

Historical Highlights

Official Publication of the Sand Lake Historical Society

Volume 44, Number 2

Our 44th Year

Winter 2018

Our winter issue looks back at a

basis for almost 60 years! We'll also

look at a couple of commentaries

Chatham's Courier newspaper, and

beyond our own borders for a story

about map "traps" and mistakes.

local institution, one we've all

on our town, circa 1926, from

we'll look within and just a bit

That and more inside!

looked forward to on a weekly

From the president

This has been a year of growth ... new energy on the SLHS Board of Trustees, new faces in the audience and new members. Our programs have concentrated on anniversaries - Suffragettes and women gaining the vote in New York in 1917, the Erie Canal and the Adirondack Park -- and the ongoing saga "Who Killed Hazel Drew?" Our January program is about another local murder, that of Deputy Sheriff Griggs at the time of the Anti-Rent Wars in 1869.

We do take time to celebrate: the holidays at Berti's (host Barbara New-Berti pictured below), music and other facets of the 1960s at our Annual Crooked Lake event, and our Annual Dinner in May. Behind the scenes, we have strengthened our infastructure and inventoried our library and archive treasures.

Perhaps the *Troy Record* in 1908 forecast what the new year will bring when they published the following: *The case will go down into history as an unsolved problem unless by accident something develops that may throw some light on it.* Could 2018 be the year we will be "Unraveling the Clues to the Tragic Murder of a Pretty Servant Girl"? Bob Moore, our town historian and local

"detective," will be presenting the facts and theories at Hudson Valley Community College in their Community Education program. (More information at http://www.hvcc.edu/communityed/index.html as it becomes available.) John Holser continues filming for his documentary on Hazel's story, using local scenes and actors.

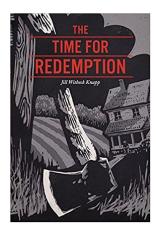
Last year (2016), we partnered with the Sand Lake Center for the Arts in a unique fundraiser for the Sand Lake Town Library. Amazing Graves: The Ghosts of Sand Lake included a tour of the Sand Lake Union Cemetery, with actors in costume representing significant ghosts remembered there. For those who enjoyed *Amazing* Graves, those who missed it or those who might enjoy seeing it again and sharing it with others, a DVD is now for sale. It was professionally created by West Field Production Co. This would be a great gift for anyone who loves local history! These are being sold as a fundraiser for the Sand Lake Town Library. The price is \$15 for one, \$25 for two, \$30 for three, and they are available at the Library, 8428 Miller Hill Rd., Averill Park, NY 12018. Quantities are limited, so don't wait! (You might want to call the Library at 518-674-5050 to make sure it is still available.) If you wish to order via mail, please send a check payable to the Sand Lake Town Library at the above address, and add \$2.00 for p&p.

Each year Ron and Barbara Berti host our Annual Holiday party. It is a treat to visit one of the treasured historic homes in our

community as well as appreciate all the special decorations Barbara creates for the event. Gene and CarolLynn Langley of Quiet Creek presented the music for the evening. We thank these very giving hosts and the musicians -- Joan Fuess, President

Upcoming programs

discuss her new book *The Time for Redemption*, nonfiction work about William Witbeck of East Greenbush. Witbeck, along with two of his sons, was charged with the murder of Deputy Sheriff Willard Griggs during the Anti-Rent Wars in Albany and Rensselaer counties. To this day, Deputy Griggs is the only Rensselaer County Deputy Sheriff to die in the line of duty, and his death is remembered annually by the Rensselaer County Sheriff's Department. The incident captivated the Capital District in 1869 and 1870 as documented in over 300 pages of newspaper articles.



The unusual legal proceedings associated with the incident led to editorials in the *Albany Law Journal* regarding pretrial publicity and juror selection, and the lengthy proceedings and trial were cited in legal and judicial histories. The shooting is briefly mentioned in the oft-cited *Tin Horns and Calico* by Henry Christman. Jill is a board

