



# Historical Highlights

Official Publication of the Sand Lake Historical Society

Volume 47, Number 4

Our 47th Year

Spring 2021

## From our president

Historically, I'll be telling my great-nieces and great-nephews all about in 2020: how it was hard to find toilet paper, paper towels, macaroni and jigsaw puzzles, and in 2021 how I felt after the first vaccine and how I felt after the second vaccine. *Unbelievable!*

Looking forward to having you all us for some enjoyable times. Our presentation on April 13 is by Fred DeMay on "Who Is and What is the Rensselaer Plateau and Is Sand Lake In It?"; our Annual Meeting will be on May 11; and then meet us *Down on the Farm* on May 21!

Special thanks for Harry Culver for special lost Tremont Calendars. Still looking for two years (*see next page – Ed.*). And I am still looking for stories on "my one-room schoolhouses" in Sand Lake (I've adopted them); I will eventually see them all identified!!! – *Jacqueline Tremont, President*

## Upcoming programs

- 1 **April 13: *What is the Rensselaer Plateau and Is Sand Lake In It?*** Fred DeMay, president of Rensselaer Plateau Alliance ([renselaerplateau.org](http://renselaerplateau.org)), will explain what the Plateau is and talk about efforts by the Alliance to preserve one of the largest and most ecologically intact native habitats in New York State. DeMay, a 30-year resident of Taborton, is an independent educational consultant after recently retiring from the NYS Education Department. His interest and involvement with the RPA grew from his love of outdoor activities and the care and stewardship of their 74-acre homestead. Along with many other activities, Fred is the Chair of the Sand Lake Fire District #3 (Taborton) Board of Fire Commissioners and the Mayfield Yacht Club Board of Directors. When not busy on the trails, Fred builds and restores boats and is a U.S. Coast Guard-licensed Captain.
- 1 **May 11: *Sand Lake Historical Society Annual Meeting.*** A bit different again this year; we'll meet in the Court Room at Sand Lake Town Hall at 7:00 p.m. for coffee and desserts (free of charge). Election of trustees and other business will be followed by a program by Town Historian Bob Moore. The Nominating Committee has put forth Holli Boyd-White for a second three-year term; and,

## In this issue:

We'll take a look at more "recycling" of structures in Town as well as a brief look back at structures on the southeast corner of Routes 43 and 150 in West Sand Lake, with a special emphasis on various iterations of Miller's (and a bit of a surprise relative to the "original" Miller's)!

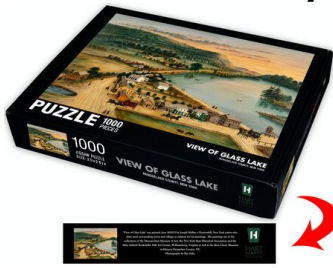
There is also information our Annual Meeting and the *Down on the Farm* fundraiser, postponed last year due to...well, we suspect you all know why it was postponed!

Linda Henchey, Doug Kelley and David Post for three-year terms to replace outgoing trustees Jane Minotti, Rosemarie Sniezyk and Sue Powers, respectively.

- 1 **Friday, May 21: *Down on the Farm*** fundraiser, at June Farms in West Sand Lake. *Details elsewhere in this issue!*
- 1 **June 8:** Tentative program on Methodist Farm, and our now-traditional "strawberry social"!

**The April 13 and May 11 programs take place at 7:00 p.m. in the Court Room at Sand Lake Town Hall, 8428 NY 66, Averill Park. COVID precautions will be followed.**

## Hidley puzzle



If you like puzzles, and/or you're still looking for things to do while cooped up and/or otherwise remaining socially distant, the Hart Cluett Museum in Troy is now offering a

1000-piece jigsaw puzzle depicting Joseph Hidley's classic *View of Glass Lake* (SEE: *Historical Highlights*, Vol. 46, Number 3, Winter 2020). The puzzle sells for \$30 (pickup only; no shipping available) from their gift shop. More information at [hartcluett.org/shop](http://hartcluett.org/shop)  
Note that the Hart Cluett Museum (and gift shop) will reopen on April 15!

