

THE DAYS OF THE STEAMBOAT

Ursula Montbriand
(Excerpts from Hague Historical
Society Presentation, Part III)

In the early eighties, an era of great prosperity began.

The TICONDEROGA, launched in 1883, was the last steamboat to be constructed entirely of wood, built by the company's own carpenters and lighted with swinging oil lamps. It marked the end of the old steamboat design.

During this period the vessels carried some noteworthy passengers - General U.S. Grant aboard the HORICON I and General William T. Sherman made the trip thru the lake on the TICONDEROGA. He said that, in his opinion, Lake George was "the most beautiful sight in the world".

Other exciting events:

About 5 PM, Aug. 1884, in the vicinity of Marion House Landing, the HORICON encountered sudden terrific winds from the west and witnessed a spiral of water lifted in a long swirling column from the surface of the lake to low hanging clouds. When the spout broke, "the roar of the water falling back into the lake was deafening."

The TICONDEROGA suffered a near disaster when a walking beam broke. Weighing eleven hundred pounds, it crashed thru hurricane and promenade decks to the main deck. On its downward course, it demolished a large mirror at head of the main stairs and a newsstand.

The engineer, Edward Peria, with cool disregard for his own safety, jumped into the engine room and closed the throttle valve, preventing escape of water and steam from the boiler.

The Board presented him with a check for \$100. in recognition of his courageous conduct.

Excursions became popular--round trips thru the lake, with passengers debarking at various hotels. When hotels complained of littering, Col. Cannon purchased Fourteen Mile Island, leased the Kenshaw House and maintained a shooting gallery for picknickers.

In 1894 the MOHICON I was built small enough to make the narrow passage into Paradise Bay--described by The New York Times as "the most exquisite bay in the world".

On the evening of Aug 28, 1902, on the all wooden TICONDEROGA, fire had been smoldering under the floor of the boiler room and gained headway rapidly under motion. The Captain made for a landing at Rogers' Rock. All possessions of officers & crew were burned but there were no passengers aboard, no lives were lost & Capt. White saved "the company papers".

With a large new steamer, the SAGAMORE (1902) followed by the MOHICAN II (1908) and the HORICON II (1911) a fine fleet was available for travel on Lake George.

The HORICON II was by far the largest, fastest and best equipped. She carried 1700 passengers. Her dining saloon, located on main deck, accomodated 100.

The dining saloon, quarterdeck, and main saloon were finished in butternut with cherry trimming--all finished in natural wood.

An unusual feature--several cabins for small parties during the trip and overnight accomodations at Lake George.

In 1911 the first holding tanks were installed in the HORICON II, then in the SAGAMORE and MOHICAN II, for collection of sewage and waste water which was pumped into disposal plant at Lake George. Garbage and cinders were also collected and set ashore at the ter-

Days of The Steamboat cont.
minals. So began the concern with maintaining the purity of Lake George and preserving its beauty.

On July 1, 1927, the SAGAMORE, in heavy fog, ran head on into Anthony's Nose, crushing her bow.

Captain Washburn competently managed to save passengers and mail-bag by backing off, barely reaching the dock at Glenburnie then hastily beaching her in a nearby cove in 18 ft. of water. She was later raised, repaired and returned to service in 1928.

By 1932 better cars, roads and many privately owned boats made many places accessible but service continued as we know it today.

A quick memory of my own:

"Going To Meet The Boat"

As a very young child I would watch and envy older members of the family, in canoe and rowboat, going to Baldwin's Dock as soon as the whistle sounded at Rogers' Rock.

Eventually I was old enough to "meet the boat". It was better than any TV program - real action, trains arriving from Montcalm, mail boxes, barrels, trunks and automobiles - a tricky maneuver getting them aboard! Last, but not least to my childish eyes, the glamorous travelers - A WONDERFUL PART OF A SUMMER DAY.

My husband says he kept himself in wonderfully good condition "smashing baggage" all summer and was so tough that he never was injured playing football!

