



Warrensburgh Historical Society Quarterly

Volume 17 Issue 4

Winter 2012

The following is from the December 25, 1952 Warrensburgh News. How many of these people do you recognize? The "Around the County" column started in 1939 and continued into the 1960s. Does anyone know who wrote this column? Thanks to Alice Maltbie for sending this in.

AROUND THE COUNTY

We're going to try this Christmas time
To send our greetings out in rhyme.

We hope this Christmas is just dandy
For Thelma, Elihu, Dot and Randy.

May '53's skies all be fair
For the Emersons, and Lew and Claire.

May Santa bring good things in flocks
To the Herrmans, Dorners, Murrays,
Jacques.

May Joy attend the festive board
Of all the Faculty, Gean and Ward.

Hope '53 brings naught to trouble you,
Pat Bisbee and all of the B.P.W.

May jolly Santa fill each sock well
For Hylands and Peg and Rockie Rock-
well.

And joy betide
this Christmas
Day
For Gertrude
Young and
Noele Pesez.

Joyful beams
from Christmas
stars
To the Post Of-
fice crew and the Stewart Farrars.

We hope your presents are superdoop-
ers,
Hulls, and Vernums, and Tony Coopers.

A very merry Christmas Day.
To MacLaren and Johnny, and Bill and
Kay.

For Bob and Lois, and Helen and Ken,
Gib and Judy, Lois and Len.

For Kip and Trix and John and Helen,
Tink Armine, Paul, and Mary Ellen.



The happiest of Holidays
For Griffins, Clossons, Quinlans, Keays.

Let bells ring out a joyous peal
For Gerard, Madeleine and Camille.

The New Year bring the best of fun,
To Formans, Mabel and Maurice Panneton.

A bushel of the seasons joy,
To O'Connells, Drapers, Hilea and Roy.

With goodies the Clayfields board be spread,
For Frank and Mary, and Ruth and Fred.

Christmas Joy to the Clevelands, and
Barneys,
The Bartletts, Boltons, and the Carneys.

The Fursts, the Wheelers, and the Lanes,
The Potters, HARRISES, and Beauchenes.

The Huntingtons, and J. Garber, Doctor,
The Millwards, Walkers, and Sig Wachter.

To the Crandalls, O'Connors, and Reming-
tons,
The Suttises, Spragues, and the Millingtons.

The best of luck in '53
For Bird and the Ortons, Sally and Lee.

Let '53 be quite adorable
For Jack and Esther, and Ed and Orabel.

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Highlights of Society activities since our last Quarterly include the following:

On Saturday, October 13th in perfect weather at Tom Davis's property on Lamb Hill Road, many antique pieces of powered farm equipment were displayed and demonstrated. We hope to repeat this very successful program next summer.

The 12th annual Graveyard Walks were held on October 19th and 26th, followed by desserts at the Cornerstone Victorian B&B and at the Maher residence, respectively. Dinner with the Dead was at Lizzie Keays on the 28th. The Warrensburg fifth grade class again made the trip to the cemetery this year. Historical characters from Warrensburg's past were Delbert Pasco, A.C. Emerson, Benjamin Burhans, Pliny Moses, and "Jack" Brown - played by actors Dennis Martinez, Pete Wood, James Corriveau, Susan Jennings, Tom O'Dea and John Gable. Donna Wood and Igor were the guides.

Rosemary Maher and Mark Brown lead our efforts to get primary and secondary students and teachers involved in local history. John Burns' high school environmental science classes came to the museum on December 4th to begin their team projects. They will present results of their work in a few weeks.

Brittney Hastings' Agricultural History exhibit at the museum has been taken down to make way for Delbert Chambers' "Our Toys" exhibit for the holidays. Significant portions of the agricultural exhibit remain on display, however.

The Society's holiday dinner this year was again held at Lizzie Keays on December 7th.

Our Bicentennial Calendar is finished and on sale at several locations around town. This was a huge effort by Sandi and Steve Parisi. They along with John Hastings, Mark

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

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Board of Directors

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The Board of Directors meets at the Senior Center, 3847 Main Street, at 6:30 pm on the **FIRST** Wednesday of each month. Call Paul to confirm at 623-3162.

