



# Warrensburgh Historical Society Quarterly

Volume 8 Issue 3 & 4

Fall/Winter 2003

## Notice

With this issue, the Warrensburgh Historical Society Quarterly will cost \$2.00 for non-members. The Quarterly is mailed to all members on publication. In addition to helping cover printing costs, the Society hopes to encourage new memberships. Please see page 2 for membership information.

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## INDIAN HEAD CAMP REMEMBERED

*During the summer of 2003 several former Indian Head campers visited Warrensburgh. These are their recollections of that earlier time.. – Editor*

### Indian Head Memories

By Sue Levine

The name Indian Head should be a familiar one to older Warrensburgh residents, as a family summer resort that thrived on upper Hudson Street for generations. Started in the 1930's (or thereabouts) by the A.C. Emerson Company, it became the summer home for large numbers of New York City area families up until its life ended in the 1980's.

The Pasco family, Lois and Bob, were the most recent owners, and lived with their handsome son Wayne and lovely daughter Marsha in the house next to the Indian Head entrance. The Pascos sold the property to the owners of Echo Lake Camp when they decided to retire to Florida about 1983.

For those of us who spent wonderful summers at Indian Head, it was more than a summer resort; it was a family. Many of its residents (almost all up until the 1970's) were New York City school teachers and administrators, who had the summers free to spend with their growing families in the beautiful Adirondack Mountains. Later on, some Indian Head regulars in other professions had to commute to Warrensburgh on weekends only. More than a few worked at the Saratoga Racetrack and spent the month of August at Indian

Head with their wives and children, and a terrific group they were.

By the time I arrived in 1969 with my husband, Joe, and 2 year old daughter, Wendy, families of all ages were enjoying Indian Head in the summer. Some had been coming there for 30 years or more and some were newcomers like us with very young children. Joe had been hired by Lois and Bob to run the Day Camp on the premises for the children of all the families who lived there. With the children happily engaged in a variety of activities from 9-5, all the parents were free to delight in the wonders of Indian Head and the surrounding areas. There were avid golfers, joggers, tennis players, fishermen, swimmers, antique hunters, readers (on their porches, with



Photo of 2003 Indian Head Reunion. The group, composed of the Koty, Gritz, Levine, Schneider and White families, started at the camp in the late 60's and early 70's. Their children became the backbone of the day camp at Indian Head. Head Counselor, Joe Levine, third from left. Photo courtesy of Sue Levine.

books from the Richards Library) and those content to just relax in the sun at the wonderful Indian Head pool or down by the lake.

In the evenings we enjoyed other pursuits such as duplicate bridge, folk dancing, card playing of all kinds and on

*Continued on page 3*

## A Message from the Board

The year 2003 has been a positive one for the Society. In February at our Annual Meeting we also hosted our Artifacts Night, with an excellent turnout from the community.

It is evident that people treasure and enjoy showing off their historic artifacts. These ranged from old photographs and postcards of local scenes to Civil War memorabilia to retail financial documents. These tangible links to our past may provide us with some stability in our uncertain world.

The annual Sticky Wicket Games and Picnic, our primary fundraiser, received strong support from the community. The weather also cooperated, giving us the most comfortable day in the event's history, sunny but not too hot! We were delighted that a group of serious young croquet players from the Brant Lake Wesleyan Church joined us and challenged our veteran players. (One of them won!)

Chef Brian Engle generously provided his expertise at the grille, supplemented by delicious member contributions to the table.

Our membership has grown, but we need more members to sustain our work. We need more articles for our Quarterly, which may not always be timely, but thanks to the dogged determination and countless hours of its editor, Sandi Parisi, does get done. She could use your help.

Speaking of the Quarterly, your Board has decided to put a price tag on it. It is a major benefit of membership, and copies distributed to the public are intended to encourage new memberships. It appears that many have not taken this hint. We feel that membership dues are very low, and would like our efforts to be recognized as worthy of at least that small financial support.

In closing, we want to thank LD Hall for his work as treasurer. Other commitments dictated that he take a break from those duties and he resigned from the Board. Brenda Cleveland took over the duties of treasurer and Eileen Frasier accepted the responsibilities of secretary. We welcome Melissa Morgan to the Board, recently appointed to fill the vacant seat.

