



Historical Highlights

Official Publication of the Sand Lake Historical Society

Volume 45, Number 3

Our 45th Year

Winter 2019

From the president

Sand Lake residents are on the move.....

- 1 Researching and preserving the history of our historic homes through the Historic Neighborhoods (Glass Lake) Project;
- 1 Collecting the stories of the past through the Oral History Project lead by Town Historian Bob Moore;
- 1 Presenting topics of historical interest at SLHS monthly meetings;
- 1 Maintaining a resource library and gathering materials that preserve the history of the Town and the Society;
- 1 Gathering to explore the history of Sand Lake Union Cemetery and solve the mystery of a 1908 murder;
- 1 Acquiring artifacts that reflect the industry of the town.

The Historical Society encourages, participates in and promotes these events. — *Joan Fuess, president*

Upcoming programs

- 1 **Tuesday, February 12:** Paul and Mary Liz Stewart, co-founders of Underground Railroad History Project of the Capital Region, Inc., will present a program about the influence of the Underground Railroad in this area. This group maintains the Stephen and Harriet Myers Residence in Albany, a headquarters for Underground Railroad activity in the mid-1850s and the only such structure remaining in the city; conducts annual conferences; publishes *The Freedom Speaker*; and documents our region's underground railroad history.
- 1 **Tuesday, March 12:** Rensselaer County and Troy City Historian Kathy Sheehan will present *From Plank Roads to Horse Boat Ferries: Traveling through Rensselaer County in the 19th Century*. Join for an illustrated lecture on the many ways people traveled throughout Rensselaer County in the early 19th century. Using maps, letters and photographs from the Rensselaer County Historical Society archives, Kathy will explore the early turnpikes, plank roads, covered bridges and the stories of crossing the Hudson River, our main highway to the outside world.
- 1 **Tuesday, April 9:** Tom Carroll, Hudson Mohawk Industrial Gateway Senior Scholar, will talk about Tiffany windows around the Capital Region. The City of Troy is estimated to have more Tiffany windows per square mile than anywhere else in the world! Tom will take a look at the life of Louis

In this issue:

The history of postal service in the Town of Sand Lake dates back almost as far as does the Town itself. We'll take a look at post offices past and present; some of this information may surprise you!



All that, information on upcoming programs and events, and more inside this issue!



Comfort Tiffany and discuss the history of his one-of-a-kind, legendary techniques (and those of his studio's other artisans) that led to great success in the stained glass business.

NOTE: February, March and April programs will be held at 7:30 p.m. in the Sand Lake Town Hall Courtroom, 8428 NY 66, Sand Lake NY.

Looking ahead....

- 1 **Tuesday, May 14:** Sand Lake Historical Society Annual Meeting. Current plans are to hold the meeting at the newly renovated historic Glass Lake House, reopening as *TBA — Tighe's Bistro Americain*. Details in our Spring newsletter!
- 1 **Save the Date:** Our 5th Annual Fundraiser will be held this year at the historic Crystal Cove Dance Hall starting at 6:00 p.m. on Friday, June 7. This beautiful, historic building has wonderful views over Crystal Lake in Averill Park to enjoy over dinner, music, and dancing. We start with small bites and a cash bar, followed by a lobster bake dinner featuring a 1.5 pound lobster with assorted salads and strawberries on lemon pound cake for dessert. (Steak will be available as an alternative to lobster.) Mark your calendar now and watch for more details in the spring!



Recap of past programs

- 1 **Tuesday, November 13:** Eric Washburn presented “Birds: In your backyard and far away,” showing slides from his journeys across the United States as well as adventures to Ecuador, Costa Rica, Brazil and Tanzania. Washburn also shared some helpful hints on taking pictures of birds. Immediately preceding, at 7:00 p.m., the *Sand Lake Association for the Mutual Protection Against Horse Thieves* held their annual 169th annual meeting!
- 1 **Sunday, November 18:** Who Killed Hazel Drew? — Film Preview and Fundraiser, at the Sand Lake Center for the Arts. Two sessions — 1:00 p.m. and 4:30 p.m — both saw near-capacity crowds. For more information on this project, please visit their web site at <https://hazeldrew.com/>
- 1 **Tuesday, December 11:** Annual Holiday Party / Pot Luck Supper, an opportunity to share not only a potluck supper but also stories of family holiday traditions at the home of Ron and Barbara Berti (the “Knowlson House”) on Schumann Road in Sand Lake. Long-time SLHS member Mike St. Germain presented two wooden plaques depicting our logo. Mike’s niece, Tamara St Germain Scannell, is a former resident of Averill Park who, along with her husband, had been instrumental in the founding of Makersmith in Leesburg and Purcellville, VA, which does, among other things, laser engraving. Tamara knew of Mike’s years on the board and his fondness for SLHS, so she decided to make him the plaques. Mike presented the larger one to the Society to display in Town Hall and the smaller as a thank-you to Ron and Barbara for all the years they have hosted the holiday party and other events.