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Membership Information

Students \$5.00 Individual \$15.00 Family \$25.00 Senior (62+) \$10.00
Senior Family \$18 Contributing \$55.00 Business \$50.00 Life (Individual only)
\$300 (membership is on a calendar year basis)

If you would like to join and receive the Quarterly by mail, please send a check for the amount of the membership classification, with name, address, and phone number to: **Warrensburgh Historical Society, P.O. Box 441, Warrensburg, N.Y. 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.**

Contributors to this Issue

Alice Maltbie
Sandi Parisi

Upcoming Events

December 7: Holiday Dinner
@ Lizzie Keay's

CURRENT MEMBERSHIP: 243

Warrensburgh Historical Society

Website: www.whs12885.org
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WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Bob & Judy Korcz
Joan & Hubert West
Phil Tucker
Donald F. & Jean D. Killian, Sr



(Continued from page 1) Around the County

May the New Year's skies be bright
For the Randalls and all at the Power
and Light.

Joy to the Lewises and Frullas,
The Buchholzs and the Willie Mullers,

The Merriest peal of the Christmas Bell
For the Reoux, and Frasier, Bill and
Nell.

And carols sing we loud and lusty



To

Helen and Barclay, Ginnie and Rusty.

May Santa bring all they would like
To the Jacobs, and Toneys, and Sophie
and Mike.

A season packed with all that's nice,
To Pearl, and Myrtle, and Thomson
Rice.

Let Santa bountifully fill the socks,
Of the Halls, the Reirdens, and LaRoc-
ques.

The Merriest of Christmas Days,
To the Swans, the Hamelins, and Ray
Hayes.

The happiest of all New Years
To Shergolds, Murphys, Beckers,
Biers.

May '53 with joy be rich
For Mitch Abood, and Mitchel, Mitch.

Many Prosperous New Year Days
For the Sheriff Bakers, and Leslie
Hayes,

For Margaret Wagar, and Birdie and
Dave's,
McGowans, and Marty, and Eloise
Graves.

To the Gilchris, Roberts, Reynolds
and Martins,
The Duells, Havrons, Dunnings, and
Bartons,

The Pascos, Savages, Livingstons.
Woodwards, Chapmans, and Robin-
sons.

We hope with joy your heart is danc-
ing,
Prespares, and Gertrude and Curtis
Lansing.

Many happy coming days,
To the Tracys, Ross, and the Ross Mac-
Raes.

May your Christmas Day be bright,
Hub and Lorena, and Helen Knight.

We hope the best of luck befalls
The Rileys, Bennetts, Borths, and
Halls.

Happiness and lots of laughs,
To the Ventons, Jacksons and the
Grafts.

May Santa bring goodies by the tons
To the Daniels, Wheelocks, and Cam-
erons.

May he bring presents by the crates
To Adorna, Gertrude, and the Gates.

Merry Christmas, that's for sure.
To the Grubes and Ruth and Spen
LaFlure.

May this Christmas Day excel most
For the Parkers, Ortons, and Anselmos.



The very best this
Christmas Day
To Maurice Ashe,
and Alice and Ray.

The very best on

the Christmas Tree
For the Wilseys, and Bakers, Anne and C.

A turkey packed with the best of dress-
ings,
Pay the Osgoods, DeGarmos, Marvins
and Gresslins.

The luckiest New Year' yet, by far
For Howard Hewitt and Clyde Farrar.

The heart
with Christ-
mas Joy
inflates
For the
Guiles, the
Kollmanns,
and the Haight.



Very merry Christmas wishes
To Bakers, Pratts, and Vernis Fishes.

May all your fortunes travel goodward,
Jesse Soper and Susie Woodward.

Seasons Greetings to the Pecks,
The Liddles, Crockwells, Hallenbecks.

The Wileys, Berndts and Kieran Watters,
And the Van Vrankens and their daughter.

We hope the best of luck descends on,
The Trains, the Herricks, and the Ken-
yons.

The Year be filled with Happiness
To the Masons and the O.E.S.

The Odd Fellows and Rebekahs
We wish them joy in double-deckers.

