



Historical Highlights

C. April 1992

NEWSLETTER OF THE SAND LAKE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
POST OFFICE BOX 492 • WEST SAND LAKE, NEW YORK 12196

MARK YOUR CALENDAR -- JOIN US

Friday, May 15 is the date and 7:30 is the time of the Annual Meeting and Dinner of the Sand Lake Historical Society at the Salem United Methodist Church in West Sand Lake.

Appetizing finger foods and appropriate beverages will be served at the Sand Lake Home of Barbara Worcester from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. We look forward to renewing friendships and exchanging suggestions for our future activities. Come and get acquainted!

The dinner menu will include old-fashioned chicken and biscuits, assorted vegetables, cabbage salad, cranberry sauce, homemade pies, and beverages.

Reservations, \$10.00 each, must be made by May 8 with Barbara Mohan, P.O. Box 381, West Sand Lake, NY 12196, or at the April 14 meeting.

Following dinner, we will be treated to "The Shakers, Their Architecture and Furniture" by Mr. Ned Pratt.

DIRECTIONS TO BARBARA'S: FROM SAND LAKE CORNER, JUNCTION OF RTS. 43&66 PROCEED EAST .4 MILE. PARK IN MARIE BECK'S CURVED DRIVE, WALK WEST TO SECOND HOUSE (PARTY NOISES)

=====

MEET NED PRATT -- Mr. Ned Pratt, who will be speaking at our Annual Meeting, is currently President of the Board of Directors of the Shaker Historical Society. Mr. Pratt's long-term interest in Shaker Architecture began where he grew up in Concord, New Hampshire near the Canterbury Settlement. Here he met and grew to know Shakers in his father's medical office. Mr. Pratt studied Architectural History at Dartmouth, and Architecture at the University of Minnesota. He visited many sites in Kentucky, then returned to the Northeast where he first visited the site in Watervliet in 1984. By 1986 he was directing the renovation of the Meeting House and has been an active Board Member since then. Mr. Pratt presently teaches the History of Shaker Architecture and Furniture in the Russell Sage Evening Division. This presentation at our Annual Meeting will be too good to miss!!

PRESIDENT'S MUSINGS

The winter cold is almost past. A time of "Cabin Fever" gave me time to review the events since my election and ask several questions.

We were quickly involved with a well-planned 'Tailgate Sale' and the Memorial Awards of Averill Park High School, profitable and exciting events. On a very HOT summer Saturday we tried to enjoy a gathering of historic societies. (Should we try again?) The Fall brought an array of intriguing membership meetings that continued through the winter months. Now we must continue our future endeavors. Plans are complete for our annual meeting - then what?

How do we support our treasury?

Should we plan summer trips?

Who wants a house tour?

Can we, through research, write a revised, updated town history?

We can accomplish these if we have volunteers for these efforts. The Executive Group is 'The Greatest', but we do need HELP!

Will you volunteer?

I expect great things, do YOU?

Ross

At the beginning of Spring, our member, Irv Edwards, shares his personal recollections of a life-long interest which benefits all.

Our next door neighbor, Harvey Van Valkenberg, who lived just across the road, finally convinced my father that keeping bees would be a wonderful way to increase the family food supply, add to the family income and increase the productivity of our crops and our neighbors' crops for miles around. In the mid-thirties the first two reasons were all that Dad needed to work with Harvey in establishing a remarkable life-long pursuit. The two men established their own apiaries, managed them separately, but shared equipment and consulted each other frequently.

In the Spring of 1936 the first packages of bees arrived. They came through the mail from a package bee farm down in Georgia. By the time I got home from school that day, Dad was waiting for me. He had set everything up and was ready to go, but he wanted to know if I wanted to help him!

Well! Working with Dad had always been fun, and besides, it had never been necessary to say, "Sorry, Dad, I've got too much homework tonight." A quick "yes," from me brought forth the usual smile from Dad and a complete bee outfit just for me. The outfit consisted of a new bee veil, a pair of cotton gloves, and one of his old fedoras that had to be lined with paper so it would fit me. All of this was great. I was getting to be a grown-up. And in those days you were not grown up until you were 21.

Dad would read bee culture literature and then relay the information to me as we worked together. My being there made the tasks of finding the queen, checking for brood, assessing the available space for honey storage and lifting supers much easier. One day toward the end of the first season Dad said, "You inspect the hives today, and I'll help." Over the years there have been occasions when I grew up much faster, but none has ever been as memorable as those occasions when Dad said, "Today I'll help you."

