hill" (on Burden Lake Road, formerly Burton's Golden Years Rest Home, a National Register designee).



[Homeroom Lofts](#) might not be a familiar name, but their location is truly a landmark near the hamlet of Sand Lake: the former Sand Lake School. Built in 1929, it was used for nearly eight decades by the Averill Park Central School District. After sitting vacant for a few years, it was sold off, with the new owners converting it into apartments while retaining much of the original character and detail of the structure. Outside it looks much as it always has; inside is very different, with clever design making the most of many familiar features.



[Mess Hall](#) ("A Military Style Cafeteria") is one of the newest restaurants in town, located in what might best be described as a "true survivor"! The little structure on Route 43 between Edgewood Drive and Sunset Road has been home to numerous restaurants, shops and even a bottle redemption center, and is now back to being a restaurant again. The theme and simple menu seem to be resonating with locals!

Amazing Graves: Ghosts of Sand Lake October 15-16, 2016

Introduction (by Bob Moore, Town Historian): One of my goals as historian is to help give the community a sense of place. Why did Sand Lake, West Sand Lake and Averill Park develop into what they are today? In reconnecting with our forebears we gain respect for what they have given us. With this understanding we can move proudly into our future.

Recently I've been working on a project, *Amazing Graves: Ghosts of Sand Lake*, that will give all of us a better sense of place. The project will take place in the Sand Lake Union Cemetery and will feature actors portraying Sand Lake residents from our town's past.

...a woman born in 1857...Six times I sailed past the rock of Gibraltar and through the Suez Canal, and I wrote five books about my adventures. – "Jessie"

These historic figures will include Dr. Smith Boughton (a.k.a. Big Thunder), James K. Averill, Sheriff William Griggs, Jesse Traver Moore, and others who made our community what it is today.

The project will also feature an exhibit that will be housed in the Sand Lake Center for the Arts. There will be old photos, artifacts and a calico Indian outfit, the type that would have been worn by Big Thunder himself.

A number of organizations have been involved in the production of *Amazing Graves*, including: Sand Lake Town Library, Averill Park Schools, Sand Lake Historical Society and the Sand Lake Center for the Arts.

Mark your calendars early so you don't miss it: Saturday and Sunday, October 15 and 16 (Rain dates are October 22 & 23, 2016.) There will be numerous shows from 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. both days, and a special "haunting performance" on Saturday night at 7:00 p.m. Admission is \$10.

Schedule of Events

- † There will be walking tours on Saturday, October 15 (rain date October 22), at 10:00 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 1:00 p.m., a seated "tour" at 2:30 p.m., and a "haunted" tour at 7:00 p.m.
- † On Sunday, October 16 (rain date October 23), there will be walking tours at 11:30

a.m. and 1:00 p.m., and a seated tour at 2:30 p.m.

- † Tour members will be transported to the cemetery from either the Sand Lake Town Library or the Sand Lake Center for the Arts by school bus (except for the night tour, where participants will park on the lower cemetery road).
- † An exhibit at Sand Lake Center for the Arts will include artifacts of the people showcased and of the era in general.

In the unlikely (we hope!!) even of rain on BOTH weekends, we are hoping to present the show in an inside venue. If the weather is iffy, people can call 732-2904 to see if the tours are happening.

...I responded to the bugle and the cadence of the drums. I was devoted and loyal...losing an ear and eventually my life in service to my country. – "Moscow"