The best of Luck in the whole region
The Firemen, V.F.W. and Legion.

To Daddy Hastings, and the Johnsons,
And Lena Garlen and the Bronsons.

And every wish your hearts desire,
For Mac Ovitt and Oliver DeGuire.

That every dream your heart craves is

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(Continued from page 3) Around the County

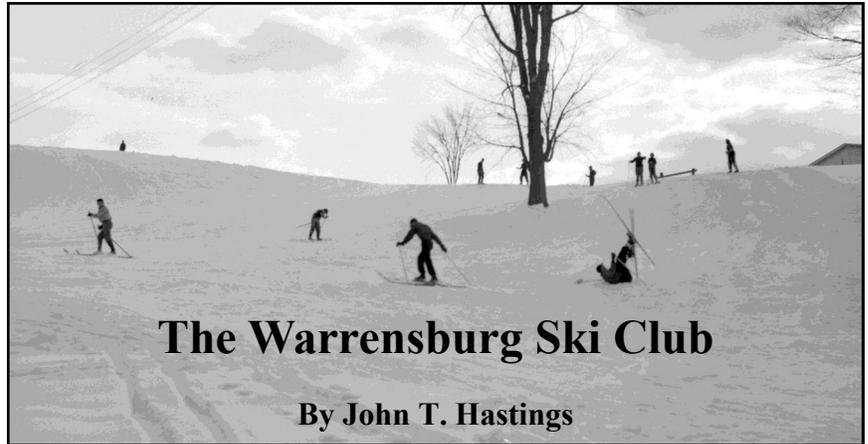
Yours, Reardons, Sweets, and Davises.

To every one in Warren County
We hope that Christmas spreads its
bounty.

And that the best of fortune showers
The Deweys and the Eisenhowers.

In fact we wish, before we end,
To all the world our greeting send.

A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A
HAPPY NEW YEAR!



The Warrensburg Ski Club

By John T. Hastings

The first Winter Olympic games were held in France in 1924. Eight years later in 1932 Lake Placid hosted the III Winter Olympics which included the events of bobsledding, figure skating, ice hockey, Nordic skiing, ski jumping, cross country skiing and speed skating. Alpine skiing was added as an event in 1936. These games not only had an impact nationally, but locally as well. Local communities soon saw the benefits of developing activities to attract winter sports enthusiasts.

and Eric Reirden directed the ski trail project.

On the night of December 18, 1935 a group of over 20 winter sports enthusiasts affected the organization of the Warrensburg Ski Club (WSC) with the goal of "boosting" the village as a winter recreational center. The meeting (as well as future meetings) was held in the New York Power and Light Corporation offices on Main Street. Gilbert J. Potter was elected president of the organization. Those in assembly were unanimously in favor of boosting winter sports to bring residents of other sections to Warrensburg to enjoy the facilities of the ski trail, along with the skating rink and toboggan slide on the recreation field. As such the Ski Club was formed to promote these plans. The other WSC officers were Bertram Whittemore, Vice President and Clifford Austin, Secretary and Treasurer. The executive committee was composed of Roy Randall, Dr. John Cunningham, Lee Orton, John Musgrove and Mac Hall. A membership fee of \$1.00 was instituted, which was to be used for advertising and to erect signs which informed visitors of the available facilities and their location. Howard Hull provided unusual support to the plan by offering the use of his fields for ski-

As early as 1910, a ski club was active in the town of Graphite, with races occurring in 1910 and 1911. Later in 1933, Luzerne and Hadley started a ski club and around this same time the North Creek Ski Club and Gore Mountain Ski Club were formed. In March of 1934 the first "Snow Trains" arrived in North Creek from the Albany - Schenectady area.