- 1 **Tuesday, January 8, 2019:** New Age of Weaponry in the Civil War. Bob Shuey, in uniform, discussed how the necessities of war created new technology and the transitions to new models of weaponry and demonstrated Civil War weaponry from his own collection.

SLHS member notification list

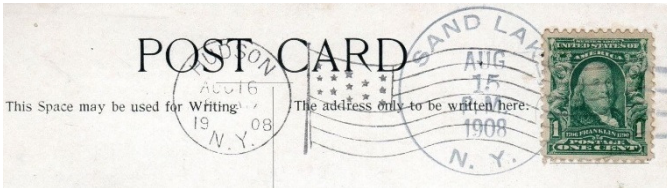
Those of you who have shared your email address with us should be familiar with our list called “[slhs-members @ googlegroups.com](mailto:slhs-members@googlegroups.com).” This is an announce-only list to quickly get word to members regarding cancellations, postponements and/or program reminders. This is *not* a discussion list. Postings generally run about 1-2 per month, and you will be offered the opportunity to opt out. We’re happy to add members whose email address was not on file. This will supplement any notifications on the School Closing Network (local TV stations and newspaper web sites) or our Facebook page and web site.

Post offices in the Town of Sand Lake

The history of post offices in and postal service to the Town of Sand Lake is nearly as old as the Town itself. In fact, the very oldest post office in Town is but three years younger than the Town! Let's take a more or less chronological look at the familiar – and not so familiar – post offices serving Sand Lake.

Not surprisingly, the oldest is...

Sand Lake



The Sand Lake post office is, by far, the oldest post office in town, dating from 1815.

Postmasters and dates of appointment:

Daniel M. Gregory, 02/04/1815; Uriah M. Gregory, 09/20/1816; Benjamin W. Harvey, 05/13/1829; Benjamin Wilkason, 01/07/1835; Gideon Butts, 06/16/1841; Calvin Sliter, Postmaster, 06/07/1843; Nathan Upham, 08/04/1849; William C. Tourtellot, 07/08/1852; William H. Wickes, 01/22/1853; Calvin Sliter, 05/20/1853; William H. Wickes, 07/26/1861; Dwight E. Barnes, 02/29/1864; David Horton, 05/07/1867; Harrison Lester, 05/28/1869; James C. Cotton, 12/07/1885; Jonathan Huntley, 12/17/1886; Amos L. Pomeroy, 06/06/1889; Sanford B. Horton, 01/22/1892.

[changed to **SANDLAKE** on March 2, 1896*]

Charles Crape, 03/02/1896; Arthur M. Peck, 03/03/1900; Albert E. Horton, 12/23/1907; Frederick H. Nash, 06/17/1914; Chester A. Nash (Acting Postmaster 04/19/1926, Postmaster, 09/02/1926); Walter I. Nash (Acting Postmaster 04/30/1941, Postmaster 09/25/1941).

[Name changed back to **SAND LAKE** on January 1, 1945*]

Mrs. Lillian E. Nash (Officer-In-Charge 10/16/1970, Postmaster 6/26/1971); Ada M. Ernest (OIC) 2/8/1978; Joseph P. Dudar (OIC), 03/14/1978; Mrs. Margaret C. Maier (OIC), 5/3/1978; Robert D. Sbovah (OIC), 6/15/1978; Deborah A. Fawthrop, 11/4/1978; Richard M. Collins Jr. (OIC), 1/10/1980; Mrs. Margaret C. Maier, 5/17/1980; Gary J. Trombley (OIC 1/20/1993), Postmaster 2/20/1993; Donna L. Baker (OIC), 12/24/2003; Linda C. VanBergen (OIC 4/16/2004), Postmaster 1/8/2005 to present.