Historical Society. She also has been involved with several area land conservancies, trusts and preserves. [7:30 p.m., Town Hall Courtroom] **Tuesday, February 13:** Where did they go? What happened to our 19th century homes and other buildings? Don Carpentier, a unique man, historical expert and long-time friend of SLHS, collected those buildings. Today, 20 of them are permanently "settled" in Eastfield Village in nearby East Nassau. Peter Schaaphok, President of the Historic Eastfield Foundation, will fill us in on this treasure. The Village is also home to the Annual Series of American Trades and Historic Preservation Workshops and was recently named in Early American Life Magazine in their list of favorite museums and historic places. Mr. Schaaphok was involved in the formation of the foundation in 1979. [7:30 p.m., Town Hall Courtroom!

member of the Greenbush Historical Society and

a library volunteer at Rensselaer County

Tuesday, March 13, 7:00 p.m. (note special time): Author Ron Hughes will discuss his book *Who Killed Hazel Drew*? at the March meeting of the Sand Lake Historical Society. The *Sand*

Lake Center for the Arts will host the event, with book signing after the presentation. Be sure to arrive early; last September's Hazel Drew presentation was SRO! The event is free to all. Friday, April 20, 6:00 -9:30 p.m. (note special date and time): Step back to the 1960s at the Old Daley on Crooked Lake! Tentative plans include Dinner, Dancing & a DJ. We'll look back at what was happening in Sand Lake and around the country and the world: music, fashion, art, technology, politics, Woodstock, walking on the moon...and more. Details to follow, so watch your postal or e-mail inbox, our web site and our

SLHS web site and Facebook

Don't forget to keep checking our web site: http://sandlakehistory.org! It's as up-to-date as possible for programs and events, and we're constantly adding new material and features.

Facebook page!

And, if you haven't already done so, look for us on Facebook! It's a great place to get the most upto-date news on meetings and events, along with other items of interest from us and from other places and groups in the Capital District. And occasionally, you'll see things you won't see in our newsletter or the website!

We've developed quite the following beyond our members, and the Facebook page proved a true "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" in April 2016. Just since October 2017, we've grown from **180** to **225** "Likes"!

Look on our web site for the link or go to https://www.facebook.com/SandLakeHistoricalSociety — "Like" us...and enjoy!

SLHS member notification list

During January 2018, those of you who have shared your email address with us will receive notification that you have been added to a list called "slhs-members @ googlegroups.com"; this will be an announce-only list for the purpose of getting out word quickly for sudden cancellations, postponements and such. It will not be a discussion list. Postings hopefully will be very infrequent, so we won't be filling up your inbox, and you will be offered the opportunity to opt out or request a different e-mail be used. This will simply supplement any notifications on the School Closing Network or our Facebook page and web site!

Sixty years of The Advertiser

To use his own words, Al Hayner is in his 92nd year! You wouldn't guess it by looking at him or by how busy he is! His eyes twinkle, he smiles broadly, and his memory is amazing.



Al started a little paper he called the *Sand Lake Advertiser* in 1958. He already had a full-time job at the *Legislative Digest*, an appliance store in the center of Averill Park, and a family, so why would he start a paper? You have to go back to his youth to understand.

When Hayner was 15, he wanted a job and spending money. He went to Faith Mills, but wasn't hired as he was too young. Al's father had a small store on the corner of Burden Lake and Sheer roads. The store was generally leased out from Memorial Day 'til Labor Day, while many rented camps for the summer months to escape the heat of the cities. Al asked his father if he could rent and run the store. His father told him that he would need startup money.

Al went into Troy and talked to Mr. Manory, a successful Italian immigrant who spoke broken English. Mr. Manory gave him ice cream and a freezer with the understanding that Al would pay when he returned for more ice cream. Opening on Memorial Day weekend, it was only mid-June when some local boys set the store on fire. By then, Al was already selling papers, soda and kerosene in addition to ice cream. The fire destroyed the store, but a firewall saved an attached camp. With some help and ingenuity, Al salvaged and added to the floor of the old store, creating a large porch/dance floor. Mr. Manory generously ripped up the bill owed for that week, and provided him with more ice cream and a



second freezer. Soon there was a nickelodeon on the porch and Al took in half the profits. He also was the biggest delivery on the Pepsi driver's route. Hayner attributes this and other blessings as "divine intervention."

After World War II, Al met Marilyn, the love of his life. He proposed when she turned 18, and

she accepted -- "Divine intervention" once again as they were married for 58 years.