The construction of a ski trail on Howard Hull's farm was inaugurated by the Warrensburg American Legion post. It was completed in the fall of 1935, having been started the previous winter. A committee of Roy Randall, Sherburne Fogg

GOOD CONDUCT RULES

requested of members and guests
of Warrensburg Ski Club

1. Do not obstruct traffic on road or driveway.
2. Ski patrol and assisting members to wear arm bands.
3. Patrols to operate in two-man shifts of one-half hour each, with quarter hour shifts from traffic duty to slope duty.
4. All skiers should be watchful and careful to prevent collisions.
5. When slopes are crowded, nothing but controlled skiing should be attempted.
6. Please fill and smooth all sitzmarks.
7. Please respect property owners. These slopes and trails are maintained for your pleasure. Help us keep our privileges.
8. Please do not walk on slopes or trails unless equipped with skis or snowshoes.
9. Stay in line for your turn at tow.
10. Make room at top of tow for upcoming riders.
11. When riding tow be considerate of other riders, especially at top. Do not snap rope as this will unbalance rider behind you and may throw rope from pulley. Do not touch safety rope, except in case of accident.
12. To ski safely -- keep in control -- do not attempt more than you can handle.

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(Continued from page 4) Ski Club

ing, snow shoeing, and tobogganing. A publicity committee of John Tubbs, Sherburne Fogg, Albert Alden, Eric Reirden, and O. B. Nye (Glens Falls) was named.

The first ski trail developed was Big Brook, which was completed in 1935 on the Howard Hull property. The three mile long trail was divided into three parts; the novice, intermediate and expert trails. An experienced skier would start at the top, while others, governed by their abilities, would start at a lower level. The novice section began at a point where the Big Brook crosses the Alden Avenue Road on Harrington Hill. It followed the brook down an easy grade through a beautiful pine grove to the end of the trail where Big Brook crosses River Street near the residence (1935) of Jerry Goodrich. It was one and one-eighth miles long. The intermediate or Bald Knob trail started at the old Reynolds place (1935) near the Willis Hays turn and was over a mile long. The maximum grade was 25% and one section of a quarter of a mile offered exhilarating downhill skiing. The trail was 20 to 40 feet in width. The expert trail started on the Pasco farm (1935) and was about 2,000 feet from the nearby parking spot. It had numerous grades and turns, and offered many thrills to those attempting to ski it. A good motor road was kept plowed from the village to the three starting points, along with parking spots at each location. One large sign was erected on lower Main Street across from the William Ticknor home. Others

were installed at the Judd Bridge and at the Alden Avenue - River Street intersection, which noted directions. Markers were also installed on the various sections of the trail. Another sign was erected at the recreation field informing the public of the skating rink, toboggan slide, ski slopes and snow shoeing facilities there. The signs were developed by Clifford Taylor.

"In forming the Ski Club and pushing the sport, the sponsors had two motives. The first was to provide facilities for their own use, and the



A slalom run on the Hull Ski Slope

second, to broadcast to all winter sports lovers the facilities here and to endeavor to secure for Warrensburg some of the winter sports business that has been passing through here for several years."

During 1936 club members worked on erecting signs and markers, as well as working on the new Bald Knob trail. The beginning of this trail was extended to increase the length by more than a quarter of a mile. Other trails were smoothed by removing drifts and filling holes. Special appreciation was given to property owners who allowed construction and maintenance of ski trails on their property; Howard Hull, D. E. Pasco,

Walter Pasco, Will Hayes, Fred Wood, Lew Moon, Wallace McLaren, Alfred C. Stone, James Tyrrell, W. W. Reynolds and Gustave Margollus. Nearly 60 people became members during the first year. Photographs were taken by Earl Austin for publicity purposes and at this time the WSC even considered opening a longer trail in the vicinity of the Three Sisters Mountains.

In October of 1936, the Ski Club decided to erect a 300 foot ski tow just south of the home of Howard Hull. The ski tow was to be operated by Clifford Hall. Plans were also made to add flood lights for night skiing, the wiring of which was to be done by Marcus Bruce. The tow was to be operated evenings, weekends and holidays.

At their November meeting of the Ski Club, John Musgrove was elected President, Dr. John Cunningham ; Vice President and Clifford Austin as Secretary - Treasurer. At the

December meeting, several members were assigned specific tasks for the season: Mac Hall was in charge of the maintenance and construction of ski trails; Edward O'Conner was in charge of keeping all signs in order; Clifford Austin was in charge of publicity; John Musgrove was to direct the activities of the club; and Roy Randall was given the job of supervising the rope tow.