*More about Sand Lake v. Sandlake elsewhere!

Older Town residents are likely most familiar with this sight:



Franklin Averill ran a store here in the 1830s. The Sand Lake Post Office was first located here in 1907, when it was still A.E. Horton's store; Albert Horton was postmaster. Chester Nash acquired the store in 1911. Frederick Nash took over as postmaster from Horton in 1914, then Fred's brother Chester became postmaster in 1926.

Note the "family connection": Walter Nash succeeded Chester in 1941 (Walter was Chester's son; Chester had reached mandatory retirement age. He passed away March 26, 1949); Lillian Nash (widow of Walter's brother Raymond, who owned the store at the time of his death in 1965) took over as acting postmaster in 1970 and was officially named postmaster in 1971.

Back to Walter and 1941 for a moment, though. In 1941, the US Postoffice Department made moves to consolidate the Sand Lake and Averill park post offices. Thanks to efforts by U.S. Representative E. Harold Cluett, the Department relented, and the two offices remained separate. Cluett also was instrumental in securing the postmaster position for Walter Nash:

"Mr. Cluett championed the cause of the Sand Lake people and insisted that while the government might be saved a little money by the plan that perhaps, after all, to merge the Sand Lake postoffice with that at Averill Park might bring about a congested condition at the latter place and call for a greater expenditure eventually than the saving that was contemplated.

"Patrons of the Sand Lake Postoffice protested vigorously and some of them said that they saw in the proposed merger a scheme to keep Walter I. Nash, the only person who qualified as postmaster at Sand Lake, out of the job as successor to his father, because he is a Republican." – [Troy] *Times Record*, Tuesday Evening, September 30, 1941

In 1978, the post office moved across the street to its current location next to Cumberland Farms.

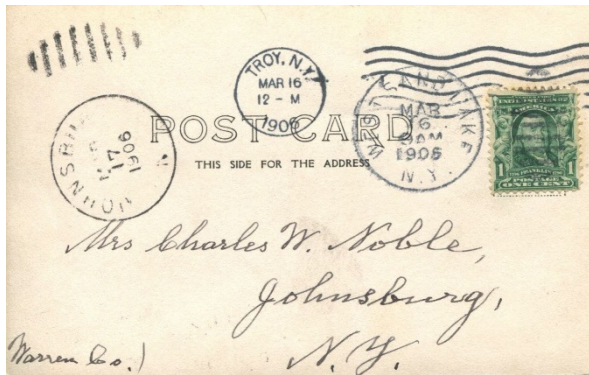
Ulinesville

A post office was established there on March 4, 1828, with Martin Rysdorff as postmaster. Its existence was brief, lasting only to May 13, 1829. Meanwhile, the hamlet's name changed to...

West Sand Lake

...and a post office there was established on April 4, 1834, with Frost Myers as postmaster.

Early history has proven difficult to locate, but a short article in the July 6, 1885, edition of the *Troy Daily Times* notes the death of Elbert W. Moul, "postmaster at West Sandlake. The deceased was a son of the late Supervisor William Moul, who died a few months ago." The July 15 edition of the same newspaper noted that "Washington Snyder has been appointed postmaster at West Sand lake. He is a storekeeper and popular in his town. He is a brother of C. Snyder, a member of the Rensselaer county bar."



The above post card, mailed in West Sand Lake, is notable for indicating the relative speed with which mail moved in the early 20th century! Note the March 16 morning postmark at West Sand Lake, the Troy postmark later than day, and the Johnsburg postmark the very next day! Service obviously was much improved from the earliest days. An 1837 newspaper advertisement for bids for mail routes noted "West Sand Lake to be supplied from Winantskill [sic], 4 miles and back once a week."

Also noted in the ad: "The distances, as stated in this advertisement, are believed to be substantially correct; but the bidder will inform himself on that point, as no increased pay will be allowed for any difference when the places are named correctly."

"The schedules are arranged so as to allow seven minutes to each post office for opening and closing mails generally, and one hour to the distributing post offices; but the Postmaster General may extend the time on allowing like extension to the contractors."