Please accept our best wishes for the holidays and the new year. It promises to be an exciting one for the Society.

## Board of Directors

John Cleveland - President  
Steve Parisi - Vice President  
Brenda Cleveland - Treasurer  
Eileen Frasier - Secretary  
Mildred Fish  
Jean Hadden  
Joyce Harvey  
Melissa Morgan  
LeeAnn Rafferty

## Committee Chairpersons

Acquisitions—John Cleveland  
Grants - Theresa Whalen  
Membership – Joyce Harvey  
Programs - John Cleveland  
Quarterly - Sandi Parisi

The Board of Directors will meet at 167 River Street (Cleveland's home) at 7 PM on the following dates. (Second Tuesday of each month Members welcome. Call to confirm.)

January 13, 2004  
February 10, 2004  
March 9, 2004

## New Society Members

Rita Ferraro  
Alfred & Patricia Olden  
Virginia Pike  
Barbara Moore  
McPhillips Insurance

Society Information, call

John Cleveland – 623-9450  
Steve Parisi – 623-2207

## Contributors to this issue:

Sarah Farrar  
Jane LeCount  
Sue Levine  
Joannie Ossakow  
Jeff Rubens

Sandi Parisi,  
Quarterly Editor

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

## Send submissions to :

Warrensburgh Historical Society  
c/o Sandi Parisi  
115 Hickory Hill Road  
Warrensburgh, NY 12885  
or e-mail  
parisibb@netheaven.com

## Quarterly Deadlines

February 1  
May 1  
August 1  
November 1

Warrensburgh Historical Society  
Quarterly  
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## Membership Information

### Membership Classifications

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

\*Individual Only

*Membership in the Society 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:

Warrensburgh Historical Society  
PO Box 441, Warrensburh, NY 12885

## NOTICE

*The recording of history is an interpretive and ever changing study. Therefore, the Warrensburh Historical Society or its Board of Directors or members shall not be held liable for the accuracy or authenticity of the material herein.*

weekends there were cocktail parties, barbecues (everyone contributed a special dish) and square dancing. We also had talent shows, horse racing indoors, running charades (our particular favorite) and lots more. What fun we had!

Everyone at Indian Head felt part of one big and very special family, the adults and the children as well, and we all seemed to get along and to enjoy the camaraderie of the 60 or more families who called Indian Head their summer home. Some for one month and some for the entire summer.



Local resident, Susan Damp was a favorite Indian Head counselor! Photo c.1977 courtesy of Susan Levine

Whether you had been there for 30 years or 3, a parent or a "camper," you became an Indian Header for life!

Though the Indian Head sign is now gone, and our old cabins no longer emanate the sounds of music and the smells of wonderful things cooking and baking, those of us who found our summer homes with the Pascos at Indian Head in lovely Warrensburg, New York, will always and forever remain one big and very lucky family!

## Remembrances of Indian Head

By Jeff Rubens

Indian Header from 1942 – 1970's

My family spent the summers (defined as from the last day of school – every trip I remember started at my father's school on the last relevant day in June – to Labor Day, or perhaps the next day, from 1942 (when I was one year old) through the middle fifties. I don't recall what happened after that and before the time I went with my own children (in the 1970's).

My earliest recollection is of people lining up near the tennis courts and banging

pots and pans to welcome people who drove into camp on the day in 1945 that World War II ended.

The families mostly consisted of people whose job was for or related to the NYC Board of Education, so most of the adults were there for the entire summer.

Major activities for the adults (as seen by a child) were the cooperative events: mostly the shows, put on by each of four groups of families. The performances were on a weekend afternoon for the children and in the evening for the non-performing adults. There were also campfires (near the beach), a yearend banquet, and probably dancing or some other activity on the Saturday nights in the intervening weeks. Other common adult activities were sports (tennis was number one; swimming, boating and fishing; there were occasional softball games, sometimes against some other local group) and card-playing (the high rollers played pinochle; gin rummy and, when it was faddish, canasta were fairly common. Some played mah jongg (which is really a "card game" but uses different physical equipment); in the evenings, when couples got together, or bridge. Off-campus activities revolved around using the Richards Library, antiquing, and hieing off to Saratoga for the track (the flats were much more

popular than the trots), a restaurant, or a concert. Kids were sometimes taken to Lake George for pinball and similar games, miniature golf, boat rides, exhibits, and junky food; or to the fish hatchery or the Hudson – Schroon confluence.

