



# Warrensburgh Historical Society Quarterly

Volume 5 Issue 4

Winter 2000-2001

## Architecture of a Small Town

by Delbert Chambers

### The CUNNINGHAM HOUSE

The building long known as the (Thomas) Cunningham House was razed on November 9, 2000. The last owner was Jack Arehart. This year it was listed on the National Historic Register through the efforts of the Architectural Heritage Committee of Warrensburgh Beautification, Inc. Demolition of the



Thomas Cunningham house in background and office in foreground. Office built about 1862 by Moses Sutton. Also used by Arthur Cunningham as dental office. Removed to Robert Cunningham property on Library St. 1931. (Library photo)

structure was thwarted in 1995 through community intervention spearheaded by the same Committee. This time there was no public awareness of the impending demolition and by eight o'clock on a rainy Thursday morning, this building that had for so long been considered a landmark of our community existed only as a heap of demolition debris.

The house, over 150 years old, had

Been given up to neglect and vandalism in recent years. It had come to a condition of rotted sills and sunken floors, and an interior that exhibited virtually none of the original architecture. Even so, the beams and joinery were in surprisingly sound condition, making it particularly difficult to break down the building, according the Patrick Galusha, who was contracted to raze the structure. *It seems that, like so many historic structures that succumb to "progress" it put up a fight to the bitter end.*

The House...

The site of the house was the northwesterly corner of Main Street and Stewart Farrar Avenue, which was known first as School Street.

By accounts at hand, certainly the house was built before 1858, as it is noted that Thomas Cunningham in that year bought it for his new bride. The "Intensive Level Survey..." dates it at c.1840. Indeed, the building was quite the same as several other houses that exist in Warrensburgh and are believed to have been built as early as the 1830's.

The house was of Greek Revival style architecture. It was of "brace-framed" type of construction, two stories, of 22/30 proportion and front gabled. The second storey windows were of six panes and the first storey windows were

(continued on page 6)

## Hickory Hill

By Lee (Winbauer) Fleming

These words about the earliest years at Hickory Hill are based on the memories of my mother, Frances (Martin) Winbauer. There are, no doubt, some errors and omissions. We hope some of the other early "Hickory Hillers" will share their memories so we can continue this history in future articles.

Skiing was an important part of my Dad's life (Hans Winbauer) for a long time. In the early 1930's, when he was a teenager living in Scotia, he and his brother Loise would take the Ski Train from Schenectady to North Creek. The Delaware and Hudson offered a dedicated train including dining and lounge cars to transport hundreds of skiers to North Creek each weekend. At the train station in North Creek all sorts of trucks and cars served as taxis, meeting the skiers and transporting them to the top of the ski hills. Even school buses were pressed into service to handle the huge numbers of skiers. At the bottom of the ski run taxis met the skiers again and returned them to the top. The Ski Trains brought a



Photo of Fran & Hans Winbauer, courtesy of Lee Fleming

(continued on page 6)

## From the President

Well folks, here we are approaching winter again, and it won't be long before the snow flies. I hope some of you had a chance to see Mrs. Gregson at Richards Library - what a wonderful speaker and story teller. John Cleveland did a wonderful job putting the program together, and as usual his efforts with the refreshment table were superb. Thanks to John from all of us at the society. John's wife Brenda has graciously taken over the Membership Chairperson duties, so the renewals should be out on time. Thanks to Brenda for her efforts. I hope everyone has a great winter. Please plan on attending the Christmas Social at the Merrill Magee house, December 14th.

Tony

Fidd  
E-mail - AMF@capital.net

\*\*\*\*\*

The Board of Directors will meet at the Glens Falls National Bank meeting room at 7 PM on the following dates. Members welcome.

Thurs., Jan 9, 2001  
Thurs., Feb. 6, 2001  
Thurs., Mar. 6, 2001

### Calendar of Events

Christmas Social  
December 14, 2000  
  
Annual Meeting  
February 13, 2001

**OOPS** – We forgot to thank John Cleveland of “A Little Touch of Country Flower and Gifts” for his lovely arrangement that was the prize for the Ladies Hat Review at the Sticky Wicket Tournament in August. Thanks!

## Warrensburgh Historical Society

### New Members

We welcome these new members, and look forward to their participation in our programs and events.