An article in the February 16, 1906, edition of the *Utica Herald Dispatch* noted that "Le Grand Turner, postmaster of West Sand Lake, was sentenced yesterday by Judge Ray, in the United States District Court, to serve one year in Auburn Prison for having

made false returns to the Postoffice Department concerning the operations of his postoffice."

Other early postmasters in West Sand Lake included Edward O. Auken (appointed in 1899), George H. Lewis (1905-21), and Charles J. Ryemiller. Ryemiller was postmaster in 1934, when the West Sand Lake post office was (temporarily?) "downgraded" to a fourth class office due to decreasing business. Ryemiller, however, continued as Postmaster until his death in 1956, having served a total of 34 years in the position. He was succeeded by his son, Charles J. Ryemiller, Jr., who was officially appointed in 1957 (said appointment having been confirmed by the U.S. Senate), received his commission from President Eisenhower.

Ryemiller, Jr., continued as postmaster until his death in 1968. He was succeeded by Morris. S. Schips.



Arguably the most familiar structure to house the West Sand Lake post office is this one, on "Albany Avenue" (as it was described on a circa 1910 post card, seen at right).

The West Sand Lake post office moved to 43 Mall in 1978. Postmasters in more recent years have included Dolores



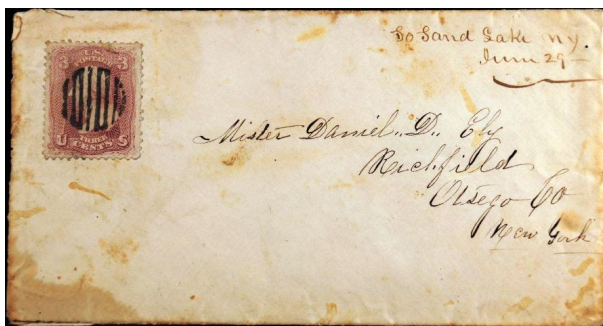
W. Morse, appointed 11/13/1982; John Tokryman (Officer-In-Charge), 9/23/1992; Holly A. Dickinson, 1/23/1993; Kevin Miller (OIC), 03/17/1997; Edward Connors (OIC), 7/2/1997; Cynthia Page (OIC), 3/25/1998; Sandra C. Simm, 7/4/1998; Joseph Marcus (OIC), 12/1/2000; Rose M. Wells, 2/10/2001; Sharon Miller (OIC), 4/4/2013; Linda Van Bergen (OIC), 8/8/2013; Sharon Miller (OIC), 1/6/2014; Joann E. Fiorino (OIC), 3/31/2014; Crystal Morby (OIC), 4/28/2015; and Charles S. Milkiewicz, 3/18/2017.

East Sand Lake

The area we now know as Taborton (more about which later) had its own post office from July 23, 1839, with Cyrus Amidon as postmaster to September 13, 1851. On that date, service was transferred to the East Poestenkill post office, possibly as a result of the formation of the Town of Poestenkill three years earlier, with Eliphalet S. Himes as postmaster. (In 1919, the East Poestenkill post office closed, and service was transferred to the Poestenkill post office.)

South Sand Lake

A post office was established in South Sand Lake on January 31, 1854, with William Stevens as postmaster. Stevens, who also was Town Supervisor in 1861, served until 1879.



Above is an envelope mailed from South Sand Lake on June 29. No year is given, but this particular stamps series was introduced in August 1861 and used until 1868. Previous stamps from 1847-60 had been “demonetized” and recalled due to the Civil War, to prevent Confederate states from using them.



The above photo shows the post office and store, along with William Stevens' home on the hill to the left. On April 12, 1881, the post office closed, and postal service was transferred to West Sand Lake. But that's not the end of postal service at this location; stay tuned!

Sand Lake Mills

Never happened! However, an explanation is in order: *The development of Averill Park that led to its present name all began in the 1870s. It can only be guessed when Horatio Averill first had the idea of*

developing the land around the Hamlet of Sand Lake. But in the late 1860s, he was involved in a new railroad project that proposed a steam railroad be constructed from Albany and Troy, running directly through Sand Lake Village to the Hoosick Tunnel and on to Boston...