In the 1940's and 50's, activities for kids revolved largely around what we called "camp," which was a day camp run by and staffed by the adults. Each parent of a camper contributed a unit of supervision, often in that person's specialty. The usual camp fare was offered, perhaps modified when some expert in something was available. "Camp" met weekdays, with morning and afternoon sessions.

There were other things for kids to do, such as dancing to records or playing games in the social hall. Evenings and weekends, the kids had to organize their own activities, if they wished; one curious sociological phenomenon was the translation of city games (such as ringalevio, kick-the-can, etc.) into rural formats. Bicycles were ubiquitous, the standard method of getting from point A to point B. Off-campus locations were not utilized much (as not needed), though there was an occasional snipe hunt in the cemetery.

Other special recollections of early



The enclosed picture, from the late forties or early fifties, is of a show being performed in the social hall. Except for the person hidden by the accordionist, I can identify all of these otherwise possibly normal people. I see my father on the extreme right. The figure on the stage best known to the public is David Ewen, fourth from the left (in the beret), a popular music writer [Milton Cross, Encyclopedia of Music; well-known biographies of Gershwin, Berlin, etc.]. Note the scenery, props, costumes (including some makeup), music, pageantry. Shows were often based on Broadway themes and/or well-known songs, e.g., (to the tune of Oh We Sail the Ocean Blue--almost certainly written by Leonora Rubens): Oh, we sail on Echo Lake/And we row our boats in circles/We catch fish of every make/And a lot of frogs and turtles. (Ah, the things that one remembers.)

years: ice for the icebox; kerosene for the stove and hot water heater, and outdoor grill; only the occasional porch screened in; no indoor heat.



## Yes, You Can Go Back

By Joannie (Ginsberg) Ossakow

In the middle of January my husband announced that he was planning to attend a week-long conference in Lake Placid in the last week of June. He asked if I would like to tag along. Of course I would, if that meant we could stop at Warrensburg for a day or two on the way. I spent twelve summers there as a child at Indian Head Camp and I longed to return to see it again and introduce my husband to the area. People often have said, "never go back" to those special places of your youth for they will never be as wonderful as you remember them. Had I listened to those words, I would have missed a treasured two days that I will never forget. Warrensburg as well as Echo Lake were and still are special places.

My first summer at Indian Head Camp on Echo Lake was in 1944. I was 14 months old and my family took the train from New York City to Lake George. A taxi took us the rest of the way. Our trunks were shipped ahead by Railway Express. Indian Head Camp consisted of approximately 50 cabins rented from the end of June until Labor Day primarily by New York City school teachers and their families. These teachers brought with them many talents and skills which they shared with the children who attended an informal day camp. We were offered instruction in arts and crafts, swimming, tennis, square dancing, cooking and sewing. Each summer there would be an all day carnival and all the children would dress in costumes. At the end of the summer the parents would perform highlights from a Broadway show in our social hall. From a child's point of view, the production was rather professional. Oh if we could have captured those images on video!

As I got older, my favorite destination in Warrensburg was the library. I always rushed to check out the latest Nancy Drew mystery. The next stop would be the Bluebird Bakery that had the most

delicious chocolate chip cookies. I dream about them often. I remember going to an ice cream shop on Main Street where we concocted our own sundaes. It was a few doors down from the Rexall Drugstore. Every summer my family would dress up for a special dinner at the Colonial Arms. I remember that milk was delivered to our cabin in glass bottles with orange colored bottle tops. Kerosene for our indoor stove was also delivered. In addition, many people had small outdoor charcoal grills. No electric starters or gas grills existed in those days. At dinnertime when the weather cooperated, the most marvelous aromas would swirl around the camp.