Alynn's Butterfly Inn  
Warrensburg Volunteer Fire Co.  
Daniel Chamberlain  
Scott Combs  
Harvey Lambeth  
James Commarto  
Barbara Ann Jary  
John Celcielo  
Helen Wood  
William Ketchum  
Warrensburg Chamber of  
Commerce

### Contributors to this issue:

#### Board of Directors

Anthony Fidd, Jr. - President  
John Cleveland - Vice President  
Sandi Parisi - Secretary  
Eldon Hall - Treasurer  
Caron Akeley  
Delbert Chambers  
Jean Hadden  
Regina Porter  
LeeAnn Rafferty

#### Committee Chairpersons

Acquisitions—John Cleveland  
Grants - Theresa Whalen  
Membership – Brenda Cleveland  
Programs - John Cleveland  
Quarterly - Sandi Parisi  
Scholarship – Delbert Chambers  
and Regina Porter

Caron Akeley  
Delbert Chambers  
Brenda Cleveland  
John Cleveland  
Sarah Farrar  
Tony Fidd  
Lee (Winbauer) Fleming  
Jean Hadden  
Ed Kreinheder  
Pat Terrell  
  
Sandi Parisi,  
Quarterly Editor

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

### Send submissions to :

Warrensburgh Historical Society  
Post Office Box 441  
Warrensburgh, NY 12885  
or e-mail  
parisibb@netheaven.com

### Quarterly Deadlines

February 1  
May 1  
August 1  
November 1

Warrensburgh Historical Society  
Quarterly  
Copyright 2000. All rights reserved

## Membership Information

### Membership Classifications

Individual	\$10.00
Student	\$ 5.00
Junior	\$3.00
Family	\$20.00
Senior	\$ 5.00
Contributing	\$ 50.00
Corporate	\$ 50.00
Institutional	\$ 50.00
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 amount of membership classification, with name, address and phone number to:

Warrensburgh Historical Society  
PO Box 441, Warrensburg, NY 12885

### **NOTICE**

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

## Pat's Column

by Pat Terrell

More about the River Street area. South Avenue (across from Herrick's Store) was just a lane in to George Hall's barn which sat about where Commercial Avenue leads off South Avenue now.

Down through the valley was an alder swamp clear to D.E. Pasco's store (now Curtis Cash and Carry).

Farther up the hill across the railroad tracks (now removed) was a slaughterhouse. It sat across from Fran and Bud Wallace's house but up the street a tad. Ira Hill did his butchering there and peddled the meat in town and the surrounding area. The meats were kept cool by packing them in ice cut from Bond's Pond (Echo Lake).

Mr. Hill's son Frank was in business with him. They bought native meat and would often hire a local boy to go with Frank over into Thurman after a beef critter. Frank would lead the critter back and the hired boy would ride the horse home.

### Schools

There were two district schools in Warrensburgh in the earlier days. One was on Upper river Street in what was later the Owen's House, opposite the sawdust pile (now a town riverside park called Harvey Park). My research shows the house is now #47 and owned by Dorothy and Lawrence Bentley.

The second district school was on Second Avenue. The house is at 8 2nd Avenue and is now owned by Terry and Mary Woodward. I don't know where the division line was but lower Main Street was in District #1. The Academy was where the Post Office recently moved from (on Stewart Farrar Street



The Academy, courtesy Richard's Library

and now houses the accounting department for Hudson Headwaters (The Health Center). Tuition was charged to attend the academy as it was for higher education. About 1888 it was enlarged and became a Union Free School. The first principal was Fred M. Moulton and the first janitor was Lute Cameron from Thurman.

The Union School had four classrooms – Primary, Intermediate, Grammar and High School; two recitation rooms and the Principal's Office. Wraps (coats, etc.) were hung in a large hall and it had outdoor toilets like a district school.

W. Lila Herrick taught the intermediate room, Martha Parks taught the grammar room and the principal had the high school.

There were only a few scholars in the High School room at a time, but even then it was hard to keep order. There were hard feelings between the upstreet and the downstreet boys. Fights started as soon as the boys were off the school grounds. The professor would call all of them back in and then turn them over a recitation desk, one by one. He would use what was called his "two-handed" ruler to paddle their rears. One always hoped they would be one of the last as he would strike lighter as he became tired.

## Military History

By Tony Fidd

### Floyd Bennett in World War Two

How is that for a title? Well of course Floyd Bennett was not in World War II, he died in Quebec, Canada on April 25th 1928 from pneumonia. His name and memory sailed into "Harms Way" attached to a brand new *Fletcher* class Destroyer designated DD-473. On April 16th 1942, Floyd's widow christened the Destroyer at the Boston Navy Yard where it was built. After shakedown the *Bennett* was put into commission on 9 February 1943, with her skipper E.B. Taylor in command.