Meanwhile ...Al's appliance store, Merrilace, sold only two appliances one July. The woman who purchased these had seen the store's sign when driving by, and she liked Norge appliances, which were sold there. Living in Rensselaer, she hadn't realized the store existed. Al tried a radio ad but had no results. Later he asked Marilyn if she was interested in starting a newspaper. Marilyn was his number one fan and she agreed.

Al is an entrepreneur and a natural salesman. Within days, Al had sold enough ads for a first addition. Marilyn helped with the layout, stencil cuts and her decorative handwriting. The paper was produced on a mimeograph machine. They printed copies and began direct mailing. The next week, Al sold enough ads once again and the paper was off and running.



As time went on, the paper grew and Charlotte Foster, who was always reliable and helpful, printed it. Eventually, a bigger printer was needed.



Marilyn would cook dinner for the staff on late deadline nights. Daughter Alyson, at age 18, decided college was not for her. She asked to work at the paper, she eventually became the editor and is still there today!

The years rolled by! About 30 years ago, as the mailing included many more areas, "Sand Lake" was dropped from the name. In 1999, The Hearst Corp. purchased *The Advertiser*. Al insisted that the existing staff keep their jobs. Several of the staff have now been there for 39+ years; that's the kind of man he is!

The paper has grown, and technology has changed. Once a single-page edition produced on a mimeograph, the paper is now often 28 pages, full color, and digitally sent to the printer. Since its inception that fateful day in 1958, the paper has never missed an issue.

Hayner's philosophy is to always look to the future. If something doesn't work out, let it go and move on! – *Dee Erickson*

Trap...or mistake?

Likely since the dawn of recorded information, there have been those who would seek to "appropriate" someone else's work and claim it as their own. Likely for just as long, there have been those creators who sought to trap those who would attempt such theft. It is especially true in mapmaking, where cartographers might misspell a word, create a fake locale, or "dead-end" a road that actually continues along. And, of course, there just might be honest mistakes or printing errors. One classic example of a "trap" actually resulted in a township being created out of what originally was a trap.

The town [of Agloe, New York] was invented as a cartographical ruse in the 1930s, but it somehow ended up becoming real. Agloe's story might be the strangest in the already strange history of copyright traps in maps.

Usually, mapmakers don't invent whole towns out of paper and ink. Usually, they craft more subtle traps: nonexistent dead ends or fake river bends or adjusted mountain elevations. Mapmakers rarely officially admit to "trap streets," but it's an age-old practice to keep copycats at bay.

If a competitor just so happens to have the same fake town on their map, then you've pretty much caught them red-handed.

That's what Otto G. Lindberg of General Drafting Co. thought when he saw Agloe on competitor Rand McNally's map. Agloe was the invention of Lindberg and his assistant, Ernest Alpers; its very name was a mix of their initials (OGL and EA). Agloe did not exist, Lindberg asserted with confidence.

Except it did. Rand McNally had sent cartographers up to upstate New York, and there, where Agloe was marked on a map, was a building called Agloe General Store. Huh? Robert Krulwich described this weird twist of fate for NPR:

"The owners had seen Agloe on a map distributed by Esso, which owned scores of gas stations. Esso had bought that map from Lindberg and Alpers. If Esso says this place is called Agloe, the store folks figured, well, that's what we'll call ourselves. So, a made-up name for a made-up place inadvertently created a real place that, for a time, really existed. Rand McNally, one presumes, was found not guilty."

So there you have it, a fake town that became real. Agloe's fate may be among the strangest, but it is not the only copyright trap that took on a life of its own. -- The Fake Places That Only Exist to Catch Copycat Mapmakers, by Sarah Zhang on the gizmodo.com website

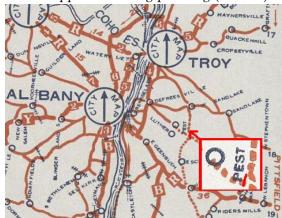
Much closer to home is an example the we can confirm neither as a trap nor a mistake. Most all of us are familiar with the neighboring town of East

Greenbush, with such intriguing hamlets names such as *Best* and *Luther*. In the 1920s, a company called Rota-Ray Map Systems marketed what at quick glance looks almost like today's in-car (or on-phone) GPS navigation system. In actuality, it was a set of



"strip maps" inserted into a small metal box. One could "scroll" up and down to follow an intended route.