By 1939, Thomson Rice was president of the Ski Club, with Carl Filsinger, Roy Randall, Albert Emerson, Maurice Ashe and Ruth Cameron comprising the Executive Committee. Five committees of membership, signs, snow conditions, ski tow and ski trails were formed.

On February 11, 1940 the

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(Continued from page 5) Ski Club

Ski Club sponsored a ski competition for Warrensburg boys. Murray Pratt won the half mile downhill race in 3 minutes and 15 seconds,



Skiing on the Hull Slope

with Michael O'Conner finishing second and Arthur Jones, third. The race was run on the Bald Knob Trail with the winner receiving a set of ski harnesses. In the 200 yard downhill race for boys ten or under, Junior Harrington won in a time of 18.9 seconds. George Sprague and Alfred Ingraham finished second and third, respectively. In the control event Murray Pratt won a new pair of ski poles, with Michael O'Conner the runner-up. Prizes were donated by Joe Briggs and the WSC. These competitions were so successful that the WSC continued these races for the next three weeks as the "Weekly Junior Competition" with the following categories; Junior and Senior High School boys combined downhill and slalom run, girls quarter mile downhill race, control and form contest open to all boys, and a grade school children's one eighth mile downhill race. First prize was a pair of spring type bindings for each category. Events were under the direction of Joe Briggs, Ray Hayes, and Bob Swan. The 1939-40 winter season ended on March 9th with

two adult ski races which included a three-quarter mile downhill race and a slalom event. Participants were Joe Briggs, Walter Gurney, Ray Hayes, Aubrey Hull, Murray Pratt, Art Jones, Michael O'Connor, and James Sullivan.

In the fall of 1940, new officers were elected for the WSC. Paul Bosse became president with Bertram Whittemore as Vice President and Ray Hayes as Secretary and Treasurer. A planned new ski tow, which was to be powered by an electric motor, was to be funded through a "game party" to be held at the Paddock on the Warrensburg Fairgrounds. By December members of the Ski Club had formed a ski patrol to operate on the Hull slopes and were associated with the National Ski Patrol. Ray Hayes was the patrol leader. Other members included Roy Randall, Andy Sallans, Aubrey Hull,

Tuesday Evening, Nov. 12th
 8:30
Benefit Party
 FOR THE
WARRENSBURG SKI CLUB
 AT
THE PADDOCK
 Fairgrounds . . . Warrensburg
 Prizes! Entertainment!

*From the November 7, 1940
Warrensburg News*

Joseph Briggs, Karl Irish, Stafford Randall, Robert Swan, Ken Johnson, and Dr. John Cunningham. Lane Construction Company, under the supervision of Paul Hensen, dynamited a number of dangerously jutting rocks on the ski slope during the fall and the New York Power and Light erected a series of 1500 watt lamps for lighting the ski tow. Also at this time, WSC emblems were developed which were shield

shaped, with red letters and skis on a powder blue background.

Thus, the WSC started the 1940-41 season with a redesigned and rebuilt electrically operated ski tow. The reconditioned slopes consisted of twenty acres of land, containing grades of five to thirty-five degrees. The ski tow offered a ride of about 1200 feet and a vertical ascent of 75 feet. The fall line of the slope was approximately 700 feet. A structure had been erected to house the tow mechanism, as well as serve as a ticket office and store-room. Slope difficulty ranged from novice to expert, with access located near Route 9. This resulted in attracting many skiers from out of town and record attendance. On February 6 the Warrensburg News reported that "the past Sunday saw the largest crowd of visitors ever, on the local runways."

Although there was difficulty getting members to attend the WSC fall meetings in 1941, the December 4th meeting resulted in the election of Maurice Panneton as President, Robert Swan as Vice President and Elihu Geraghty as Secretary. Two weeks later the Warrensburg News noted "And just as the Ski Club was about to start raising money, news of the new Red Cross drive reached us. About all we can do is to realize as quickly as possible that winning this war is more important than any personal interests and activities." Such ended the early activities of the WSC.