The *Bennett* spent the first two months of its war service patrolling around the Hawaiian Islands. The *Bennett* then

proceeded at fastest possible speed to the Solomon Islands where she participated in the following actions:

Cape Torokina, Bougainville on November 1st 1943.

Green Island landings on February 15th 1944.

The Bombardment of Kavieng, New Ireland on February 18th 1944.

The Bombardment of Rabaul, New Britain on February 29th 1944.

After leaving the Solomon Islands the *Bennett* moved north to participate in the Mariana Islands campaigns including the invasions of Saipan (June 14-July 1st 1944), and the landings on Guam (August 2nd-16th 1944). The *Bennett* then returned to the South Pacific in time to support the invasion of Palau (September 6th-25th 1944).

October 1944 found the *Bennett* in San Francisco for repairs, arriving there on October 25th 1944. The crew of the *Bennett* spent Christmas 1944 in Hawaiian waters, serving as a harbor patrol. The respite was short lived, as the *Bennett* was sent back into "Harms Way" in time to participate in the landings and invasion of Iwo Jima, where the gallant ship was struck by a Dud bomb on March 1st 1945. Luckily no one was injured and the shell caused relatively little damage. Unfortunately for the *Bennett* this hit from a Japanese shore gun was a foreshadowing of what was to come. The *Bennett* was next dispatched to Okinawa for Radar Picket duty. Picket duty consisted of a ring of Radar equipped Destroyers around the carriers and battleships in the middle.

At this point in the Pacific war, the Japanese had devised a devastating new weapon, the Kamikaze pilot. These suicide planes were terrifying to the sailors who fought them, imagine a human intentionally crashing a plane into your ship. At 0850 on April 1st, the *Bennett* joined the ranks of ships hit by these terrible weapons, with every gun firing the *Bennett* was hit by a Kamikaze in the forward engine room, flooding the compartment and knocking out all electricity. The human bomb also killed 3 men and wounded 18 other sailors. The crew was able to extinguish the fires and the *Bennett* was able to make it to Kerama Retto under her own power. The next

day under tow from the *Yuma* (ATF-94) she made it to Saipan for emergency repairs. The *Bennett* remained at the Puget Sound Navy yard from May until August 1945.

In August, the *Bennett* proceeded to Adak, Aleutian Islands, and made a run to Petropavlovsk, Kamchatka with weather personnel from 28 August to 26 September.

The *Bennett* was placed out of commission on April 18th 1946, after earning 9 Battle Stars for its World War Two service.

I was not able to turn up a photo of the *Bennett* by press time, so I have included a photo I took of Floyd Bennetts grave marker at Arlington National Cemetery. It is located in section 3 grave number 1852-B, in case you get a chance to visit. The Marker states on the front; "THE FIRST MAN TO PILOT AN AIR-PLANE OVER THE NORTH POLE WITH HIS FRIEND COMMANDER RICHARD BYRD"



Photo courtesy Tony Fidd

Sources: *Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships, Vol 1, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Naval History Division, Government printing office 1959, 1970 with corrections.*

*United States Destroyer Operations in World War Two, by Theodore Roscoe, United States Naval Institute, Annapolis Maryland, 1953.*

## Local Odds and Ends

By Ed Kreinheder

### Why Are Our Song Birds Leaving?

I remember waking at dawn and hearing a joyous chorus of song birds in the summer and a serenade of robins and

others in late evening. We haven't heard this for many years. All we hear now in the morning is the raucous cry of the crow.

We miss the Whippoorwill call every evening beginning at dark and far into the night. We could listen to them while in bed and fall asleep before they stopped calling. A ground nesting night bird, they may have been prey to the greatly increased population of raccoons, crows and predatory birds.

The dainty swallows with their purple back and lighter colored under parts have become much scarcer. I saw only one blue jay in our yard this year. They used to be so numerous that, though a very pretty bird, they were sometimes a nuisance.



Haven't seen a bluebird for years though they are still found in some areas.

We still have humming birds, robins, mourning doves and of course the starlings and pigeons.