The steam railroad was never built, but an electric trolley line was built in 1895. [Meanwhile] Horatio Averill began purchasing farms and large plots of land in the vicinity of Sand Lake. In 1874, he commissioned Burton Thomas to lay out a subdivision on a 75-acre plot at the south end of the village. The subdivision was named "Interlachen Park." This parcel was located on today's Burden Lake Road and Prospect Avenue.

In 1875, William F. Scram, head of the Scram Collegiate Institute, died and this famous local school closed. Horatio Averill purchased the Institute and it was renovated into the "Averill Park Hotel," which became a well-known summer resort located near a large grove with boats and fishing on Sand Lake...

*With this increase of activity, the need of a post office at Sand Lake grew. A search of the United States postal archives found that an application for a new post office to be named **Sand Lake Mills** at Rensselaer County was made, but no copy of the application was discovered. — Bob Lilly, from *Historical Highlights*, Vol. 29, No. 3, Spring 2003*

Averill

A post office Site Location Form was on record and a copy contained the following information. The proposed office to be called Sand Lake Mills, is crossed out and the name "Averill" substituted. It would be located on postal route 6224, which extended from Troy to West Stephentown. This route was operated by Henry D. Sharpe. The form was signed and returned by Albert Horton, proposed Postmaster, and certified by [Harrison] Lester, Postmaster of Sand Lake, on March 9, 1880.

*It would appear that it must have been Albert Horton who changed the name. With the paperwork completed, a new Post Office named the **Averill** Post Office was established and was dedicated May 31, 1880, with Frank Pettit as the first Postmaster. — Bob Lilly, as above [Note: The **Averill** post office existed through March 27, 1882, under that name.]*

Averill Park

*With the activity connected with the Interlachen Park subdivision and the promotion of the Averill Park Hotel, a new application was made and the name of the Post Office was changed to **Averill Park** on March 27, 1882. So, it appears that the post office and the village was named after Horatio F. Averill, as a result of his efforts to develop the area. — Bob Lilly, as above [Note: Frank Pettit continued as postmaster.]*

As with Sand Lake, we are fortunate to have a nearly complete list of postmasters and dates. Succeeding Frank Pettit were: John A. Coons, Dec. 23, 1885; Alanson M. Conike, Oct. 29, 1888; Frank Petit, April 10, 1889; George Shriner, May 15, 1907; Fred A. Shoemaker, May 17, 1912; Henry F. Henkel, Dec. 31, 1931; Charles H. Werger, May 10, 1932; Elsie E. Werger, Aug. 27, 1933; Pierce D. Kane, July 19, 1938; his wife, Mrs. Helen E. Kane, who was appointed on July 19, 1938, after his death; his daughter, Helen T. Kane, who was appointed on Dec. 9, 1944 and formally approved by the U.S. Senate October 24, 1945.



We interrupt our story briefly to note that the official name of the post office was changed to **Averillpark** (one word) on December 1, 1895, and back to **Averill Park** (two words) on July 1, 1916.

Judging from the cover shown above along with many others we have found, the postmark did not change to one word!

In earlier times, the Averill Park post office was located in several different spots within the village, amongst them the building that also has housed Wright's Drug Store and The Village Shop, a small storefront several

doors west of the Variety Store (Young's Pharmacy), and Tillotson's / Traveler's Rest Hotel (now the site of Miller's Automotive). The photo above, from the early 1900s, shows both Traveler's Rest hotel (l) and another site of the post office (r)!

The year 1957 saw the opening of a new post office, "dedicated by Martin O Ogden, district manager, Post Office Department Regional Operations, at Albany. Before the dedication various groups...paraded to the new post office, accompanied by the Averill Park and Sand Lake Community Band. The marchers included the

Averill Park Merchants Assn., Averill Park and Sand Lake Volunteer Fire Co. and Auxiliary, members of the board of education of the Averill Park Central School District, legion members and their auxiliary, the Parent Teacher Associations of the schools in the district and the Kiwanis Club of Sand Lake, Inc.

"Arthur M. Butler was master of ceremonies and Miss Helen T. Kane, the postmaster, gave the welcome. The invocation was given by Rev. Francis P. Anthus, pastor of St. Henry's Church of Averill Park.