## Errata

In our last issue, we noted the debut of Sand Lake's Military Banners program, being "kicked off" (sorry!) with one honoring Moscow, the Civil War Horse. Despite the fact that we correctly cited an article in *Historical Highlights*, Volume 28, Number 2, Winter 2001-2002, in which Moscow's story was told, that article was a bit misleading, and we managed to compound the error! Averill family descendant Evelyn Murray, who will sponsor Moscow's banner, was good enough to gently straighten us out:

*James Gill Averill (my great-great grandfather) was the owner, not James Knox Averill (one of his sons). It's confusing, because James G. died in the early 1880s, and James K. (who died in 1900) took over [Moscow's] care, promising his father that he would bury Moscow at the feet of the father. At least that's the family story!"*

## SLHS online

If you haven't already done so, find us on Facebook: [facebook.com/SandLakeHistoricalSociety/](https://www.facebook.com/SandLakeHistoricalSociety/)! It's a great place to get the most up-to-date news on meetings and events, along with other items of interest from us and from other places and groups in the Capital District. And you might see things you won't see in our newsletter or on the website!

Our page is getting noticed more and more! In December 2019, we hit a milestone: 500 likes! And if there has been *any* benefit to us during the pandemic, it is that more and more folks are discovering and liking our Facebook Page. On October 15, 2020, we hit 600 likes, and less than three months later, **700**, along with a number of other "followers." As we go to press, we stand at 769 members (out of a total of 824 followers of the page)!

New on Facebook in September 2019 was **Sand Lake (NY) History**, a companion *group* to our **Sand**

**Lake Historical Society page**. This group allows members to share information and to ask or answer questions about our Town's history. This, too, is proving popular, currently with 620 members!

And there's always our website, [sandlakehistory.org/](http://sandlakehistory.org/)!

## SLHS member notification list

Those of you who have shared your email address with us should be familiar with our list called "[slhs-members@googlegroups.com](mailto:slhs-members@googlegroups.com)." This is an *announce-only* list to quickly get word to members regarding cancellations, postponements and/or program reminders; it is *not* a discussion list. Postings generally run about 1-2 per month, and you will be offered the opportunity to opt out. We would love to add members whose email address was not on file; just let us know, as it is our best chance to get important news out quickly! This will supplement any notifications on the School Closing Network (local TV stations and newspaper websites) or on our Facebook page and website.

## Still seeking Tremont calendars

The Society is looking to complete a *virtual* collection of calendars issued from 1961-1987 by the Tremont Lumber Company. (SEE: *Historical Highlights*, Vol. 31, Number 3, Spring 2005.). The good news is that, thanks to a generous donation from member Harry Culver, we now seek



only **1967** and **1985** calendars. We will scan and return them to you. Please let us know at [sandlakehistory@aol.com](mailto:sandlakehistory@aol.com) if you can help!

You can now see the *almost* complete collection on our website: [sandlakehistory.org/tremont-calendars/](http://sandlakehistory.org/tremont-calendars/)

## Officers and Trustees 2020-2021

**Officers:** *Jacqueline Tremont (2022)*, President; *Jane Minotti (2021)*, Vice President; *Sharon Dawes (2022)*, Recording Secretary; *Rosemarie Sniezyk (2021)*, Corresponding Secretary; *Michelle Mosher Schultz (2023)*, Treasurer.

**Trustees:** *Holli Boyd-White (2021)*, *Peter Finn (2022)*, *Michael Perry (2022)*, *Nancy Perry (2023)*, *Jim Powers (2023)*, *Sue Powers (2021)*, *Wayland Whitney (2023)*, *Ann Winnicki (2022)*.



## Miller's, and the southeast corner of routes 43&150, West Sand Lake

Speaking of calendars... some time ago, the Sand Lake Historical Society received the donation of a 1928 "Mike Miller Choice Groceries and Meats" calendar. As with so many paper products, time had not been kind to the calendar. The artwork had faded somewhat, and the paper continued to get darker and more brittle, to the point where it was very risky to handle and not likely to survive much longer.

Some minor repair was attempted, but there were portions missing completely. The decision was made to carefully scan the calendar, after which it would be carefully framed, mostly to keep it together. Scanning also enabled us to essentially recreate the calendar as it might have looked in 1928, thanks to the wonders of Adobe PhotoShop software!

The collage here will give you some idea of the condition of the original, as well as how it might have looked when new! This will hang in Town Hall soon, along with a full-size print of the "restored" calendar.

Of course, this dates back nearly 100 years. The Miller name on a store is a bit older, and the original building older still. Let's take a very brief look at what was, and what has changed over the years at or near that southeast corner of Route 43&150.