One interesting entry on a section of map intrigued us. We wonder if it was an intentional trap, a proofreading mistake, or possibly even a flaw that happened during printing (PEST?):



Of course, the practice of "traps" (or out-and-out goofs) continues today, especially where computers and the Internet make copying / stealing easier than ever. Witness this screen capture from Google Maps resulting from a search for Towne Tavern:



We are truly curious about this one! We all know *Sliter's Corners* is now in the southwestern part of town, but until the 1880s, it was the name of what we now refer to as the hamlet of Sand Lake. We would also note that MapQuest and other online mapping sites do not make this error, so ????

While looking up other things....

[NOTE: The following two articles, found while searching for something else completely, are from a November 1926 issue of the Courier, a Chatham newspaper, on a page headed "The Lebanon Valley and Southern Rensselaer County." Images are not from the original newspaper. Much of the page has, area by area, the kind of news one tends not to find in today's newpapers, such as BURDEN LAKE: Mrs. Melvin Deveraux has returned from a visit with her daughter Mrs. George Miller of Schenectady. Also note all text was transcribed as published; no corrections!

Regarding the first article, we have yet to uncover any information regarding this proposed village incorporation. If anyone has any information, it would be most welcome! – Ed.]

INCORPORATION IS SUGGESTED; New Village Might Include Averill Park, Sandlake and Glass Lake -- Move Not Seriously Considered However

The Averill Park-Sand Lake-Glass Lake section is one of the up-and-coming sections of Rensselaer County as is evidenced by the progress that has been made in the last few years and the united manner in which the residents work, for any project that is for the public weal.

They have a fire and lighting district and in the recent past there has been a certain amount of discussion with regard to the advisability of forming an incorporated village, some suggesting that such a municipality embrace the three villages and others maintaining that the incorporation should be restricted to Averill Park.

The project has not, however, advanced beyond the talk stage and there is said to be no prospect of immediate action inasmuch as not all residents of the section are in favor of the idea or, perhaps, it might better be said that there are some who are not enthusiastically in favor for the reason that there appears to be no vigorous opposition.

As one Averill Park man said on Monday of this week: "I question whether incorporation would be advisable inasmuch as we already enjoy many of the privileges that incorporation could provide, these having followed the formation of the fire and lighting districts, the limits of which are identical. Incorporation, of course, has its advantages but it also has its disadvantages as is known by those who have been members of the governing bodies of such villages. It is only a few weeks ago that I read of a village in Dutchess County that was considering a vote, to see if the municipality should

be disincorporated their experience under incorporation having been unsatisfactory."

There is no doubt as to the truth of the gentleman's statements, but it is also true that there are hundreds of incorporated villages in the state that could not be persuaded to return to the former order of things.

And now another question arises i.e., suppose the matter of incorporation should be seriously considered, the territory to be included in the limits of the municipality to be Averill Park, Sand Lake and Glass Lake. What would the village be called? One or more of the places would lose its identity.

It can be understood why it is proposed that the three places be grouped for incorporation inasmuch as it is not possible for the uninitiated to tell where one begins and the other leaves off.



When the Standard Oil Company of New York wanted a name for their gasoline and didn't care to go outside of the family for it, one of the hired men suggested "Socony," a word manufactured from the company's name and one now visible every few feet along every well traveled highway. This fellow, or any other, however, would have his wits taxed to the utmost to cut this caper with the names Averill Park, Sand Lake and Glass Lake. Just see the hodgepodge that would result should it be tried. For instance: Sandglasspark, Glaysa, Glassirllake, Parandake, Avandake, Akeavass, Aveassake, Glavake, Glandark, etc., etc., ad lib. Who would favor any of these names? None of the three places would stand for them. The fellow who happened to run across one of them couldn't tell whether the municipality was an Indian camp or a Russian settlement.

But, all joking aside, should the villages decide to combine and incorporate, a euphonious title for the combination will be found, one that will be satisfactory to everyone.

The number of people in the three places is said to be in the neighborhood of 1,500 and many a village has been incorporated with less. Look for instance, at Kinderhook, N. Y. with probably 750 population.

It has been incorporated for many years and there is not one of its residents who would listen were someone to suggest disincorporation.

WEST SANDLAKE A PRETTY VILLAGE; The Thrift and Civic Pride of the Residents Make a Favorable Impressoin [sic] on the Stranger

To the person visiting West Sand Lake for the first time comes the impression that here is a village the beauty and attractiveness of which has not been sufficiently advertised.

