

The Guide

Town of Duane Newsletter
September 2015
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Church Renovations Underway

This past spring the Town of Duane received a \$74,000 state grant to help pay for renovations to the Methodist-Episcopal Church. This church was built in 1883. Reinforcement of the bell tower foundation and a new roof were the top two priorities. Vachon General Construction from Malone was awarded the contract for making the repairs to the bell tower base. Their bid came in much lower than expected and this will allow monies to be appropriated for: replacing the roof, refinishing portions of the inside and installing a second door in the back to make the church handicapped-accessible. All work is expected to be completed by October 1st.



Craft Show Scheduled at Church

Over the past few months the town board has encouraged residents to come up with ideas as to how the church might be used by local residents. Aimee Brockway, a local resident, recently received permission from the Town Board to organize a Craft Show at the church on October 11th from 9am to 4pm. Local vendors and crafters will be present selling their merchandise. She plans to have a DJ present providing music. For more information contact Aimee at 518-483-8447.

Election Day 2015

Election Day this year is November 3rd. Local residents will be voting at the Duane Fire Station from 6am to 9pm. In terms of the Duane Town election, voters will only be voting on two positions. Both positions are seats on the Town Board. Laura Paquin is an incumbent seeking her second term on the board. Carmella Teeple has served 8 years on the Town Board and has decided not to seek re-election. The town expresses its gratitude to Carmella for all the time and effort she has put forth over the last 8 years. Job well done! Seeking his first term on the Town Board is Gary Cring.

Duane Cemeteries Get Needed Fence Repairs

At the June 17th Town Board meeting the board approved funds to be spent on making necessary repairs to the fences at the Ladd Cemetery and the Hoose Cemetery. The repairs included painting; straighten posts and installation of new double gates. The work was performed by Bonesteel's Landscaping Service. In the photo at the right Mr. Bonesteel is adjusting one of the new gates.



Fire Department Honors Community for Manhunt Support

Without question the big news story of 2015 has to be the manhunt for convicted killers Richard Matt and David Sweat. Not only were they present in the Town of Duane but Richard Matt was shot and killed in Duane. I do not intend to summarize the escape. I would like to focus on one aspect of the hunt: the strong support shown by this community for the people trying to end a 23 day long nightmare. I personally worked at the Fire Station preparing and serving food. I was amazed at the outpouring of food, supplies, donations and help for the hundreds of people who passed through the Fire Station. I heard nothing but compliments about our community support and the efforts displayed by everyone. Many of the agencies involved in the manhunt sent letters of appreciation to our local fire department. At the September 14th meeting of the Duane Fire Department a special ceremony was conducted by our local fire department to pay tribute to many of the community members involved in this manhunt effort.



Town of Duane Historical Notes

Prepared by: Gloria Gori, Town Historian

The Hopkinton Port Kent Turnpike: Part 1

The earliest northern road was the North West Bay Rd. that was in use before the 1800's. It came from Saranac Lake to today's 458 to St. Regis Falls, then to Hopkinton. Then came the Hopkinton Port Kent Turnpike through Duane which is today the Red Tavern Rd. and County Rt. 26, which was Old Rt. 99. It was one of the most important roads through this part of the country for it provided a way for the early settlers to get their produce to a port for shipping and exchange them for needed tools and staples.

On April 18, 1829, the State Legislature passed an act that allowed construction to begin. An allocation of \$25,836 was granted. It levied a tax on all land located within three miles of the route, which raised an additional \$12,500. In today's money this was equivalent to \$848,023.

The project required four surveys to lay out a route to connect Port Kent to Keeseville, AuSable Forks, northwest to Franklin Falls, Union Falls, Silver Lake to Loon Lake, to Duane, then to St. Regis Falls, Dickinson to Hopkinton. The surveying took 26 days and was completed in late October. First it was a blazed trail, to a bridle path and finally to crude 75 mile dirt and gravel road. Brooks and rivers were forded or make shift bridges made by long stringers crossed with logs. They tried to avoid the steepest hills but used 8 foot hemlock planks 3 inches thick to plank the remaining hills. Construction was completed in 1832. In 1833 the road opened as a Toll Road. Only one toll booth was allowed at the mid-point of the route. Very little revenue was collected. The Turnpike Commissioners prepared a petition to replace the one toll gate with two "half toll gates" located near each end point, charging half the normal amount of toll. The Senate passed the bill in 1835. This still did not generate enough revenue for the maintenance of the road. The settlers had ingenious ways to avoid paying the toll. Then there were exemptions; Sunday Church Services, funerals, election days, serving on a jury, doctors and mid-wives, going to the grist mill or black smith. In 1838 a law passed that the road would be transferred to the towns it ran within. The towns' highway funds would have to take care of the road upkeep, dissolving the toll road.