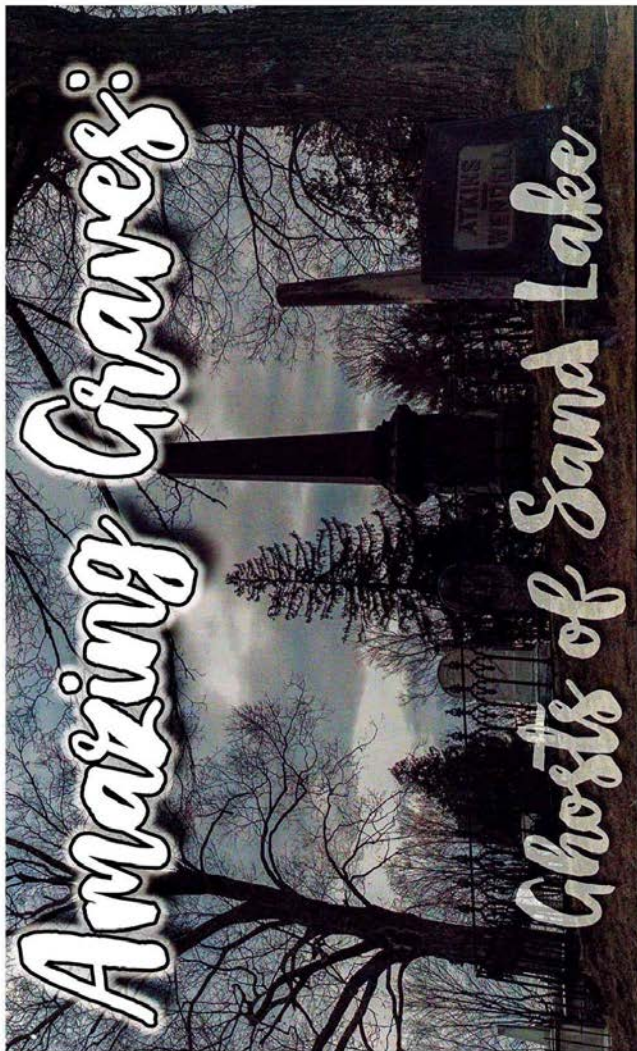
Admission for the tour is \$10.00 per person. Tickets will be available the day of the event. Recommended for ages 10 and over. Proceeds will benefit the Sand Lake Town Library and Sand Lake Union Cemetery.

Community Sponsors

- † Averill Park Central School District †
- † Office of the Sand Lake Town Historian
- † Sand Lake Center for the Arts †
- † Sand Lake Historical Society †
- † Sand Lake Town Library †
- † Sand Lake Union Cemetery
- † Town of Sand Lake
- † West Sand Lake Volunteer Fire Department

Donors

- † A.B. Daley Insurance
- † Art Herman Builders
- † Cross Roads American Grille
- † DeGraaf – Bryce Funeral Home, Inc.
- † Jiff-E-Mart
- † Kiwanis Club of Sand Lake, Inc.
- † Lakeview Inn on Crystal Lake, Inc.
- † Karen Opalka
- † Sand Lake Septic Service
- † Spectra Environmental Group
- † Towne Tavern
- † Tremont About Town Rental
- † Eric Washburn



FUNDRAISER FOR THE SAND LAKE TOWN LIBRARY

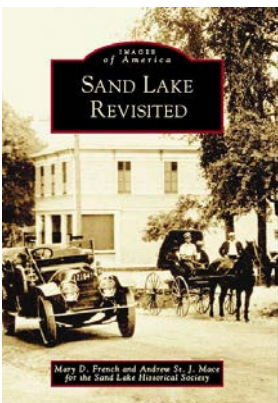
*In partnership with the Sand Lake Historical Society
and the Sand Lake Center for the Arts*

Oct. 15-walking tours at 10am, 11:30am, 1 pm,
seated tour 2:30 and 7 pm.

Oct. 16-walking tours at 11:30, 1 pm, seated tour at 2:30 pm.

Rain Dates: October 22 and 23-same tour times.
For weather information call 732-2904.
Tour information call 674-2426

Admission: \$10 a person. Recommended for ages 10 and over.
Tickets purchased day of event at the Sand Lake Town Library.



<http://sandlakehistory.org>
E-mail: sandlakehistory@aol.com
Historical Highlights
Andrew Mace, Editor/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/Renewal 2016-2017

(Please print clearly)

New Member Renewal

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

\$3 per Student (13-22) _____ \$10 per Individual _____ \$15 per Family _____

\$100 per Lifetime (Individual) _____ \$150 per Lifetime (Family – two persons) _____

Would you prefer to receive newsletter via e-mail or via Postal Mail (choose only one)

Total enclosed: \$ _____

For you: Fall 2016

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



Sand Lake Historical Society

Membership Application/Renewal 2016-2017

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\$100 per Lifetime (Individual) _____ \$150 per Lifetime (Family – two persons) _____

Would you prefer to receive newsletter via e-mail or via Postal Mail (choose only one)

Total enclosed: \$ _____

For a friend: Fall 2016

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