"The Flag was raised over the post office by an American Legion color guard. The Community Band played the National Anthem and John J. Ellis directed singing.

"Mr. Butler, in a brief address, gave the history of the post office and its postmasters... Revenues at the post office, he said have tripled in the last 20 years and doubled in the last 10 years. Rural routes now cover 97 miles, serve 875 boxes, 1,137 families and 3,116 patrons. The post office has 301 boxes..." - [Troy] *Times Record*, November 16, 1957

By the way, you might have noticed yet another example of the "family connection" in the Kane family, much as with the Nash family in Sand Lake and the Ryemiller family in West Sand Lake!

In more recent years, postmasters at Averill Park

have included:
 Harriet R. Thomas, 8/6/1983; Holly Dickinson (Officer-In-Charge), 12/14/1995; Theresa M. Belawski, 5/11/1996; Michelle V. Stanek (OIC 8/14/1997), 9/13/1997; Christine Cook (OIC), 1/7/2000; Andrew J. Cook, 8/12/2000; Karen L. Roberts (OIC), 6/10/2013; Alisha Davidson (OIC) 12/9/2013; Linda C. Vanbergen (OIC),

1/6/2014; Karen L. Roberts (OIC), 2/27/2014; Charles S. Milkiewicz (OIC), 1/5/2015; Michelle Statile (OIC), [no date]; Stephanie L. Sikorski (OIC), 12/1/2015; Lisa Newkirk (OIC), 2/8/2016; Cindy Page (OIC), 9/20/2016; Diane Degonzague (OIC), 3/3/2017; and Timothy W. Mooney, 8/18/2018. We have not been able to determine who, if anyone, served between Helen T. Kane and Harriet R. Thomas.

Currently, the Averill Park post office is located just east of the Sgt. Walter A. Adams American Legion Post.



Sliters [Corners]

There isn't much information to be found on this particular post office. The American Philatelic Society lists **Sliters** as having been established August 29, 1881, with Charles Youghants as postmaster. It was discontinued October 14, 1904, with service area responsibility going to West Sand Lake. It also was known at least informally as the Sliters Corners post office.

Whatever the circumstance, status or importance of this post office was, there is little doubt that it, in fact, did succeed the South Sand Lake post office and, in fact, shared the same building. Witness this image appearing on the commemorative Sand Lake plate issued for the U.S. Bicentennial; compare it to the photo under South Sand Lake.



Taborton

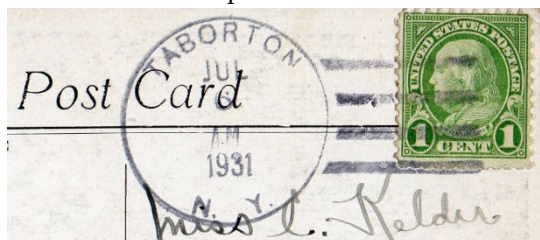
After a gap of almost 41 years, the easternmost portion of the Town again was served by its own post office. According to the American Philatelic Society, a



Taborton post office was established on December 12, 1892, with Friederick Ewald as postmaster. Other sources suggest a September 12, 1892, start date with Conrad Malkmes as first postmaster. Minnie Malkmes was postmaster from 1913 until the post office closed May 28, 1942. Again, sources differ, with some claiming Minnie was Conrad's daughter, while

others (including obituaries for Conrad, who died in a 1935 fire) was his sister. Either way, it was yet another family affair!

Pictured above is Minnie, in front of the post office. Shown below is a 1931 postmark.



Out-of-town (but nearby)

Several one-time post offices just outside Town of Sand Lake borders also had some connection to postal service within the Town.

Alps had a post office from January 3, 1826, to April 30, 1906, after which its service area was transferred to "Averillpark."

"Dunhams Hollow" had a post office from February 13, 1908, to March 3, 1918, after which its service area was transferred to Averill Park.

The second post office for West Stephentown (the first ran only from 1829-32) ran from September 16, 1841, to October 31, 1907, after which its service area was transferred to "Averillpark." Yet a third post office was then established there, running from January 26, 1909, to December 31, 1953; this time, its service area was transferred to Stephentown Center, which had begun in 1877 as Stephentown Centre but was given the present spelling in 1892.