The description on the collage reads as follows: *The Southeastern corner of the intersection of State Routes 43 and 150 has supplied West Sand Lake with essential groceries and sundries since at least 1878 when Washington Snyder built a general store and hotel on the site. Mike Miller and Sons ran the store in the original 1878 building until 1952, when new owners took over. It was demolished in 1956 to provide parking for a new and far larger Miller's Market. Seen here is a digitally restored image of a 1928 "Mike Miller Choice Groceries and Meats" calendar, along with the original, which has been framed and preserved thanks to a generous donation from Hannaford Supermarket & Pharmacy, successor*

*to and still informally referred to as "Miller's," given its deep roots in the community.*

Snyder's hotel, one of two at that intersection (Brewster House being the other), was well known in the village and hosted all sorts of events (such as the annual meeting of the Sandlake Association for Mutual Protection Against Horse Thieves) as well as serving as meeting place for the Grange and the Knights of Pythias. (Washington Snyder had also served as Postmaster of West Sand Lake in the late 1800s.)

It is not clear exactly when Mike Miller became the proprietor of the store. Meanwhile, in 1927, "The hall In Mike Miller's building, formerly used by Pleasant Valley Lodge, Knights of Pythias, Is to be remodeled into living apartments. The last meeting to be

*held in the hall will be Saturday night when West Sand Lake Grange will hold its regular session. Beginning next week the lodge, Pythian Sisters and grange will hold their will hold their meetings in the new Pythian Castle." – from The Troy Times, Troy, N. Y., Thursday Evening, February 24, 1927 [More about the new "Castle" below; see photo next page – Ed.]*

By 1952, "Miller's" had new owners in Ed Zeronda and Joe Qullinan, and big changes were to come! Within a few years, the old hotel building was gone, with the lot providing parking spaces for the new Millers' Super Market just east of that lot. That building, in turn, saw several changes, improvements and expansions; ultimately, though, it was replaced by the structure we see today as Hannaford!

While the hotel succumbed to progress, two buildings immediately to its south remain extant to this day. The first one many will remember has having a barber and Miller's Gun Shop, and (later) a liquor store. That building also has seen changes and remodeling; currently it houses a Subway and a realtor.

Next to that is what many know as currently vacant but most recently as the home of Doors for Hope. For many years, Jim Bonesteel ran a furniture store there. Originally, though, the building was erected as the new home of Pleasant Valley Lodge,



Knights of Pythias. *The Troy Times* of January 29, 1927. Devoted most of four columns to photos and an article describing the laying of the cornerstone and a banquet to take place that evening to celebrate the (near-) completion of the new Pythian Temple. The Pleasant Valley Temple of the Pythian Sisters had been instituted July 15, 1924; at the time of the dedication, it had a membership of 53 Sisters and 40 Knights. The article also featured a history of the Temple, noting that Pleasant Valley Lodge had been formed some 31 years before. (Nationally, the Order of

***New Pythian Castle at West Sand Lake.***



Knights of Pythias, an international, non-sectarian fraternal order, dates back to 1864. It was the first fraternal order to be chartered by an Act of Congress.)

*“The Castle Hall, or lodge room, is located in the front portion of the second floor and is 30 by 40 feet in dimensions. The room has high vaulted ceilings with ventilators and hardwood floor. The walls are stippled in shades of gray and gold, with old ivory woodwork and mahogany doors and trim. In panels about the side walls Charles Grant Davidson, the artist, is painting a series of pastoral and other scenes about the village and views emblematic of the order, which will make the lodge room unique and interesting. In the front wall are placed triple stained-glass windows, the gift of Mr. and Mrs. Clifford C. Hastings...”* Much of this survives in the building to this day!

For a short period of time, prior to the completion of the West Sand Lake School (on the former Younghan’s property) and it becoming part of the Averill Park Central School District, some classes were held in the Temple when the District 4 building (on Route 150 “North”) proved too small to accommodate all the district’s students!