On June 20, 2003 my husband Sid and I arrived at Country Road Lodge B&B and were greeted by our hosts Sandi and Steve Parisi. It was so much fun talking to them and Steve gently filled in some of the blanks in my memories of Warrensburg.

The next morning after our arrival we visited the fish hatchery. It was as I remembered it with a few changes to the indoor structures. Then we drove to Echo Lake. Indian Head Camp was taken over by Echo Lake Camp years ago but the physical layout of the place seemed as it was fifty years ago. I had no trouble directing my husband to cabin "L" which is now called Cornell House. New siding and air conditioning were the most obvious improvements. Otherwise, the cabin looked



Joannie Ginsberg in 1947 at the steps of Cabin L. Photo courtesy of Joannie Ossakow

remarkably familiar. The pine trees in front of the cabin are huge. In the 1940's our view of the lake was an unobstructed one. Of course the beautiful Lodge on Echo Lake is an exquisite addition and we look forward to dining there in the future. The footpath that I used to take from our cabin to the beach on Echo Lake no longer exists. We drove to the public beach and I peeked through the trees where Indian Head campers would swim. I specifically recall a big raft located 50 yards from the shore. When you could swim to the raft and back to the shore, you passed your swimming test. We all had huge black inner tubes for added fun.

On Sunday morning we enjoyed a delicious breakfast at Country Road Lodge B&B and tore ourselves away to continue on to Lake Placid where we further explored the Adirondack region. After Lake Placid we flew to Montana for a week in Whitefish. That was a great trip too but my husband reminds me that the two best nights' sleep he's had in many years, were those nights we spent in Warrensburg this summer. I agree!



Joannie (Ginsberg) Ossakow in front of "Cabin L", now known as Cornell House c. 2003. Photo courtesy of Joannie Ossakow

Thank you for keeping Warrensburg and Echo Lake beautiful.



## Graveyard Walk Characters

*The Annual Festival of Scarecrows includes a Graveyard Walk, highlighting some of Warrensburg's former residents and business people. Some of the information is factual, other is created from the information that is known about those people. If we have made any errors, or if you have additional information about the characters, we would greatly appreciate hearing from you. We also hope that next year you can experience new characters.*

### Alice Bowles

Written and portrayed by Jane LeCount

Hello, my name is Alice Bowles. I am not buried in Warrensburg, even though my name is on the gravestone. My husband, John Bowles did that. He wanted us to be buried together. That was not to be. John died January 16, 1935. The service and burial was from St. Cecilia's Church. Very few folks came to his funeral. I can't blame Warrensburg people too much. January 1935 was cold. Folks then were not only cold, but hungry and depressed. The Great Depression was very evident, but many Warrensburg citizens wanted nothing to do with the Bowles family.

Our name by then was linked to that of the notorious "Willie Sutton." Why would my neighbors want to come? Even Mr. Albert Emerson would never admit that he offered my nephew Bill (that's Willie Sutton) a position at his bank in 1927. I suspect the Emerson family was receiving the New York City papers. The headlines constantly featured the notorious bank robber, Willie Sutton.

I had testified on behalf of our nephew, Bill, at his trial in 1931 for robbing the Rosenthal Jewelry Store in New York City. I said he had been visiting us in Warrensburg. My appearance and testimony convinced the jury I was telling the truth. The DA did not believe we were related. He assumed Bill's attorney hired an actress.

John and I loved Bill as a son. He was our favorite of the Sutton's five children. He was well-mannered, intelligent, clever, funny, and a very quick learner! He was my star pupil. I tutored him

along with the children of the wealthy families who employed me as a governess and a social secretary.

Bill was only thirteen when he met my half sister, Billie Burke who was playing in the Ziegfeld Follies.

John, my husband, that tall red headed. Irishman, was a tough, street wise dock worker. He and my father-in-law doted on Bill. Perhaps we all did. Bill could do no wrong, nothing was his fault, this according to my father-in-law, Bowles, a blind immigrant who ruled the family. It was a noisy crowded Irish household. John did not mind that I was often away days at a time while employed as a governess.