Rural letter carriers

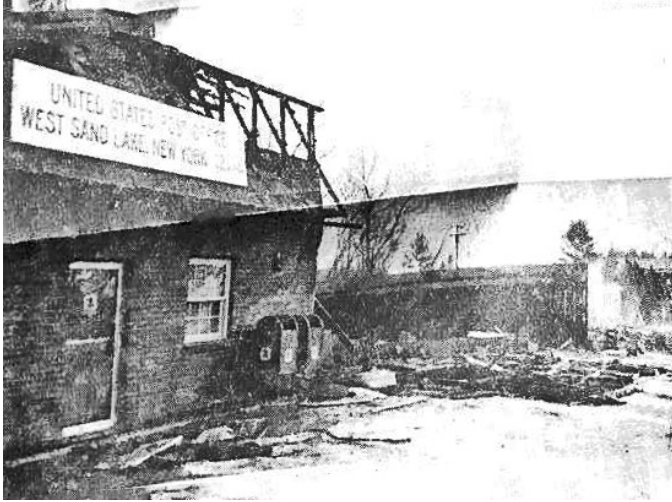
No discussion of our beloved post offices would be complete without a quick nod to those who braved "rain, snow, dark of night, etc." to deliver mail to residents at their homes. We won't even try to mention them all, but here are a few.

Samuel B. McNary served over 34 years as a rural mail carrier out of Averill Park, from 1917-51, retiring at the then-mandatory age of 70. His first deliveries were to 135 customers, using a horse-drawn sleigh, in winter 1917. He soon "splurged" on a Model T Ford, but he could only use that in summer. An article in the August 10, 1951, issue of the [Troy] *Times Record* noted that his "duties" often included running errands for snowbound families, rounding up and sending home children and other odd favors." At the end of his career, he was serving 375 rural boxholders. Notably, he was also the "M" in K.L.W.M., a bus and taxi service.

Ira Mielenz was the oldest rural mail carrier in New York State at the time of his death in 1953, having served for 46 years. He began in West Sand Lake in 1906, using horse and buggy in summer and horse and cutter in winter, missing only one day during his entire service when it was too cold to take the horse out on the route! Like McNary, he faced mandatory retirement at age 70. He had also been a charter member of the Rural Mail Carriers Association and a former member of the Knights of Pythias. He had succeeded Hidley Fellows, the first rural carrier from the West Sand Lake Post Office.

Duane Wehnau began as a substitute for Ira Mielenz from 1947-52. Someone else succeeded Mielenz on the route for the next five years, after which Duane came back full-time, serving until September 1983. He recalls that, when he got the job permanently, his wife got a telephone call. The caller asked her what he knew about the job. She told the caller he wanted the job, and the caller told him to

show up the following Monday! He did both Averill Park and West Sand Lake until 1980, when the routes were split.



Among many accomplishments, Wehnau played a major role following the fire that destroyed seven stores and damaged the West Sand Lake post office and several other stores in the 43 Mall on December 5, 1980. His sister had heard the call on the fire monitor and called him. He called the postmaster and then quickly went down to the scene (parking at the Ambulance Garage so as not to be in the way). At the post office, he met the postmaster and the State Police. The Police removed the contents of the safe, and Duane started emptying the mailboxes.

One word or two, or what's in a name?

Sand Lake or Sandlake? Averillpark or Averill Park? Post office or postoffice? Naming of post offices long has been a concern (for some, anyway).

As early as the 1840s: "The name of the candidate for postmaster should not be applied as the name of a post office. It is preferable to have some LOCAL or PERMANENT name, which must not be the name of any other office in the State; and you should aim to select a name not appropriated to any office in the United States." – U.S. Post Office Department

By the 1890s, "Inconsistent geographic name usage and spelling was deemed 'a serious and growing evil in the publications of the Government.'" The era saw a trend to try to simplify and/or make consistent various names, such as changing "borough" to "boro," "burgh" to "burg," or "centre" to "center." Prefixes such as "East," "Old," etc. were to be discouraged, as were additions such as "Burg," "Corners," "Hollow" and many others.

