

Warrensburch Historical Society Quarterly

Volume 10 Issue 1

Spring 2005

FOND MEMORIES

By Frank Bennett

Back in 1954 my father and mother, Ken and Ethel Bennett, who lived here in Warrensburg, decided to purchase a building lot for a hunting and fishing camp. They had heard that Finch Pruyn was selling lots up north near the town of Newcomb at a place called Goodnow Flow. A man named George Shaughnessy, who worked for Finch Pruyn at the time, took us around Goodnow Flow showing us the various lots available. Dad and mom decided to buy lot number 27 which consisted of 113 feet of shoreline on Goodnow Flow and 691 feet up back. It was exactly 6.5 miles from the town of Newcomb back into the woods to the lot they had purchased for the sum of \$250.00.

My grandfather and grandmother, Frank and Clara Pratt, and my uncle and aunt, Tom and Lena Swan, also bought lots, one on each side of mom and dad's lot. It was a 53 mile trip from Warrensburg to the building lot.

My dad Ken didn't waste anytime getting things started. I was 14 years old at the time and was more than willing to help and learn what I could about building a camp. The spot that dad de-

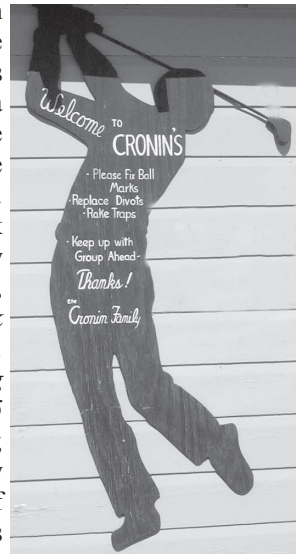
75 YEARS OF GOLF ALONG THE HUDSON

By Rosemary Maher

This year marks the 75th anniversary of golf along the banks of the Hudson River. Cronin's Golf Resort, formerly Queen Village Golf Club, was founded in 1930 by Mark Cassidy and Guy Wilkenson. The original course designed by Patrick J. Cronin, grandfather of the present owners, was built on farmland owned by the Heath, Bissell, and Hewitt families. Several local residents can trace their roots back to these families. The grandmother of Paul Robinson (deceased 2001), owner and operator of the Delavan Hotel, was a Heath. She was born in the living quarters of their farm in 1868.

The Hewitt Farm was owned by the uncle of Dot Orton who is presently of Warrensburg. The present day Oasis, a rest stop on the course, is constructed over the very foundation of the Hewitt farm.

Shortly after the course was constructed Mark Cassidy bought out his partner's share. Each summer he moved his family to a small house adjoining the clubhouse. His son, Mark Bo Cassidy in his book, *Hackensack Recollections, Warrensburg 1935-1945* remembers; "the steady contingent of local players who were hooked on the game; in some cases having morning cookouts with loads of pancakes and sausages at the first tee, then golfing the rest of the day." The course quickly became a favorite with locals and visitors alike.



In 1945 Richard McCarthy and Robert J.

Cronin, son of the designer Patrick Cronin, purchased the course from Mark Cassidy and changed the name to Queen Village Vacationland



The Queen Village Golf Club clubhouse from a vintage postcard.

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President's Letter

Dear Members and Friends,
At the ninth annual meeting of the Warrensburgh Historical Society on February 10th the membership approved the nomination of Frank Bennett, Jean Hadden, John Hastings, Rosemary Maher and Melissa Morgan to two-year terms on the Board of Directors. All were incumbents. In addition we welcomed Marilyn Hayes, appointed previously to fill the seat vacated by Sherri Lamy, to the Board.

Unfortunately, due to the weather we did not achieve a quorum at the March Board of Directors meeting, and so I cannot report on the election of officers. Hopefully this will occur at the April Board meeting, to be held after this goes to press.

Following the Annual Meeting we enjoyed a talk by local historian, Bill Gates on the Fort William Hotel.

There are two upcoming programs which I hope you will all attend. The Spring edition of Artifacts Night will take place on Tuesday, April 26, 7 PM at the Senior Center. Great conversations about interesting objects are guaranteed.

On Wednesday, May 25 Dr. Daniel Way of HHHN will present an illustrated talk, "Country Doctor, Then and Now" at the Merrill Magee House. Dr. Way serves the North Country and still can be found making house calls. He recently published a book of his own color photography of people and scenery encountered in his daily routine. This promises to be an interesting and entertaining program.

Work progresses at the museum. Great strides have been made by the Town crew in renovating the top floor, with a new ceiling already in place. Scanning and cataloging continues slowly, as time permits. A sincere thank you to the volunteers who are making it happen. We are seeking grants to assist in proper handling of the apparel collection.

Did you notice how thin this Quarterly is? Please, put on your thinking caps (as my mother used to say) and write about your childhood in Warrensburgh, or your favorite character or place, whatever. What a shame it would be if this publication disappears from lack of support.