Indeed, essentially no other homes or businesses extant at the time have survived to the present day. Between super market expansion and the “new” fire house, everything on that south side of Route 43 from Route 150 to the old firehouse is long gone. On Route 150, several other structures also are gone to make room for expansion and access. Thankfully, old pictures still exist and can be seen in our books

***Images of America; Sand Lake and Sand Lake Revisited!***



This aerial photo, courtesy of the Miller family via Terry Cox and dating from the late 1950s or early 1960s, shows the “new” super market, barber shop, Miller’s Gun Shop and, just beyond the white building, Bonesteel’s Furniture (the former Pythian Temple).

**While looking up something else...**

We came across this while researching Mike Miller’s market in old newspapers. To this day, that intersection remains “troublesome”!

Ten persons had a narrow escape from death late yesterday afternoon when two automobiles came together in a crash at the four corners at West Sand Lake, where the traffic signal erected by the town authorities was recently removed by the State Highway Department. Although the occupants of the two machines were frightened and considerably shaken up, fortunately no one was seriously injured though both cars were damaged. One of the motor cars operated by Miss Anna Collins of Fourth Street, this city, and containing five young women in bathing suits en route to Crystal Lake, was rounding the curve from the Troy Road at the corner, when it was struck by a sedan in which were riding three young men and two young women, tourists from New York City, who were proceeding at a fairly good rate directly ahead toward Albany. As the cars came together in a sideswipe, the Troy car was swung around and came to a stop at the fire plug in front of Mike Miller's store.

Deputy Sheriff Chester Wendell took the operators of the two cars to the home of Justice of the Peace Clifford C. Hastings, but as the Justice was ill in bed proceedings were postponed to a later date, and as soon as temporary adjustments were made the cars were allowed to proceed on their way. Deputy Wendell exonerated Miss Collins from blame for the accident. Deputy Sheriff William File, who appeared on the scene after the accident, ordered Deputy Wendell not to give the names of the drivers for publication and no report had been received at the jail this morning. - from *The Troy Times, Troy, N. Y. Thursday Evening, July 22, 1926*

## Recycling, Part III

This past fall, we noted how the Messhall (first featured in our Fall 2016 newsletter) was moving to a larger building in Poestenkill. But the little building opposite High School Road didn't stay vacant for long! Now open at 3269 New York 43, Averill Park, is the Gipfel Coffee Company! The Gipfel name comes from



the original German name of the road and the mountain in Taborton, what most of us know as Kipple.

Owner/Roaster Christine Kehn offers a variety of fresh roasted coffees, teas, other hot and iced beverages, pastries and more from 6:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., weekdays.

The structure has seen many uses over the years, including as an antique shop in the 1950s and "Raver's Roost" in the 1960s. Later uses included "Buns Up," "Hubba's," "Special T's" (bakery), "Perfect Pizza," a bottle recycling center, and others as well!

Best wishes to Gipfel Coffee Company! (Website: [gipfelcoffee.com/](http://gipfelcoffee.com/))

Awhile back, Trinity Lutheran Church in West Sand Lake merged with another congregation in North Greenbush to form Hope Lutheran Church. The 1953 church in West Sand Lake (*above, from a Google Street View*)

became redundant, as worship now takes place at the church on Blooming-grove Drive. However, the building on Route 150 in West



Sand Lake did not remain vacant for very long: the Lake Avenue Congregation has taken over in what is now known as West Sand Lake Community Church.

(Website: [wslcc.org/](http://wslcc.org/))

On Lake Avenue, just off Route 43 in Averill Park, is the building that originally housed the William D. Mahony Memorial St. Henry's School and Convent. After that ceased to be a school, it served as the home of Lake Avenue Community Church, then became vacant as that congregation moved to West Sand Lake (see above). Now, the former school and church on

Lake Avenue is about to see yet another "repurposing"!

Preliminary approval has been granted for SKYHIGH Adventures to use the former St. Henry's School building and grounds as follows (from their website [skyhighadventures.com/](http://skyhighadventures.com/)):

"We plan to serve youth; families; senior citizens; and other community organizations.

"We plan to utilize the land for sports fields; bicycle training areas; walking, running and bicycling trails; adventure challenge course area; outdoor



meeting places for groups; and space for educational activities and training.

"We plan to use the building as soon as possible for community groups to meet; office space; large group activity areas; small group meetings / activity spaces; and storage space.

"Examples of future building use are community bicycle shop; studio arts; Industrial arts and a makerspace area; recording studio; exercise centers; after-school programs; counseling and family services; swimming pool (when feasible); community room; and CPR, first aid, and lifeguard training."