After the war, there was a renewed interest to revive the WSC and open the Hull ski slopes. In the fall of 1947 the WSC held a number of meetings to look at restoring the rope tow. The November 19th

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(Continued from page 6) *Ski Club*

meeting resulted in Aubrey Hull being elected as President, Peg McGraw as Secretary, and John McNally as Treasurer. The club also planned to assume the assets and liabilities of the former club. Fifty-one people became members and paid \$2 each in dues. Local merchants and citizens also contributed \$600 to the WSC to pay off past debts and to purchase a 10 horsepower motor for the rope tow, as well as liability insurance. With the rope tow inactive for nearly six years, many difficulties were encountered before getting it operational. By early February the rope tow was finally in operation and skiing was resumed on the Hull slopes.

However, it was near this time that Hickory Hill ski area opened just west of the village. It is therefore not a surprise that in the fall of 1948 that the WSC met to consider and accept an offer (from Hickory Hill) for the sale of the ski tow equipment. In 1950 the no-longer active WSC donated the \$9.70 in the treasury to the March of Dimes.

A later Warrensburg Ski Club was organized in 1963 through the High School. The officers for 1963-64 were Donne Borth, President; Daryl Carrington, Vice President; Peter Kline, Secretary and Sue Potter, Treasurer. Trips were made to Big Tupper, Whiteface, West Mountain, and Gore Mountain. This club later became involved in the development of the Blister Hill ski area on Hackensack Mountain, but that's another story.

For more information: *Lost Ski Areas of the Southern Adirondacks* by Jeremy Davis, 2012, The History Press. This book is available at the Museum.

Town Historian Tidbits

By Sandi Parisi

From a July 27, 1893 Newspaper Article in the Warrensburg News

Warrensburg girls who are addicted to the habit of chewing gum - and there's a good many of them - little dream of the terrible fate they are bringing upon themselves. I saw in the Boston Courier, the other day, the following awful warning to gum chewers which, for their benefit, I reproduce here:

It is said that the human mouth is surely but steadily moving toward the left of the face, owing to the tendency to chew with the teeth on the right side. It is to be hoped that in some way gum chewing may be suppressed, for if it increases, there is danger that a race may be developed whose mouths will be located in the back of the head. To remedy this defect, some centuries of vigorous chewing would be required to bring the mouth back to its proper position. The Rambler.

Joyce and Jean were very loyal members of the Society.

Joyce O'Connor Woznica

Joyce O'Connor Woznica, 88, passed away in her residence at Ashley Glen Assisted Living, Peachtree City GA on Tuesday, September 25, 2012. Joyce was born October 3, 1923 in Warrensburg, NY, the daughter of the late Sara Bowyer O'Connor and John Henry O'Connor. In 1951 Joyce married Stephen Woznica and raised four daughters in Norwalk, CT. She enjoyed writing children's books and poetry and contributed articles to the Warrensburg Historical Society Quarterly.

Joyce is preceded in death by her

daughter, Gail Woznica of Grand Junction, CO. Joyce is survived by sisters Anne Hallock of Gilboa, NY, Phyllis Gaudia of New York, NY, Sally Kubin and her husband John of Benson, VT and her brother John O'Connor and wife Linda of Sun Valley, ID.

Joyce is survived by three loving daughters and five grandsons: Susan Somerson and her husband Steve of Media PA, Nancy Boccella of Vernon, CT and her two sons Jarrod and Daniel Boccella of Atlanta, GA and Ellen Passero and her husband Ken of Norwalk, CT and their three sons Andy, Jake and Billy Passero.

Memorial contributions in Joyce's honor may be made to the Warrensburg Historical Society, P.O. Box 441, Warrensburg, NY 12885.

To date these people have made memorial donations in Joyce O'Connor Woznica's name: Alice Damp, Anne Hallock, Sally & John Kubin, John O'Connor, Cynthia Peterson.

Jean O. Gralewski

Jean O. Gralewski, 86, formerly of King Street, passed away Wednesday, August 22, 2012 at Stanton Nursing & Rehabilitation Centre in Queensbury. Born Nov. 20, 1925, she was the daughter of the late Joseph and Orpha (Wilsey) Anselmo. Jean was a graduate of WCS Class of 1944 and married Norbert H. Gralewski on August 11, 1951 in Warrensburg. She was a member of the Warrensburg Historical Society, Warrensburg Beautification Committee and the Over the Edge Quilting group.