In closing, on a trip thru the lake this past summer I overheard a passenger - impressed, no doubt, by the beauty and wilderness of some areas - say, "It's a beautiful lake but there is an awful lot of it that no one can get to." To which I say "Amen"!

(Mrs. Montbriand's chief source: The Steamboats of Lake George 1817 to 1932 by Ogden J. Ross)

HISTORICAL SOCIETY is now taping the materials presented at its monthly meetings. Pending a permanent home, these tapes are in the care of Program Chairman, Dr. Robert Cole.

SPECIAL MEETING For Property Owners of Silver Bay Association on Friday evening, July 8: Plans are for a social as well as a business gathering.

Information requested on voting qualifications for school district elections secured by Dorothy Goodfellow from Kenneth Pawson, Staff Attorney for State Education Dept. follows in its entirety:

"A person must be at least eighteen years of age, a citizen of the United States, and a resident within the district for a period of at least 30 days prior to the election.

Additionally there may be a registration requirement depending upon whether the district has chosen to so require. The word 'residence' denotes domicile and a person may have only one domicile. Thus, the residence requirement would exclude from eligibility all those who are summer residents.

The fact that a person pays school tax on his property has absolutely no bearing upon that person's right to vote in a school election. Only bona fide, permanent residents may do so."

New officers met last August and have several interesting proposals to benefit our community for the July agenda.

A REMINDER! 1977 dues are due.

Keith McManan, Pres.

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SONNETS ANYONE?

POWER PLAY

Perhaps your lights went off the other night
(I'm sure it wasn't just the very first time!)
And though it didn't give you any fright,
I'm sure you said it certainly was the worst time--

Because you'd planned to see a certain show
Or cook a special dish you'd thought about
Or read or write or draw or knit or sew
Or something else you couldn't do without

A time there was which gave men much rejoice--
When lights came on again after the dark
And unremittingly we made our choice
That nevermore would shadow make its mark

We'll always find a candle to suffice....
For brilliant light we'll have to pay the price.

Harry de Buys
5/11/77

SCHOOL DISTRICT ELECTION RETURNS

251 Ballots

Budget passed: Yes-157 No-90

blank-4

Board Member 5 yr term: Pamela

Hens elected-121 Curtis Jordan-41

Write Ins: James McKee-74 Michael

Fitzgerald-1 Pete McKee-1

blank-10 void-3

Board Member 1yr term: Robert

Patchett elected-156 Martin Fitz-

gerald-84. Write In: James

McKee-4 blank-4 void-3.

(Election board advises that any one making an error on their ballot can return to the desk, tear up the ballot, in their presence, and secure a new one.)

ROBERT PATCHETT says he "plans to study and digest the current school business and curriculum with the interest of the students foremost".

He studied Hotel management at the University of Pittsburgh and Tufts College in Mass. and founded his own Insurance Agency at an early age.

PAMELA HENS says, "My prime goal as a School Board Member will be to help achieve the best educa-

She attended Hague School thru 9th grade, finished high school in Ft & has a B.A. degree in English Ed. from Lemoyne College.

ELECTION DAY FOOD SALE raised \$205. for Mary G Beste Memorial Scholarship Fund.

COMMENCEMENT for Hague Central School will be held June 24 at 8 PM.

Coleen Thibeault will be Class Valedictorian. She is a member of the National Honor Society and the Student Council. She was also active in cheerleading, school chorus, yearbook staff, drama club and girls soccer. She will study medical technology at Hudson Valley Community College.

Debbie Jly will be Class Salutatorian. She was class secretary, a member of the Student Council, editor of the yearbook, on the newspaper staff, and active in the drama club, the school chorus, basketball, softball, soccer and cheerleading. She will study accounting at Canton Agricultural and Technical College, planning

PUBLIC HEARINGS HELD MAY 10

(24 people attended)

First Hearing: re proposed ordinance to establish 5 MPH speed limit for boats around Waltonian Islands.