The gold finch used to be very numerous and at our feeder all year, most of them staying here through the winter. A few years ago we had one of our coldest winters on record. The finches were all gone by early fall. How did they know the weather when our forecasters didn't. Now they are not nearly as plentiful and very few stay through the winter.

We get reports from all over, not only in this area. At one time crows were so wary it was difficult to come within a 100 yards of them on the ground. It was considered great sport to shoot at 100 to 200 yards or more with a telescope rifle. Now they are not hunted and are quite tame and can be seen on lawns, gardens and even on our back steps. The raptors, predator birds, are protected and are much more common than formerly and prey on smaller birds. The crow destroys nests, eats the eggs and hatchling of song and smaller birds so is a nuisance in that respect. On the good side they eat injurious insects, garden worms, beetles and carrion.

I remember when farmers had to coat their corn seeds with a repellent when



planting. It was called CROW FEZ. Scarecrows were also used.

Other factors are air pollution, insect spraying and decreasing habitat. Hopefully the West Nile infection will not become epidemic.

However these are not the only reasons. The song birds are a very delicate organism and can be effected by conditions not apparent to us.

Old time coal miners used to carry canaries in the mines with them. If the canaries stopped singing or died it was time to leave. Maybe the birds are trying to tell us something. (We ought to listen). It has happened so gradually over the years, that only us old timers looking back can realize what we have lost. We Miss The Birds!

## A Little Bit of Country

by John Cleveland

### Sugar Cones

Sugar Cones were an essential and expensive addition to any proper eighteenth century tea table. A fashionable hostess took pride in setting her tea table with her best china and silver spoons. White sugar was an important part of this social ritual.

Small chunks of sugar were cut from the cone with iron sugar nippers, scissor-



like cutters made especially for this purpose. The lumps of sugar were served in a china bowl, and placed in the tea with silver tongs. Sugar cones are easy to create and make wonderful presents for friends who like antiques.

## How to Make a Sugar Cone

Makes 2 to 3 cones

### Materials:

Pilsner glass for mold

4 cups white granulated sugar

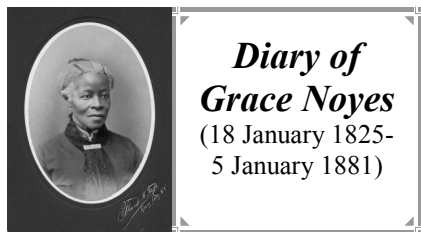
1 cup light brown sugar

Dinner fork for mixing

Saucer or small pewter plate for each cone

In a large bowl, use a fork to blend the white and brown sugars, making sure there are no lumps. Sprinkle a few drops of water on the mixture and blend again, fluffing and stirring. With your fingers, sprinkle water over the sugar as you would sprinkle linens to iron them. Continue adding a few drops of water and stirring until the sugar will barely hold together when you press a little in your hand. You may have to practice a little. If the sugar is too dry, it will not hold together, too wet and it will melt.

Molding the cones. Sugar cones were originally packed into tall, conical pottery molds, but you can get the same effect from a pilsner glass. Firmly pack sugar into the glass with a spoon to about 1/2" below the rim. Turn the molded cone out on to a saucer. Set aside to dry. Dry the cones for at least a day before wrapping or moving them. Wash and dry the glass every two or three uses to prevent sugar from sticking to the glass.



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

Continued from previous Quarterly

Wednesday, May 1, 1878

Not very plesent It rained some Mrs MacEwen here Jim drawing out manure) Marie sewing Eben Grant married today

Thursday 2 Very plesent & warm went out to day & had my first ride since last November & have felt real smart

Friday 3 Plesent real warm Mrs King

went to the Falls to day. I could not ride Because the horse was away Hesden came up to night at 7 o'clock in the eve. Mercy (Mercury) at 69 above zero

Saturday 4 Plesent & warm drest me with out a fire in my room fore the first time this year. Hesden here helping his mother. I did not ride to day fore Jim had the horse it rained in the eve

Sunday 5 It rained hard all day Hesden up here Mac Beth Preached

Monday 6 It was cold & very damp this AM Fred and Hesden went to the Falls Mrs King & MacB went to Lake G- im making fence

Tuesday 7 real plesent & warm Jim drawing out manure I baking and went out to ride in the PM with Mrs King & had a lovely ride

Wednesday 8 It was real Plesent and warm I went to ride this AM Biddie ironing

Thursday 9 Not as warm Boining soap grease I was out at the ? ??????the men all away to day