The road saw heavy use in the fall and early winter. It was not unusual to see a string of teams nearly a mile long taking their produce to Port Kent. The wagons and sleighs were filled with heavy loads of wheat, corn, pork, deer and cattle hides, wool and potatoes. They returned home with lighter loads of priceless luxuries of tools, cotton cloth, sugar, fine flour, and other staples. They drove herds of cattle and sheep on this route. Money was almost unknown. Bartering, the swapping system was a major means of paying debts. Businessmen and horse traders traveled this route with a horse trader meeting his demise in our Town of Duane.

Towns were few and far between. Traveling was at a snail's pace. An article in the Malone Farmer told about the speed of travel on the roads. It required 6 days to go from Malone to Plattsburgh. In 1820 it took 2 days to travel 20 miles. Little inns were built, spaced about a day apart, along the route. Most were very small, consisting of one large room which had a bar, kitchen, and dining room. A large fireplace provided the heat. The guest would climb a ladder to a dormitory where they slept. The rates were 3 cents for a mug of spirits, 25 cents for a meal, 25 cents for lodging, and another 25 cents for stabling. Resort hotels were in a different class and were built later.

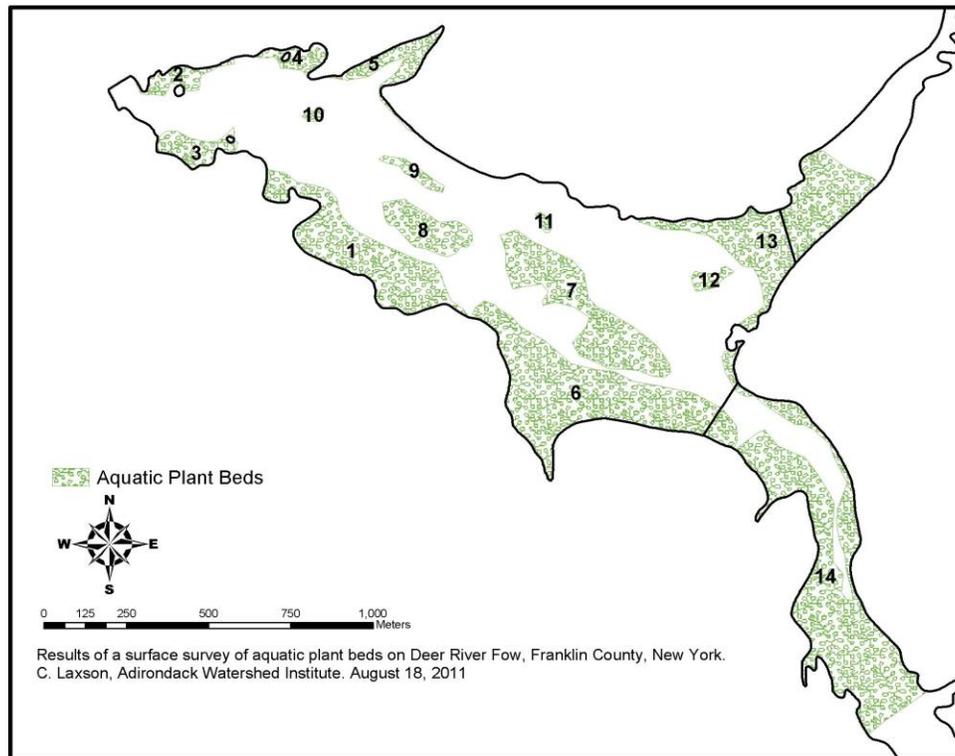
In my research, the most interesting find was there were no paved roads in the Adirondacks until the end of World War I. In 1912, the first concrete surface, an experimental quarter mile stretch, was poured on the old Meacham Rd. in Duane.

Sources for my article: "Heydays of the Adirondacks" by Maitland C. Desormo and the Malone Farmer

**The following information is made available to you by:
The Horseshoe Pond/Deer River Flow Association**

For additional information on this subject please refer to the town's website.

(www.duaneny.com)



Deer River Flow: The attack on milfoil in the Flow began in the summer of 2010. The Flow, is a 391 acre State owned impoundment behind a dam also owned by New York State, and is generally shallower than 12 feet.