One gentleman asked whether this was not already a low speed zone. Supervisor DeLarm explained that present laws only limited speeds within 200 ft. of shorelines, leaving a corridor between the islands and shore where speeding is not illegal and there have been several near accidents. The proposed ordinance would be enforced by Lake George Park Commission Patrol Boats.

No further questions, no opposition and two people expressed approval. Hearing closed.

Second Hearing: re request from Mrs. Malcolm A. Grimes, Secretary-Treasurer for 3y-Water Cabins Inc, for permit to establish a "Travel Vehicle Park" on their lakeshore property near the junction of routes 8 and 9N.

The laws, already in effect and proposed in the new Zoning Ordinance, were discussed by Mr. Ed Crabbs, Planning Board Chairman & Mr. Keith DeLarm, Town Supervisor, indicating that this kind of venture is prohibited in hamlet areas, since classified as "objectionable use" by N.Y. State Conservation laws (which established the Lake George Park Commission) and as "non-conforming use" in Hamlet Areas in the proposed Town Zoning Ordinance & in Article 27 (A.P.A. Act)

Mrs. Grimes questioned whether "Travel Vehicles" were mentioned in these laws. It was agreed that this was "the intent of the law".

Two neighbors spoke in support of the Grimes' claim that this is the only feasible use for their property and refusal of the permit would be a hardship.

Everyone who spoke expressed sympathy for the annual flooding problem in this area and appreciation for the conscientious intent of the Grimes family but concern for future effects on the town outweighed these considerations.

Brief discussion of alternate uses and methods of flood control for the property.

Mr. John Warren had interviewed real estate brokers in this area and found them agreed in the opinion that this kind of enterprise lowered the value of nearby properties.

Mr. Jack Henry reported that, while traveling in this country, he had observed this effect in many communities to which he no longer cared to return.

Mrs. Bea Polino, Pres. of Hague Chamber of Commerce, reported that all except 2 members were opposed because it would spoil the beauty of the town. The two members in favor felt it might provide customers for other businesses. Disagreement was expressed on grounds that most people on vacation in self-contained travel vehicles are interested in saving money, carry their own supplies (or carry their favorite quality brands) and would therefore provide very little custom for local businesses.

Brief discussion of methods of sewage disposal.

Health Dept. had advised Mr. Grimes that he would be limited to 11 units and should not proceed until he had secured a permit from the Town Board.

Mr. Grimes mentioned that there would be no open fireplaces-only charcoal grills carried in the vehicles. People commented that these would be used outside.

Mr. Viscardi mentioned that is using this permit would establish a precedent. If he sold his

Public Hearings cont.

property next door, the Board would not be in position to refuse a similar permit to his successor or other property owners on the lakeshore.

The neighbor supporting the Grimeses mentioned that this would be only a summer business and, because of high taxes, he was in favor of anything which brought money into the town, "anything at all", before we "take up the sidewalks in October."

Mrs. Patchett reported that year-round business in this area is increasing without changing the character of the environment.

Discussion of "Article 78 proceedings" indicated that, if the Board granted this permit, the Lake George Park Commission would overturn their ruling.

Mr. Dick Bolton spoke for The Lake George Park Commission, stating that they are aware of pollution in the lake, concerned about it and will continue working to control it.

38 property owners had signed a petition opposing the permit on grounds of traffic congestion in mid-town and impact on our peaceful atmosphere.

One letter opposing the permit was received from two Silver Bay Property owners. Hearing closed.

Third Hearing re anti-recession and revenue sharing monies. Brief discussion of regulations for use of these monies - they must be used (or work begun) within six months and for projects which will provide new employment.

There was general approval of the work already begun. No suggestions for other projects.

Hearing Closed.

(Our town's people at work are very impressive. There was ample opportunity for everyone to speak and they did so concisely and to the point with almost no repetition.)

TOWN BOARD MET following the Hearings:

Specifications for snowplow-truck were reworked and bid opening set for May 24.

It was agreed to continue the Town's insurance package with the Potter Agency.

Resolution passed in favor of 5M.P.H. speed limit for boats around Waltonian Islands.