Steve

Contributors to this issue:

Frank Bennett
Robin Croissant
Steve Parisi

Warrensburg Town Historian
Rosemary Maher

Sandi Parisi, Quarterly Editor

We welcome comments, corrections, articles, pictures, reminiscences, and letters to the editor. Send to :

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*The next Quarterly Deadline is
June 1st*

New Members

James P. Cronin
Linda Lamy
Aurelie Massimine
Robert A. Walsh
Peter & Donna Wood



Bill Gates talks at Annual Meeting

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Board of Directors

Steve Parisi- President
John Hastings – Vice President
Jackie Leonbruno - Treasurer
Melissa Morgan - Secretary
Frank Bennett
Rita Ferraro
Jean Hadden
Marilyn Hayes
Rosemary Maher

The Board of Directors will meet at the Senior Center, 3847 Main Street, at 7 PM on the second Tuesday of each month. Society members welcome. Call Steve to confirm at 623-2207.

COMING EVENTS

Artifacts Night –

Tuesday, April 26, 7 PM
Senior Center. Refreshments. Bring out your treasures and let us see them.

Country Doctor, Then and Now

An illustrated talk by Dr. Daniel Way
Wednesday, May 25, 7 PM.
Merrill Magee House. Refreshments.
We are fortunate to have this noted north country doctor and photographer share his experiences and talents with us.



Dr. Daniel
Way atop Sleeping Beauty
(Photo by Harriet Busch, MD)

Membership Information

Individual	\$12.00	Student	\$ 8.00
Family	\$25.00	Senior (62+)	\$ 8.00
Contributing	\$ 50.00	Corporate	\$ 75.00
Institutional	\$100.00	Life*	\$250.00

*Individual Only

Membership is on a calendar year basis.

If you would like to join and receive the Quarterly by mail, please send check for the amount of the membership classification, with name, address and phone number to:

Warrensburg Historical Society, PO Box 441, Warrensburgh, NY 12885.

NOTICE

The recording of history is an interpretive and ever changing study. Therefore, the Warrensburgh Historical Society or its Board of Directors or members shall not be held liable for the accuracy or authenticity of the material herein. We welcome and encourage corrections, comments and additional information.

Golf *con't. from page 1*

Country Club. The following year Bob Cronin bought McCarthy's share. Mr. Cronin maintained and up-graded the course until 1988 when his sons, James and John became the current owners.

The course has seen many changes over the years. In the 1950's several

cottages were added and in 1967 nine additional holes were designed and added by Bob Cronin. Most recently James and John added a new Natural Grass Driving Range, the perfect place to sharpen your game.



The clubhouse as it looks today. Photo by Steve Parisi

James and John, will celebrate her 50th year this year as an integral part of the Cronin work force. Jeremy Cronin, 20,

son of James works each summer at the course and his younger brother, James, aged 6, is frequently seen at his father's side checking out all the aspects of the course. James' wife Jean is a tireless worker helping both James and John



The course with the Three Sisters Mountains in the background. Courtesy Cronin's Golf Resort website.

The Hudson River which runs along the side of the course has proven over the years to be both friend and foe. No one who has ever played golf at Cronin's can deny the beauty of the river but over the years ice and water damage have been constant winter threats. In the late 70's many holes were damaged and in the 80's ice created the need for redesigning of 4 holes. Each year as the ice fields of the Hudson move south the course is endangered and the owners breathe a sigh of relief when the spring thaw occurs without incident.

Those owners, James and John Cronin, who took the course over from their father in 1988 officially changed the name to Cronin's Golf Resort. It is and has been for many years a "family business. Beverly Cronin, mother of

manage all the details of tournaments, cabin reservations and food preparation. Speaking with great pride about his family, James Cronin, recently remarked that "four generations of Cronins have contributed to the success of this course."

The course is an 18 hole par 70 course of 6121 yards. It is truly one of the most beautiful spots in the area. For those interested in a little nostalgia you might want to show up for BINGO night at Cronin's when James conducts a very exciting game using the original "Queen Village Vacationland Country Club" cards.

Fond Memories *(con't. from page 1)*

cided to build the camp on had five large trees uprooted

and they had fallen on top of each other. So the first order of business was to cut the trees up in lengths that we could handle and roll them down onto the shore to be burned. Then of course all the stumps had to be cut out and removed. Most of this work was done with double bit axes. There was no power in there back then, and dad didn't have a chain saw. Dad, as many of you know, worked for the Warrensburg Central School as foreman of the bus garage and bus driver. Because of this dad and mom could only come up and work on the camp on weekends and holidays.

Gramp Pratt was retired, so he and I set up an umbrella tent just above the building site which was right in the middle of a bunch of berry bushes. Gramp Pratt was going to work on his place and I would work at getting those trees and stumps out of there. I had one small problem in getting the logs to roll down the hill to the shoreline. There was a gully between where the logs were and the shoreline. I knew if the logs got down in that gully I would never be able to get them out, because they were just too heavy. So I fell two trees right across the gully, limbed them and rolled the logs across and onto the beach like dad wanted.