Friday 10 A cold rainy day Boys fixing u p leaches (setting up ashes to leach for lye for soap making)

Saturday 11 real cold I baking Miss Freeman & Allie left to day noon Marie sewing

Sunday 12 Cloudy & cold Biddie mad All most a Frost Jim draging & geting ready to plow corn MacBeth went to the Falls Miss Boyer came

Monday 13 Cloudy & cold all most a Frost Biddie Washed MacBeth went to the Falls Mrs King & Marie sewing

Tuesday 14 Cloudy & cold All most a Frost Marie sewing Biddie cleaning out shoe press Men all at work at Foster Place Sociable here this Eve. Charlie has the measles at Dartmouth We just heard of it

Wednesday 15 A little Frost this morning Cloudy & cold Gracie T just left for home this AM. Men at work at Foster Plase Prayer meeting this Eve. Mrs J. F. Burdick called Mrs King got

a new Dress to day

Thursday 16 a little Frost Cloudy & cold all day Moon full to night Mrs King & Marie Makeing Dress Men at work at Foster Place real Cold all day

Friday 17 a real heavy Frost last night But did not hurt much It came on real warm & I went out to ride Fred went to the Lake fore calf Mrs Kings dress most done. Pendle failing all the while

Saturday 18 It was quite warm to day Austin left fore good this AM & Minnie P. this PM Abial Pental died this AM at 3 oclock aged 35 years Jim making fence Fred--Morris & MacBeth went to Lake George

Sunday 19 It was warm quite warm & I went out to church this AM Fore the first time since Last November Abial Pental Funeral Buried to day Mac Beth Preached to day I went down to A C Emerson's to day

Monday 20 It has rained all day & turned off cold Saml and Hesden came to night and left Charlie there Jim drawing wood & put up leaches Marie at work on dresses fore Grace Noyes

Tuesday 21 It was so cold that I did not go out Saml here MacBeth & Hesden went to the Falls Mrs King all most sick Jim geting out manure Marie cleaning Varnum Boy found to day

Wednesday 22 Wind blew hard all night & all day real cold Saml has measles. Mrs King and Mrs Hunt went to the Falls Willie Jones leaves here to night Planting corn Jim get manure out

Thursday 23 It was cold had a fire in my room all day MacBeth went to Lake George Saml has measles Mrs King with him all day. Willie left this AM Marie & Biddie cleaning verry foyey this AM.

Friday 24 There was all most a frost Saml has measles good Hesden came up this PM Fred & Jim Planting corn Marie & Biddie cleaning

Saturday 25 It was very foyey this AM but came off real plesent & warm I was bakeing this AM Saml real sick

I have not been out to ride this week Hesden here at ???

Sunday 26 It is real warm and present and I went out to church MacBeth Preached Mrs King did not go. I went out in the eve Mr Whitton from Sandy Hill lectured on temperance

Monday 27 Cloudy & Windy and unpleasant Hesden went down with Dr Dan Howard Frank commended work this AM Biddie Washing the men finish planting today

Tuesday 28 Windy & cool Fred orking on road fore him self. Jim drawing gravel. Marie & Biddie cleaning cellar Mrs King with Saml

Wednesday 29 Rather cool. I have felt real mean all day. Fred & Boys Planting garden Jim on Road at work Marie & Biddie ironing MacB went to Lake G this AM to see about leaving here.

Thursday 30 Decoration day Jim on the Road Rainy, disagreeable day. I did not go out Saml was here I felt real me I have not been out to ride this week

Friday, 31 Present But windy all day I felt bad and have not been out to day. Saml getting along all right Jim on the Road Fred planting garden Had the stone Pict this PM Marie & Biddie cleaning

### **Cunningham House**

*(continued from page 1)*

of six over six double sash. It was sided with painted clapboards. At the rear it had a one and half storey addition that was probably added soon after the building was purchased by Cunningham in 1858 to support the ever increasing family.

The building had a stone foundation that included a cellar only under the original structure. It was noted during demolition that only the top course of the foundation stone was cut (this by hand, of course). We can assume that this stone was quarried from Hackensack Mountain, as was much of the building stone that was used in Warrensburgh. *One of the large cornerstones has been set aside on the property with the intention*

*of having it incorporated into the next landscaping plan and that it should have secured to it a plaque, such to remember the property as having significance in the historical integrity of Warrensburgh.*

The pedimented gable, although simple in itself, was a detail that gave the building a respectful prominence as it faced Main Street. Adding to and completing this effect were boxed cornices and Doric pilasters at the four corners.