Besides her parents and beloved husband, Norbert, she was predeceased by her brother, Joseph Anselmo Jr.; and her aunt, Olive Lynch.

Survivors include her daughters; Sonya Drew of Raleigh, N.C. and Violet Spatz and her husband, David, of Warrensburg and beloved sister Ruth Fruda of Warrensburg.

(Continued from page 2) President's Column

Brown, and others, have contributed to the writing of the Bicentennial book which is now being carefully edited by Steve Parisi. The book has accounts of 200 people, places, and events in Warrensburg's history. Both the calendar and the book will be collector's items.

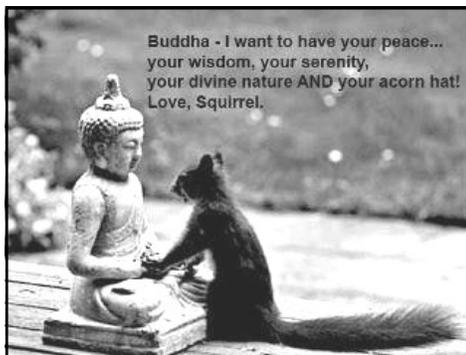
Audio recordings for seven of the museum exhibits are being produced by 2011 WCS graduate Jesse Scheuttinger, now attending SUNY Adirondack. These will allow visitors to listen to descriptions of those exhibits as they tour the museum.

Keep in mind that the Book Nook at the museum has many items that make excellent gifts. Stop in, or use the order form you received in our mailing to members in late November. And don't forget to renew your membership.

"The farther backward you can look, the farther forward you are likely to see" (Winston Churchill), so until next time, keep looking backwards.

Paul Gilchrist

Cover Photo: The masthead photo shows the Rist block on the left and the bandstand after a heavy winter storm. Date is unknown.



Buddha - I want to have your peace... your wisdom, your serenity, your divine nature AND your acorn hat! Love, Squirrel.

Official Opening of the Old Swimming Hole

(From the March 22, 1973 Warrensburg News)

Miss Kathleen Goodman, 40 Hudson Street, Warrensburg, shares a recent letter and drawing from Paul Gurney, a former resident who now resides in Chicago. He is a brother of Walter Gurney, Oak Street, Warrensburg. Before his retirement he was an architect and designed the beautiful band stand in Floyd Bennett Memorial Park, Warrensburg. February 23, 1973

Dear Kathleen,

On page seven of the pamphlet of the John Thurman Historical Society for December, 1972, is an old photo of Echo Lake, formerly known as Bonds Pond. When we were kids, the stretch between the two boathouses comprised the general swimming area, and the first kids staunch enough to dive in after the ice went out, or nearly out, earned their names and the date on the boathouse. They were the champions!

The enclosed drawing shows the opposite side of the nearest boathouse in the photo, known as Ashe's boathouse. The other belonged to Mrs. Lown. It was on Ashe's that the venturesome signed in. (I made this drawing 40 years ago).

Naturally, the frigid dip called for witnesses, because anyone could carve their date and just renege on the rest. If there were four or five involved, it was usually taken for gospel truth and the others felt a little ashamed, like not being able to spit between your teeth. John Straight held the championship as the first of the first for several years running. Nature had insulated John a little better than most, but I seem to recall that Harold Smith headed the list on the clapboards at least once.

Sometimes the event made "The News," but the honest admiration lasted about a week in up street male social circles or around the school house yard - and was genuine.

About the same time of year a few girls in the early school grades shed their asafetida bags. These were worn on a string around the neck like a necklace, but were not allowed to show. Having been installed by the parents six months previously to ward off winter's ills, by spring they were pretty ripe and the evil smelling ingredients bordered on the downright obnoxious. You always knew who was wearing one and also noticed when it was gone.

Vitamin tablets have probably replaced the asafetida bags now and that is real progress in the anti-pollution department.

Sincerely, Paul Gurney

(For the enlightenment of those younger readers who don't remember the asafetida bags, the dictionary describes it as: "a gum resin with a garlic like odor, used in medicine to prevent spasms." Some kids, including our family, wore camphor bags. - K.G.)