Motion passed to refuse permit to establish Travel Vehicle Park on Grimes' property, because it would be detrimental to aesthetic appearance of the town; public opinion was opposed; and it would be in violation of both the Town Comprehensive Plan and Lake George Park Commission Regulations.

Motion passed approving use of anti-recession monies for improvements to the Town Hall.

PUBLIC HEARING SET for May 31 to discuss new Town Park Ordinance. 7PM at Town Hall.

Next meeting of the Town Board will be June 14 at 7:30 PM.

Keith DeLarm
Town Supervisor

NEGOTIATIONS REOPENED between the Forest Bay Property Owners Association and Town Board. Efforts to reach a compromise and avoid court costs etc. will continue.

PLANNING BOARD CHAIRMAN, Edward Crabbs is returned from Italy and was out checking Cold River Canyon with Greg Hill of APA on Wed. May 18 during that downpour!

Next Planning Board Meeting will be June 26 at 7:45PM in Town Hall.

THE PUBLIC IS ALWAYS WELCOME

SCHOOL PLAY, "MASH" will be presented on June 11 at 8PM in the School Auditorium. Tickets will be sold at the door. \$1.50 for adults and \$1. for students.

LARGE VOLUNTEER AMBULANCE CORP. Received a plaque from N.Y. State Volunteer Ambulance & First Aid Association for their 10 year, accident free, safety record.

JASPER J. SHATTUCK, died May 6.

Jasper was a quiet man and a dutiful son. He stuck with "the farm" for many years, though he didn't like farming. One niece remembers him skiing down the hill with bottles of milk for delivery in both hands & his school books under his arm. He learned photography from his father and enjoyed letter writing as a hobby.

He tried his hand at caretaking and "selling pulp" to the Ti Mill and finally returned to Silver Jay, near scenes of a happy childhood, and worked at Int. Paper Co. until retirement.

When he and Jennie (Mrs. Jasper) celebrated their "50th" in 1975 they discovered they had acquired many friends. Jennie and their son, Wayne, wish to express appreciation to the many who helped during Jasper's long illness, particularly Drs. Walsh and Cummins & Moses Ludington Hospital Staff.

In lieu of flowers, donations were sent to Hague Baptist Church Memorial Fund.

MRS. SAMUEL FRASIER, "Vernie" of Hollow Rd. Hague, died at age 54 in the Moses Ludington Hospital.

She was born in Plattsburgh, the daughter of Claude and Anna Hargett. She was a member of the Hague Fish and Game Club.

She is survived by her husband, two sons--Randy and Phillip of Hague, two daughters--Bonnie of Hague and Lynn, now serving in

U.S.A.F. in Omaha, Neb, one granddaughter, four brothers--Arthur and Coile Hargett of Mineville, Emmett of Moriah and Leon of Tampa Fla, seven sisters--Mrs. Ruth Menard of Williston, Vt, Mrs. Cleo Howard and Mrs. Amanda Zani of Orange, Mass, Mrs. Vera Jernell of Marboro, NY, Mrs. Nina Russo of Mineville, Mrs. Alberta Orr of Witherbee, Mrs. Lidia Woods of Crown Point and several nieces and nephews.

Funeral services were conducted by Rev. Edward Elliott at the Hague Wesleyan Methodist Church.

BUSY MONTH FOR FIRE DEPT.

Fire Chief Robert Hoyt reports the fire on May 4 destroyed 20 acres of woodland near Decker Hill Road. Cause unknown.

Fifty men responded--Hague and Ticonderoga Fire Depts. and two Forest Rangers. The fire was contained in 5 hours. A crew of 17 men from the State Correctional Facility at Mt. McGregor, under the direction of Forest Rangers and two guards, maintained a fire watch through the night.

Sat. May 21, fire completely destroyed the Thibeault summer residence. The firemen laid 1900 feet of hose, used their own tanker and Brant Lake's tanker. This one was contained in 3 hrs.

Sun. May 22 the John Hudson home was completely destroyed. The Hague firemen were assisted by Ticonderoga Fire Dept.--3 hours.

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(Address correction requested)

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