In 1922 we were both excited about purchasing the Seth Harrington farm on the Schroon River in Warrensburg. We could be together in a more peaceful, quiet atmosphere. We both loved working the farm. We had a few cows, chickens, and a garden. John did get a job at the paper mill close by, and I was busy canning, cooking, and baking for church functions.

I had come from a more cultured environment, growing up on a Southern plantation in New Orleans. I was 9 or 10 when my Dad died. My beautiful mother Blanche Beatty Hodkinson, in her grief, left us children with the Beattys and went to New York City. She soon met that famous clown, Billie Burke. They ran off to marry, much to the dismay of the family. They toured the world with his circus act. My half sister who would also be called Billie Burke was born in 1885. As an eleven year old I was intrigued with her outrageousness. Our mother decided her daughter, Billie, would become an actress and indeed she did, both on the stage and screen. She was married to Flo Ziegfeld for 18 years. Many will remember Billie Burke as the good witch Glinda, in the Wizard of Oz.

Yes, Willie Sutton was a bit of a rake but John and I loved him dearly. I remember that as ill as John was with pneumonia in the winter of 1935 we were both concerned about Bill who then was in the Pennsylvania State Prison. He told me, "Don't fret, Alice, he will be out. He will find a way. He did at Dannemora, and he did at Sing Sing."

Willie Sutton died a free man in 1980.



**Diary of  
Grace Noyes**  
(18 January 1825 –  
5 January 1881)

*Transcribed by Sarah Farrar exactly as Grace wrote it, spelling, punctuation, etc. The notes in parenthesis are Sarah's notes explaining who and what Grace was talking about.*

Continued from previous Quarterlies.

*Grace was portrayed in the Scarecrow Festival Graveyard walks by Shirley McFerson, also known as "Sweet Mama Stringbean."*

Sunday, December 1, 1878 Plesent I did not go out Rev Mr Rankin Preach here to day Fred left for Albany Bid-die mad as Blazes

Monday 2 torming Biddie washing & she was fearful mad all day Mrs Rockwell and Daughter came to day at noon Marie here Biddie staid here all night

Tuesday 3 Plesent Biddie left this AM Went to Minnie's to work Jim at work on fence Marie sewing & Mrs King

Wednesday 4 Rainy very rainy Jim cuting wood Marie & Mrs King sewing

Thursday 5 Plesent But Cold Snow on the ground Pigs killed today Jim and mother killed them

Friday 6 Plesent Jim making fense Mrs Rockwell cleaning up

Saturday 7 Plesent Jim and Frank at work at fence Callie & Minnie cane home to night from New York

Sunday 8 Plesent But Cold Mrs Rockwell just Sunday here Jim Purse Came Marie here Mac Beth here

Monday 9 It rain.d all day Jim cuting wood Eliza Rawlins came to night those girls from Bolton here Mrs Rockwell Wash.d to day

Tuesday 10 It rain.d all day trying lard Marie & sister sewing on dress

Wednesday 11 It rained & snow.d Marie & Eliza sewing Chas Braily died (Braley) last night We have a house full here

Thursday 12 Plesent Jim on the road

at work Marie & sister sewing a house full here

Friday 13 a pretty Cold day Chas Braily Buried to day Jim on the Road Eliza & Marie sewing

Saturday 14 rather a soft day most of the girl staid over Sunday Burtie More went home to day a house full & lots of work on hand

Sunday 15 Plesent Sunday

Monday 16 real Plesent But Cold Mrs Rockwell washing Jim went to the Falls fore coal fore Wills (J. W. Wills had general store.) Saml went down

Tuesday 17 Plesent Marie & Eliza sewing a house full here getting ready fore Christmas Tree & Fore Marie wedding

Wednesday 18 Plesent But Cold a house full here and lotts of work to do Mr Austoin & Miss Rose went to Glens Falls to reading at Opera House

Thursday 19 rainy rather cloude Exhibition at the Academy We done lotts of work to day

Friday 20 Plesent Jim on the Road at County House Exhibition Hesden & Saml came to night to Exhibition

Saturday 21 Plesent But Snow.d about five or six inches Bakeing & lotts to do School close.d and scholars all left fore home Marie & sister here Finished Mrs Kings dress