Gramp and I had cots in the tent so we didn't have to sleep on the ground. We usually went to bed pretty early because we both were working pretty hard up there. Every night you could hear the bears hooting back and forth to each



Frank's mother on the property .
Courtesy Frank Bennett

other and we would hear other animals out in the brush or snapping a twig. We both wished that we had brought a

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Frank Bennett's grandfather and father on the dock.
Courtesy Frank Bennett.

weapon of some kind just in case we needed it, but we didn't. We didn't expect to see dad or anyone else before the weekend. Gramp and I had gone to sleep on a Thursday night, when all at once we were awakened by something or someone hollering. Gramp and I sat up and listened but we couldn't tell for sure what or who it might be because it was so far away. We knew it couldn't be any of our folks because they weren't due before the weekend and this was 11:00 P.M. on Thursday night! We decided to go back to sleep.

I guess it was around midnight or after, when Gramp and I were awakened again. But this time it was something very large moving through the briar bushes outside the tent! I grabbed an 8 cell flashlight that was very long and heavy. Gramps feet and mine hit the ground at about the same time! What ever was out there was coming directly toward the tent, then it was right along side the tent and we just knew it was a bear! It approached the front of the tent and I just knew it was coming in through the front flap! I had that flashlight poised up over my head and was prepared to strike that bear on the head as hard as I possibly could! The flap started to move, when my father Ken spoke up and says "Frank, are you in there?" I am so thankful that he had the good sense to speak up before sticking his head in that tent! I would have killed him for sure thinking he was a bear!

As it turned out dad had loaded up his car trailer with 20 cinder blocks, a load of lumber, an old porcelain kitchen table, chairs, and another tent that belonged to my grandfather. He decided to bring it up that night, but had some problems with the trailer on the way up

so he got up to Goodnow later than he expected to. There was no road down into the area where we were going to build, so everything had to be off loaded down at the Goodnow Flow Dam, then loaded onto a boat and brought up to the building lot to be off loaded.

The dam was probably about one half mile away from the building lot. Dad was hollering for us to come down and get the load he had

brought up, but of course we didn't realize it was him making all that noise down there. Dad wasn't listening to any of our excuses as to why we hadn't come down with the boat! He was very upset with Gramp and me both!

We all went down to the dam and unloaded the trailer, but decided to leave the load until daylight. Dad went back home, and we went back to bed. The following morning Gramp and I took my dad's 14 foot runabout boat with a 12 horsepower Sea King motor on it down to the dam. We noticed that an old river boat with two sets of oar locks was pulled up on the shore but not chained or locked. We had seen it there a lot, and never saw anyone use it. We knew it belonged to the Finch Pruyn Lumber Company. We decided to borrow it for a couple of hours and didn't see the harm in doing so. The river boat was old but it was big and could hold the entire trailer load of supplies that dad had brought up. So we put the 20 cinder blocks in the bottom of the river boat, then stacked all the lumber on top of the boat. We decided to tie a rope around the lumber just to make sure it all held together. Then we stacked the kitchen table, chairs, and tent on top of the lumber. We had a long heavy rope that we tied to a metal ring that was mounted to the front of the old river boat. Gramp was going to control the motor on dad's boat and go very slow up the flow, while I hung onto the rope that went back to the river boat. We realized of course that the river boat had some slow leaks...

TO BE CONTINUED IN THE NEXT ISSUE.

From Warrensburg News 1968
Warrensburg's Famous

Triplets

Sixty-three years ago, on June 30, 1905, triplets were born to Mr. And Mrs. Otto Fish of Warrensburg. A more beautiful trio of babies would have been hard to find, ...Vernon, Viola and Vernish. Today, Vernon, known as Molly, is completing 22 years as director of the Warrensburg town dump and has given notice of his intention to retire. Viola, now Mrs. Beecher Johnson, and Vernish operate a rubbish removal service. We wish the Fish triplets Happy Birthday. [Editor's Note: They would have been 100 years old this year 2005].

As a follow up to that story, two years after the original story, (1907) the following article appeared:

Twins Follow Triplets Nature is Again Generous to This Family Dwelling on Oak Street.

If the walk on your side of the street should raise up a couple of feet do not get frightened. It's only Otto Fish, of this village, walking on the other side. Two baby girls – twins-were born to him Saturday and he naturally feels exceedingly weighty over the event. The father, mother and children, who have been named Fannie and Hattie, are all doing well.

Thank you to Robin Croissant who has a scrapbook of newspaper clippings that her grandmother Mabel D. Fuller put together.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY CONTEST

Thank you to Caron Akeley and Frank Bennett who called in their answers for the name of the Hudson River as mentioned in the last Quarterly. Unfortunately neither of their answers, which were other names given the river, was the one from the 1905 Harper's magazine article.

CAHOTATEDA was the correct answer. It means "river beyond the peaks."