The estate included a rather small building situated quite near the sidewalk and of the same Greek Revival style of architecture as the house. Attorney Cunningham used this building as his law office. I suspect that it was built new for this purpose and probably dated to about 1860. Arthur Cunningham, grandson to Thomas, used it in later years as a dentist's office.

This same building was removed to the corner of Milton Avenue and Library Avenue and exists today, with additions, as part of a private residence. It retains some of its original colonnaded façade.

The Man...

It is recorded that an attorney, Thomas Cunningham, located to Warrensburgh in 1856. (Others suggest that it was 1854.)

In 1858 he bought this house for his new bride, Mary E. Burdick.

Quoting Jean Hadden, "Warrensburgh wouldn't be the town it is today if it were not for men like him (Cunningham) who labored to lay a solid foundation. He was one of the leading political and influential men of his day."

"Thomas Cunningham was born in 1826 in Chesterfield, Essex County. As a young lad he "read law" with Kellogg & Hale in Elizabethtown. He graduated from Plattsburgh in 1854 and was admitted to the Bar." He became a member of the Warren County Bar Association. He allowed aspiring lawyers to receive instruction in his office. Among them was Charles F. King, who himself became a significant figure in the history of Warrensburgh.

Cunningham was a large stockholder in the Lake George/Warrensburgh branch

of the Plank Road Company and by 1885 he was on the Board of Directors. He was among the first Trustees of the Warrensburgh Academy, this in 1857. The Academy building was located on School Street (hence the name) immediately behind Cunningham's house. (No "snow days" for his kids!)

Between 1861 and 1883 he was Warrensburgh Town Clerk, Deputy Revenue Collector, District Attorney and Town Supervisor for fifteen years.

Thomas and his wife had ten children, only seven surviving to adulthood. They were Charles B., Frank, Fred, Harry, Robert, Maud and Alice. He farmed his land that stretched from Main Street to Milton Avenue. Thomas Cunningham died in 1907 at the age of 81.

In 1902, Fred controlled the land in the area today known as Ridge Street and Burdick Avenue, which he cut up for building lots. It was called Burdick Street Development, possibly named so in recognition of his mother. (See Summer 2000 WHS Quarterly for map of Development)

In 1923, Robert and Dr. C. B. Cunningham (Charles B.?) started selling lots with the involvement of surveyor H.D. Chambers. This development is the area today known as Library Avenue. The former convalescent home at the end of Library Avenue and facing Milton Avenue was then called Cunningham Retreat.

Maud was born in 1876 and was the last of the Thomas Cunningham family to live in the "Cunningham House".

*References: Jean Hadden, "A Field Guide to American Houses", "A Sketch Book of Warrensburgh", "Architectural Heritage Tour" guide, "Intensive Level Survey of Historic and Architectural Resources in the Hamlet of Warrensburgh, Warren County, New York", "Souvenir Edition of the Warrensburgh News" and "Warrensburgh Historical Society Quarterly".*

### **Hickory Hill**

*(continued from page 1)*

huge economic boom to the North Creek area. Many families supplemented their incomes by renting rooms to the skiers, providing meals, transportation and en-



tainment. Skiing was in vogue. It was stylish and chic. It was a social event. The new friends you'd meet, the camaraderie of the day's adventures, the sociable train ride home, all of these things contributed to the experience of skiing, giving it an ambiance, an image. It was daring, exciting and romantic. Mom learned to ski at Stone's Mountain, located on the east side of the Hudson River between Luzerne and Warrensburg. You can still see the remnants of the old rope tow on this steep little mountain. Skiing caught Mom's eye and she begged and pleaded with her father for skiing equipment. He didn't like the idea. It was the middle of the depression and skis were a luxury. He resisted for a while but finally, she won out and a trip to Montgomery Wards in Glens Falls resulted in wooden skis with bear trap bindings. She was hooked.

My Dad was drafted into the United States Army in the summer of 1943. Mom and Dad were married in December and spent their honeymoon traveling by train to Camp Hale, Colorado. There, Mom, Dad and their friends Ken and Flo Bates planned, calculated, and dreamed about creating a place to ski with their friends. Being assigned to Camp Hale was no accident. Dad wanted to ski and had requested duty with the US Army Ski Troops. He was fortunate to receive the duty he'd requested, and based on his college downhill racing experience, qualified as a ski instructor.