Sunday 22 It snow.d through the night Mrs King had head ache Hesden & Saml here Marie & Eliza here Purse came in PM

Monday 23, Plesent Jim went down with Hesden and Saml Marie Married this PM to Jim Purse By the Rev Mr Wood at the Babptis Church

Tuesday 24 It was fearfull Cold to day. Fred came home to night from Albany Mrs Rock well leashing to day

Wednesday 25 Christmas day Fred & Charlie here & Mac Beth & Miss Freeman & Allie & Mrs Rockwell Jim & Frank after wood Christmas Tree at the Presby Chursh I felt real mean to day

Thursday 26 Prett Cold. Fred at the Church this AM. Charlie here Episcaple have their Tree this evening

Friday 27 Very Cold

Saturday 28

Sunday 29 Pretty Cold Mac Beth Preach.d Fred & Charlie at home Fred has tooth ache badly

Monday 30 fearfull Cold Mrs Rockwell wash.d to day

Tuesday, December 31, 1878 (no entry)

## Caring for Your Antiques

By Sandi Parisi

### Old Negatives

Many collections of old photographs and negatives include ones that pose a potential danger. The earliest negatives were made of cellulose nitrate film. This film was first made in 1889 and continued in use until 1951 in the United States and was still in use in Europe into

the 60's. This film can breakdown to the point that it can burst into flames if the temperature reaches 106 degrees. If you have negatives that appear to have bubbles or look like molasses, then you should immediately have a copy made of the negative and then dispose of the negatives in a hazardous waste container at your local town transfer station.

The Warrensburgh Historical Society will accept any old negatives or photos you wish to dispose of.



*Have a Happy New Year!*

## A Thank You to our Sponsors at the 2003 STICKY WICKET Croquet Games and Picnic

held on August 24th

The following have contributed toward the well-being of our community by supporting this event and the work of the Warrensburgh Historical Society.

**Accommodations & Campgrounds . . .** Alynn's Butterfly Inn | Cornerstone Victorian B & B | Country Road Lodge B & B | Emerson House B & B | Friends Lake Inn | Merrill Magee House | Route 9 Motel | Schroon River Campsites | Seasons B&B

**Automotive . . .** Bob Griffin & Sons | CDS Motor Group | Corner Car Care | Napa Warrensburg Auto Parts | Smith's Garage | Warren Ford-Mercury

**Restaurants . . .** Bill's Diner | George Henry's | Grist Mill Restaurant | Heck of a Pizza | Marco Polo Pizza | Mountain Country Restaurant | Potter's Diner

**Retailers . . .** A Little Touch of Country Floral & Gifts | Barbara Ann-tiques | Curtis Lumber | Discoveries | Jacobs and Toney | Lazy River Farms | LD's Pharmacy | Miller Art & Frame | Nemec's Sports, Farm & Garden | OJ's Appliances | Oscar's Smoke House | Posies | Radio Shack | Ray's Liquor Store | Riverside Gallery | Stewart's Shops | Treasure Shoppe

**Plus these varied businesses, organizations and individuals . . .** Adirondack Journal | Carl Brainard, Fish Taxidermist | Caron Akeley | Champlain Stone, Ltd. | Community Insurance | Courtly Music Unlimited | Cozy Cabin Stove & Fireplace | Cronin's Golf Resort | Glens Falls National Bank | LeCount Real Estate | The Patriot of Lake George | Dr. Raluca Sandler, DDS | Richard Baker & Sons Lumber | Town of Warrensburg | Warrensburg Chiropractic | Warrensburg Chamber of Commerce | Warrensburg Laundry | Warrensburg Volunteer Fire Company | Warrensburgh Beautification Inc.

*and a Special Thank You to Brian Engle Chef Extraordinaire!*



**Winner Kyle Stonitsch**  
receiving 2003 trophy  
from President John  
Cleveland.

**Teresa Whalen, winner**  
of the drawing for the  
ladies hat review.



#### Previous Winners

2002 Raymond Whalen  
2001 Delbert Chambers  
2000 Delbert Chambers  
1999 Al Leger  
1998 Raymond Whalen  
1997 Kim Kubaryk