This larger body of water is heavily infested with milfoil. Because of the size of the problem and the expense of addressing it, the HPDRF Association has developed a plan based on the prioritization of milfoil beds. Each of the milfoil beds were ranked based on the condition of the bed and the use of the area. High priority was given to dense beds where there is a high probability of the plant spreading and where the area appears to get a lot of boating use. We plan to have professional divers lay mats in a moderately infested area in the center of the Flow and will develop teams of volunteers to deal with the shallow bays.

Based on a formal agreement made with DEC:

-Lay benthic mats and hand pull milfoil around the mats on milfoil beds with a moderate density and where there is active boat usage (beds 9 and 10 on map)

-Hand pull milfoil in beds numbered 1, 5, and 6 on map

Highlights from Town Board Meetings

June 17th meeting:

Absent: Mark Young

John Carr of Blue Mountain Engineering addressed the board regarding the town church and the grant. He reiterated that the most important aspects of the project are the bell tower and the roofing.

Aimee Brockway addressed the board relative to promoting functions at the church. Discussions included non-refundable deposits and how the money collected would be handled. The board agreed to have the existing piano serviced. Rita Gordon agreed to contact legal counsel regarding contracts and liability releases for functions.

Highway Superintendent LeMieux reported to the board that he received a quote from Bonesteels for fence repairs for both town cemeteries. The quote was \$6,700 and the board agreed to pursue this project.

July 15th meeting:

Absent: None

John Carr of Blue Mountain Engineering addressed the board regarding the proposals for the town church project. The board reviewed the proposals and decided to award the bid to Vachon. Aimee Brockway expressed interest in holding a craft show at the church on October 11, 2015. The board agreed to grant permission for the event. Board member Rita Gordon will be researching insurance and liability issues for events at the church.

The Town Board expressed the need to establish a wash station at the new Meacham Lake boat launch in an attempt to reduce the spread of milfoil.

Supervisor LeMieux reported to the board his communication with Dale Becker of NYS DEC regarding testing of the closed landfill. Since prior test results have been favorable, it is possible that the length of the mandated testing may be reduced.

August 19th meeting:

Absent: None

The board reviewed all bids submitted for the roof repairs to be made on the town church.

Duane Black was awarded the bid.

Gil Paddock addressed the board regarding Time Warner Cable. Currently lines have been run to the fire station and he would like to see an effort to solicit support from residents to make to make Time Warner's services available.

Supervisor LeMieux discussed his options for working on the 2016 Town Budget. He reported that the town equalization rate is at 88%.

Aimee Brockway addressed the board regarding the craft sale in October. She currently has 17 vendors for the show.

September 16th meeting:

Absent: None

Dave and Kathy Meacham shared with the board the results of their on line petition concerning the proposed boat launch location at Meacham Lake Campground. Currently 151 people have signed the petition and left comments. They recently presented the petition to DEC officials.

The DEC has informed the town it will no longer be necessary to have our landfill tested. Past results have been very good. This will result in a \$1600 savings per year.

The renovations at the town church are on schedule and going well. The roof repairs were stated on September 16th. All work is expected to be completed by the end of September.

The board worked on the adoption of a 2016 budget.

Dates of Upcoming Meetings and Events

October 11th - Craft Sale at Church from 9am-4pm
October 21st - Town Board Meeting at the Fire Station 7 PM
October 31st - Annual Halloween Party at Duane Fire Station
November 3rd - Election Day, Polls open from 6am to 9pm
November 18th - Town Board Meeting at the Fire Station 7 PM
December 16th - Town Board Meeting at the Fire Station 7 PM
January 20th - Town Board Meeting at the Fire Station 7 PM

Food Pantry Schedule: October 22nd, November 19th and December 17th.

Time Warner Cable Survey: Gil Paddock is conducting an informal survey of community residents that would be interested in the internet services/bundles provided by Time Warner. For additional information or to express your interest contact Gil at 483-0060.

Halloween Party: The annual Halloween Party sponsored by the Duane Angels will be held on Saturday, October 31st at the Duane Fire Station.

Thank you: The town wide garage sale was a huge success with all proceeds going to the Duane Fire Department. The Duane Angels would like to thank everyone for their donations and support.

Time to Start Preparing for.....winter

After last winter it is difficult to think about preparing for the upcoming winter. At any rate, winter will arrive and we need to be prepared for it. Take the time to start and run your emergency generator and your snow blower. If they need service now is the time to discover this. If you burn wood you should have your chimney cleaned and inspected. If you use fuel oil have your tank filter, nozzle and electrodes replaced. Keep some fresh batteries on hand for your flashlights. Take an inventory of your emergency supplies and replenish as needed.

Next issue of *The Guide* to be mailed out at the end of January 2016.

Any suggestions or questions concerning *The Guide* should be directed to Gary Cring (483-2611)