Located: a short distance (short in these days of automobiles) from Albany or Troy, it is, from the scenic standpoint, one of the show places of Rensselaer County and during the last two or three weeks this section has been particularly attractive because of the variegated hues of the autumn foliage on tree and shrub and bush.

The stranger, traversing the long main street of the village, cannot but be impressed by the many very cozy homes which flank either side of the thoroughfare, especially pretty from the architectural viewpoint, homes that bespeak most emphatically, by their spic and span condition, a most commendable civic



pride. Many of those homes have, apparently, been erected during the last few years and they are, of course, modern in every respect.

Modernity might, possibly result in monotony of view but on this pleasant West Sand Lake Street the is prevented by the sprinkling of homes of the, older type, some of them: evidently having been erected eighty or a hundred years ago. The owners or occupants of these homes have, apparently been imbued with the same brand of civic pride that characterizes the owners of the newer homes inasmuch as the old places, almost without exception, have been kept in a good state of repair, the grounds showing evidence of painstaking care and the use of the paint brush has not been spared.

It is said this is a locality in which many city people and other sojourners pass their summers and it is a statement that is easy to believe. The scenery is unsurpassed, the location is convenient, the all-year-round population are a congenial people and in many other respects it is the sort of spot the urban dweller finds to his or her liking as an enjoyable retreat during the warm months of the year.

For two or more years the village has been denied electric railroad transportation facilities but the motor bus line with frequent, and convenient service to and from Troy, provides a means of travel of which many residents, each day, avail themselves.

It has electric current for light and other uses; it has the telephone; it has an efficient fire company and in various other-respects it show evidence of being a village that is keeping abreast of the times in these days when so many of the smaller places throughout Eastern New York are either stagnant or on the down grade.

It has stores with stocks that are intended to supply practically every want of the villagers, these merchants, too, showing every evidence of having their eyes continually open to changing demands and making an effort to supply those demands in the most efficient manner.

Judging from the number of new or practically new, homes and the various other evidences of thrift, West Sand Lake is destined, in the not far distant future to be one of the most lively and wide-awake of the many villages in southern Rensselaer County, it being safe to predict that this progress

will be brought about by the present loyal residents and by the many people looking for suburban homes, either for the entire year or a portion thereof, who will be drawn there by the many attractions and natural advantages provided by Dame Nature when she was in one of her most amiable and benign of moods.

In Memoriam

We note with great sorrow the recent passing of members Diane Freeman and Ruth Udwary, and our thoughts and prayers are with their families.

Officers and Trustees of the Society 2017-18

Joan Fuess, President (2020); Joe Ferrannini, Vice President (2018); Jackie Tremont, Corresponding Secretary (2019); Nancy Perry, Recording Secretary (2020); Wayne Evancoe, Treasurer (2019). Sharon Dawes (2019); Dee Erickson (2019); Bonnie Hellum (2019); Jane Minotti (2018); Michael Perry (2019) Sue Powers (2018); Michelle Mosher Schultz (2020); Rosemarie Sniezyk (2018)



Written on the box: These Christmas balls were purchased by Philip and Edna Pierce their first Christmas after World War II in December in 1946 at Nash's General Store in Sand Lake, N.Y. – Dee (Pierce) Erickson

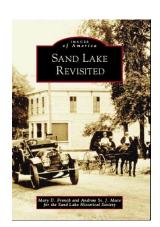


SLHS members sworn into office

On January 1, 2018, SLHS Secretary Nancy Perry was sworn in as Sand Lake Town Supervisor. Dee Erickson, Board member, was sworn in as Councilperson. We wish them both the very best of luck in their new duties!

Note the family bible Dee used actually is older than the Town itself! The Wethey/Traver Bible, circa 1790, belonged to her ancestor, Henry Wethey, who settled in Sand Lake after serving in the Revolutionary War.





http://sandlakehistory.org
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Historical Highlights
Andrew Mace, Editor/Publisher





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Sand Lake Historical Society Membership Application/Renewal 2017-2018

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\$100 per Lifetime (Individual)	\$150 per Lifetime (Family – two persons)
	<u> </u>
V 1	newsletter via e-mail or via Postal Mail (choose only one

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*First time members joining after January 1, 2018, will see their first year's membership extended to May 31, 2019!