Our honey harvests were usually good. In early fall we extracted the honey and filled 5-pound pails with this wonderful natural product and sold it for 75 cents per pail. By the end of October all the year's harvest was gone. The family income had increased. Our family was growing, and teenagers have enormous appetites. We did. Our local bakery, Freihofer's, had just introduced 'cracked-wheat' bread. Mom thought we should eat this new nutritious bread. We did! Covered with honey. The family food supply had been supplemented. Mom and Gram began using many new recipes. Our

'goodie' supply had never been so bountiful. Helping the bees survive the winter is the final chore of the year. Dad and I packed our bees away with the same loving care as we had maintained them during the summer. Over the years we never lost a hive because of the snow and cold of winter. The following spring, Johnny Robinson was heard to say that Dad's bees sure helped his clover and corn crops. Harvey Van Valkenberg sure was right.

For two years I raised bees as a 4-H member. My family and I settled in Georgia, and bees again became important to our livelihood. In retirement we have returned home, and the honey bee continues to benefit us in the same way as it did some forty-five years ago.

In June of last year the ultimate bee happening took place. Daughter Wendy was spending some time with us before completing her family move to California. One afternoon about five o'clock she came rushing to the house in a somewhat breathless state, saying, "Come check the bees." Sure enough, I had a swarm of bees. And sure as shootin', I didn't want to lose them. Action!! And of all times deliberate haste is the method to employ. Win, my wife, contacted two people for help. I listened to them to refresh my memory. During intermittent calms I began putting necessary equipment together. Friends arrived and strategies proliferated. By the time the sun had set, the swarm was settled on the trunk of a plum tree in the orchard. The bees had settled for the night. Of this I was sure. But then our curiosity took over. Two of my friends were barefoot. None of us wore veils. Wendy suddenly squealed, "Look, they're dancing." By this time all the humans were 12 to 18 inches from the swarm watching the rituals of this wonderful insect. The reason the swarm didn't bother us is simple. When honey bees swarm they are in search of a new home. And when they go travelling they take plenty of food. The bees are so full of honey and so in need of a domicile, they care little about temporary visitors such as humans. But all of us were intrigued by their behavior.

The next morning I spread a bedsheet on the ground, placed an empty hive unit under the swarm, gave the tree a good shake and watched the bees march into their new home. And at this moment Wendy and I are taking bees to her new home in California.

RESERVATION FOR 1992 ANNUAL DINNER MEETING

NAME: _____ PHONE: _____

NUMBER OF PERSONS: _____ (\$10.00 per person) TOTAL _____

(I, We) (do, do not) plan to attend the pre-dinner social hour.

Checks Payable to: **SAND LAKE HISTORICAL SOCIETY**, c/o Barbara Mohan, P.O. Box 381, West Sand Lake, NY 12196 by May 8.

Checks may include dinner, dues, and gifts. **Please specify.**

1992-1993 DUES

Probably your annual membership will need to be renewed as of May 31, 1992. To continue as a member, please complete this form and mail it, with your check, \$5.00 per person, payable to: **SAND LAKE HISTORICAL SOCIETY**, P.O. Box 492, West Sand Lake, New York 12196

NAME _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____

Dues will also be collected at the May and June meetings.

CHECK BELOW THOSE SPECIAL INTEREST ACTIVITIES ABOUT WHICH YOU WOULD LIKE NOTIFICATION:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> WRITING PERSONAL HISTORIES | <input type="checkbox"/> ORAL/VIDEO HISTORIES |
| <input type="checkbox"/> TOWN HISTORY PROJECT | <input type="checkbox"/> GENEALOGY |
| <input type="checkbox"/> HOUSE TOURS | <input type="checkbox"/> ELECTRIC TROLLEYS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> HIST. SIGNIFICANT ARTS/CRAFTS | <input type="checkbox"/> FUND-RAISING |
| <input type="checkbox"/> NEWSLETTER | <input type="checkbox"/> HOUSE/FURN. RESTORATION |

THESE ACTIVITIES ARE DESIGNED TO ADD A NEW DIMENSION AND PLEASURE TO YOUR SLHS MEMBERSHIP.

#####

Gift Memberships to the Sand Lake Historical Society are available throughout the year. They offer a nice opportunity to remember that special person, to stimulate community awareness and pride, and perhaps to attract the active participation of more persons in our society. We ask you to consider this for birthdays, Mother's Day, Father's Day, graduations, or just as a thoughtful gift to a young friend, relative or newcomer to the community.

NAME _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____

We will send a certificate or letter of welcome and a membership card.