In their off-duty time, Ken, Flo, Hans and Fran began to scheme. Scheming was not easy though, since Dad was a P.F.C. and Ken was an officer. Officers weren't allowed to fraternize with the enlisted men. Mom and Dad would wait until evening and then sneak, in the dark, down the road and across the bridge to the Bates' quarters. Plans were made and sites discussed. The two young couples had everything before them, including the rest of World War II. All plans were put on hold when Dad was transferred to the Infantry 305<sup>th</sup> and overseas. During their long months of duty Hans and Ken managed to keep their hopes and dreams, and themselves alive.

After the war ended, a serious search began for a site where they could build their ski center. Hours were spent poring over topographic maps. They were

searching for a north facing slope with a significant vertical drop and within reasonable distance of the Albany / Schenectady area. Several possibilities were visited and rejected before they came across the Three Sisters. Hickory is located on one of the Three Sisters, three rugged mountain peaks overlooking the junction of the Schroon and Hudson Rivers. The property for sale had been farmland. It was now the summer home of Brooklyn resident Lillian Walsh. The farmhouse was in reasonable condition and there were large slopes that had been cleared. The slopes faced north, the vertical drop was significant and the price was right. Hickory had found a home.

In the late spring of 1946 when the property was purchased the Bates lived in Schenectady and the Winbauers in South Glens Falls. Both men had day jobs and Hans had a family soon on the way. Both men also had a stubborn, never-say-die attitude. They were absolutely determined to make Hickory a reality. Spending each weeknight at "the Hill" and then bringing their families to spend the weekends, every spare minute was spent in getting ready to open for the '46-'47 season. The farmhouse needed major renovations to serve as a ski lodge. The interior walls had to be torn down, a ticket office built, the kitchen had to be converted to a snack bar and a fireplace installed. There was an old barn to be demolished, additional slopes to be

and endless other tasks.

This project could have been overwhelming. It wasn't. It was a time of sharing hard work and good times with friends and family. Each completed task was a victory, and brought all of these people closer to their own place to ski. There were many people lending a hand. Mutual friends of the Bates and the Winbauers showed up each weekend to help out. Hans' brother Loise and his co-worker Bob Selzer spent countless hours. These people remembered these times as a social experience, not as a business start up. They were all there because they enjoyed it.

The first ski run at Hickory was up the hill in front of the farmhouse, the "Honeyrun". The lower portion of this slope had been cleared years ago. For a ski run, it had to be extended up the mountain to more than double its length. To clear the additional slope, a logging crew working with a team of horses was brought in. A horse drawn mower was used to mow the lower slopes. The new rope tow was located in the same location as today's Poma 1. It was a long tow, extending all the way to the intermediate get off of the current Poma lift. A luxury sedan powered the rope tow. A Packard was driven up and parked at the bottom of the lift. Belts attached to the Packard's drive train drove the lift. To start the rope tow, the

car was started and put into drive for the day. Hickory had a high-class lift - the Packard was a deluxe edition with ac-



The Lodge, courtesy Lee Fleming

cleared, existing slopes to be mowed, not to mention getting the lift engine and lift towers installed, ordering supplies

commodations for a chauffeur, a sliding, etched glass divider, elegant glass bud vases at each door, and a luxurious pas-

senger compartment.

The slopes were ready, the lodge modifications completed and the lift running smoothly. Now, Hickory needed snow. The plan was for Ken and Hans to operate and maintain the lifts while Flo and Fran worked the ticket office. The snack bar concession was let to Floyd Foot of Warrensburg. A hot dog was 25 cents. The lodge was a comfortable setting. There was an open, circular stone fireplace and a wood stove for heat, a cozy fireplace with an old cushy sofa in front of it and huge picture windows looking out on the slopes. The parking lot was located at the bottom of the hill near the town road. Skiers had to carry all their gear from there, over the railroad tracks and up the hill to today's parking lot, and then up the next hill to the lodge. The grade of the road was much steeper then, and it was quite a hike. All-day lift tickets were \$2.00. That first year was a huge success. The snow came. Crowds came and came back. Word about Hickory spread to neighbors and neighbors told friends. In one weekend that first season, Hickory took in \$800. At two dollars a ticket that's 200 skiers each day - a great turn out!