SKYHIGH Adventures was formed in 1996, and the Multi-Sport Life Tri Club and SKYHIGH Adventure Camp were added in 2005.

## Sand Lake Garden Club raffle; 1568 hand-colored woodcut

This hand-colored 16th century woodcut is from an Italian book on medicine. The frame measures 24"x28" and the woodcut itself 9"x13". Value on the



open market is approximately \$400; opening bid is \$200.

The woodcut is on display Saturdays through May 1 from 12:00 – 3:00 pm at the Sand Lake Center for the Arts in Averill Park. Bidding will close May 8 at noon. Bids will be accepted at SLCA.

More information: [sandlakegardenclub.com/](http://sandlakegardenclub.com/)

Proceeds from the auction support the Club's scholarship fund for Averill Park High School seniors.

## Down on the Farm!

The Board of Trustees of The Sand Lake Historical Society is pleased to invite you to our 2021 *Down on the Farm* Fundraiser at June Farms on Friday, May 21, 2021, at 5:30 p.m. It promises to be a fun, hometown night out with friends and neighbors.

June Farms in West Sand Lake is the Venue Sponsor for the 6th Annual Fundraiser. There will be a wood-fired pizza buffet, live music, farm tours, an ice cream sundae bar, cash bar and more!

June Farms reflects a strong agriculture tradition that goes back to our earliest settlers. As we enter a new decade, you can journey back in time to a display of farms and farming in the Sand Lake area over the years. Enjoy a tour of the farm and see some of the many animals and some beautiful scenery!

Please consider becoming an Event Sponsor, which includes two event tickets and two yearly SLHS memberships for \$150. Individual tickets are also available on our website, where you may also download this form or pay online via credit card! You can also download a poster and a flyer to share with friends.

Thank you for your support, and we hope you will join us for an old-fashioned *Down on the Farm* night!



### **Down on the Farm, Friday, May 21, 2021.**

- Individual Tickets:  SLHS Members \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$45 each /  \_\_\_\_\_ Nonmembers @ \$50 each
- EVENT SPONSOR (Includes two dinner tickets, and two memberships) \$150
- I/we cannot attend but would like to make a donation of  \$10  \$20  \$50  \$100  other \_\_\_\_\_
- I/we would like to donate a Gift Card or Raffle Item

Name(s) as you wish to be listed: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_ Checks payable to Sand Lake Historical Society

Thank You! For more information please email [sandlakehistory@aol.com](mailto:sandlakehistory@aol.com)

**Deadline for regular ticket orders is MAY 15, 2021. Mail to: SLHS, PO Box 492, West Sand Lake NY 12196**

**Or respond and pay via credit card on our website: [sandlakehistory.org](http://sandlakehistory.org) (look for and click on the poster)**



Sand Lake Historical Society  
**Membership Application/Renewal 2021-2022**

*(Please print clearly)*

New Member  Renewal

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

\$3 per Student (13-22) \_\_\_\_\_ \$10 per Individual \_\_\_\_\_ \$15 per Family \_\_\_\_\_

\$100 per Lifetime (Individual) \_\_\_\_\_ \$150 per Lifetime (Family – two persons) \_\_\_\_\_

Would you prefer to receive newsletter via: Email  or Postal Mail  *(check only one)*

Do you have any particular historical interests or expertise? If so, please let us know:

\_\_\_\_\_

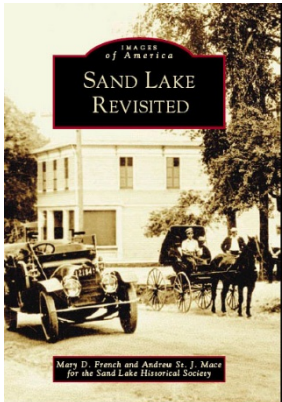
Total enclosed: ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to *Sand Lake Historical Society*. Mail to:  
Sand Lake Historical Society, Post Office Box 492, West Sand Lake, New York 12196

Spring 2021

**NOTE: Memberships run from June 1 through May 31.  
New memberships will be good through 5/31/2022!**

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<https://sandlakehistory.org>

E-mail: [sandlakehistory@aol.com](mailto:sandlakehistory@aol.com)

**Historical Highlights**

*Andrew Mace, Editor/Publisher*



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Sand Lake Historical Society

Post Office Box 492

West Sand Lake, New York 12196