And then there was "Ordered, No. 114 [issued April 9, 1894]. To remove a cause of annoyance to the Department and injury to the Postal Service in the selection of names for newly-established post offices, it is hereby ordered, that *from this date only short names or names of one word will be accepted* [emphasis ours]. There may be exceptions when the name selected is historical, or has become local by

long usage, but the Department reserves the right in such cases to make the exception or not as it sees proper. Names of post offices will only be changed for reasons satisfactory to the Department." W. S. Bissell, Postmaster-General

End of the route

We hope you have enjoyed the information presented here. If you can fill in any names or details or correct information presented here, please contact us via email...or by postal letter! Both addresses appear on the back cover of this newsletter.

William Kennedy honored

Author, Pulitzer Prize-winner and "favorite son" William Kennedy received Ireland's Presidential Distinguished Service Award for the Irish Abroad. Irish President Michael D. Higgins presented the award at a dinner and ceremony in Dublin on November 29, 2018. Kennedy was cited for ways in which his literary output illuminates the Irish-American experience.

"This is a marvelous award, and a form of confirmation – that I really did what I set out to do when I was a young writer," Kennedy said in a statement. "I aspired then to be an American novelist, but as soon as I started writing I realized how much of the Irish was in, not only me, but in all my schools, my churches, my neighborhood — which even in my father's day was called Limerick — and it also was in the politicians who ran the city and county, and when they got lucky, the state and the nation. And so my novels, in large measure, became a historical testament to what I lived through, and reported on, as the vast Irish consequence in American life during two centuries."

SUNY Press recently published *Bootlegger of the Soul: The Literary Legacy of William Kennedy*, a collection of the writer's work and essays honoring his career. He is currently at work on a stage adaptation of "Ironweed." – Information taken from the [Albany] *Times Union*, November 19, 2018

Schaghticoke / Rensselaer County Fair Bicentennial

Troy City and Rensselaer County Historian (and our March speaker) Kathy Sheehan is seeking photos and remembrances of the Rensselaer County Fair, held for several years at the turn of the last century at the "Fairgrounds" in West Sand Lake, currently the site of the West Sand Lake Elementary School. If you have anything you'd like to share, please contact Kathy through the Rensselaer County Historical Society (on the web at <https://www.rchsonline.org/>)

SLHS Facebook page and web site

If you haven't already done so, look for us on Facebook for up-to-date news on meetings and events, along with other items of interest. Go to <https://www.facebook.com/SandLakeHistoricalSociety> — "Like" us...and enjoy!

Speaking of our web site, <https://sandlakehistory.org/> is back online, better, secure and more stable than ever! Things are generally up-to-date on the site, and we're adding to it whenever we can!

Calling local artists!



The Sand Lake Historical Society seeks 25 artists to paint/decorate birdhouses to support our 2019 Fundraiser. The finished birdhouses will be pictured on the website and will be on display at various locations in town and at the Society's Annual Dinner in May.

They will be awarded during a final silent auction at the SLHS 5th Annual Fundraiser Lobster Bake at historic Crystal Cove Dance Hall on Friday, June 7.

Officers and Trustees of the Society 2018-19

Joan Fuess, President (2020); *Rosemarie Sniezyk*, Vice President (2021); *Jackie Tremont*, Corresponding Secretary (2019); *Sharon Dawes*, Recording Secretary (2019); *Michelle Mosher Schultz*, Treasurer (2020).

Holli Boyd-White (2021); *Dee Erickson* (2019); *Jane Minotti* (2021); *Jim Powers* (2020) *Sue Powers* (2021); (2020); *Dawn Vink* (2019); *Drew White* (2019); *vacant* (2019).



Sand Lake Historical Society Membership Application/Renewal 2018-2019

(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) _____

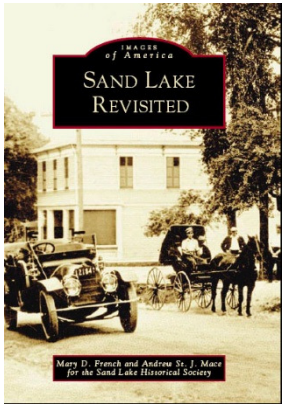
Would you prefer to receive newsletter via: email or Postal Mail (check only one)

Do you have any particular historical interests or expertise? If so, please let us know:

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

HH 45-3 Winter 2019 NOTE: *New memberships received after 1/1/2019 run through 5/31/2020!*



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



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