After the second season in operation, an expansion was planned. A second rope tow would be installed and some new trails cleared. This new tow would run up the right side of the slope, alongside the brook and paralleling an old road that led to an abandoned farm. We were told that three young sisters died of diphtheria at that farm in the late 1800's, and were buried there. The lift was powered by a Cadillac parked at the top. This arrangement gave years of reliable service except for repeated problems with the electrical system. Repairs had to be made frequently to the car's wiring due to damage caused by hungry porcupines.

Hickory grew by word of mouth. Families came, friends came and neighbors came. It was not unusual for an entire neighborhood to ski at Hickory every weekend. Hickory was a relaxed place where you didn't worry about your kids (if they fell down or got stuck, the next person to come along would pick them up), you didn't worry about expensive ticket prices, the skiing was decent, the lift lines were short, and the après ski hour was shared with good friends. Ski-

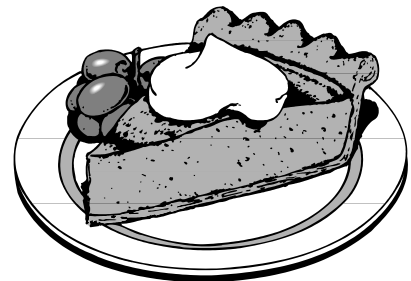
ing at Hickory was a social experience, a loosely knit "club" of skiers who returned to Hickory every weekend. An example of how this "club" came to be: Ed Wardwell knew my mother from working with her at the Imperial in Glens Falls, and started skiing at Hickory with his wife Peggy. The Wardwells knew the McMullins, the McMullins knew the Braidwoods, who knew the Foxes, who were neighbors of the Heaths. Many employees of General Electric in Schenectady skied at Hickory. Hans' brother encouraged all of his co-workers there to give Hickory a try. Some early members might remember "Crazy" Ralph Mosher, a GE engineer who invented the first robotic hands.

For the Winbauer and Bates families, Hickory was all they had hoped it would be, and more. It was also much more work than they had counted on. In those days, before the Northway, the Bates put in many hours on the road traveling to and from the Hill. In the summer and fall, Ken would be at the Hill several weeknights as well as the weekends. Burn-out was inevitable. When the travel and sweat equity became too much, Hans and Fran bought the Bates interest in Hickory and became the sole owners. By this time there were two small Winbauer daughters underfoot. Fran took over the snack bar. Dad ran the lifts with the help of employee Jimmy Parker. Eventually, after a third addition to the Winbauer brood, the kitchen duties were turned over to Bess Wolf, and "Stan the Ticket Man" was hired to run the ticket office.

Skiing grew in popularity across the USA. In the northeast, new ski areas owned by large corporations were opening. These areas had modern Poma lifts and chair lifts. Hickory, with rope tows, couldn't compete. By incorporating, and selling shares of stock, Hickory could raise money to purchase a Poma lift. Many of the Hickory regulars were interested in owning a piece of the mountain. A new, modern lift would improve the quality of skiing for everyone. After much discussion, Hickory was sold to the Hickory Hill Corporation for \$1.00 and several shares of stock. In the late summer of 1955 a Board of Directors was chosen from the shareholders. The first Board included Jack Heath, Fred Longe, Pete Fox, Hans Winbauer, Don

Brockwell, Teen Beeman, and Tom Meath.

*The following years at Hickory Hill are the years that my sisters and I remember spending there. In a future article, we'll continue the story. If any of you have Hickory stories to share, please contact us. Our email address is [hickory\\_ski\\_center@angelfire.com](mailto:hickory_ski_center@angelfire.com), or drop us a line at Hickory Ski Center, PO Box 127, Burnt Hills, NY, 12027. You can visit Hickory's website at [www.hickoryskicenter.com](http://www.hickoryskicenter.com).*



## Recipe Corner

### Pumpkin Cheesecake By Brenda Cleveland

A festive finale for your holiday meals.

2 (8 oz) pkgs. softened cream cheese  
1 cup canned pumpkin  
1/2 cup white sugar  
1/2 tsp. vanilla  
1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon  
Dash each of ground cloves & nutmeg  
1 Graham Cracker Ready Crust pie crust

Mix cream cheese, pumpkin, sugar, vanilla and spices at medium speed with electric mixer until well blended. Add eggs; mix until blended.

Pour in to pie crust.

Bake at 350 degrees for 40 minutes or until center is almost set. Cool. Refrigerate 3 hours or overnight. Top with Cool Whip or whipped cream.

*Editor's Note: Please submit recipes for future Quarterlies.*