



Placid Pioneer

December 2007

Bowling Alleys in Lake Placid

by Beverley Pratt Reid, Town and Village Historian

In 1999 Mary MacKenzie compiled the following information on various bowling alleys in Lake Placid.

The first bowling alleys were erected in the outbuildings of the Mirror Lake House in 1889. These were located on Mirror Lake (near the present Golden Arrow). After the Mirror Lake House burned in the fire of 1894 the buildings were left empty and were eventually torn down after the turn of the century.

Although the Cascade House was not located in the village, it should be included in the bowling alley history. The main building was built in 1879 and in 1883 was "handsomely enlarged and a boathouse, bowling alley and tavern were added." After the purchase of the building by the Lake Placid Club the bowling alley was still in existence and was included in their advertising. However, both of these venues were open to guests only.

In 1901, Rev. William W. Moir was the first Rector of the St. Eustace Episcopal Church. He believed that, "the physical well-being of an individual was just as important as his spiri-

tual well-being. He was especially interested in planning and providing wholesome physical activities for young people." He personally financed the building of a four story church Parish

House on Main Street on the west shore of Mirror Lake. The street floor contained a gymnasium, also utilized for church services, etc. The floor below contained a game room with bowling alleys, pool and billiard tables. This building was open to all people of the community and continued until 1917.

The construction of the Masonic Building with new, modern bowling alleys, at the cost of \$600 each, was the next venture. These alleys continued in existence until the 1950's when they became antiquated and in need of replacement. This proved to be too expensive and the alley space was rented out.

In 1954 the Whiteface Inn constructed a convention hall that included four alleys. Again, these

were available for guests only.

The next forty years found the bowlers traveling to Saranac Lake for their enjoyment. Then in 1997 a Main Street building was refurbished and bowling returned to Lake Placid under the fun name of "Bowl Winkles" and can be enjoyed by all.



Can you identify these 1967 Lake Placid bowling competitors who traveled all the way to Rochester to play? Hint... one woman on this team has given many years of service to her hometown in elected office.

❄ Winter Lecture Series! ❄ ❄ ❄ ❄ Fight Cabin Fever!!! ❄

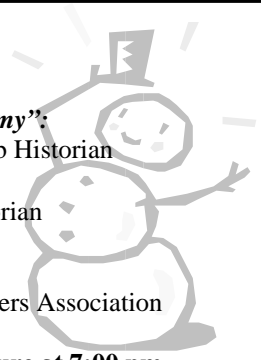
Wednesday, 01-15-08 "Ascending the Mountain: Historical Adventures on Whiteface"
Doug Wolf, Atmospheric Sciences Research Center

Wednesday, 02-20-08 "History of the Skating Club of Lake Placid: Its vital impact on our economy"
Barbara Tyrell Kelly, Lake Placid News columnist and Skating Club Historian

Wednesday, 03-19-08 "Mill Pond: Then and Now": Beverley Pratt Reid, Town and Village Historian
Comments by Peter Kroha and Bob Hanna

Wednesday, 04-23-08 "Times and People of Placid Lake": Georgia Jones, Lake Placid Shoreowners Association

All programs will be held at Howard Johnson's Restaurant: Dinner at 6:00 p.m., Lecture at 7:00 pm.
If you can't come for dinner please come for the program!



Message from the President

by Peter Roland, Jr.

2007 was an eventful year for the Historical Society and The History Museum!

For the first time in many years the Museum had significant cosmetic improvements, with a new coat of paint inside the Waiting Room and refinishing of the original hardwood floors thanks to the generosity of a Historical Society patron. Museum Committee Chair Ed Lynch developed all new exhibits telling the "stories" of Hotels, Founding Families, Agriculture, Guides, Winter Sports, the Shoreowners Association, Lake Placid Club and the Uihleins and Heaven Hill Farm. The new look was extremely well received by members and visitors during the season, and work will continue on these and other exhibits during 2008.

We also held a number of successful events during the season. The *Members Reception* in June was very well attended and provided an opportunity for Society members to see the all new exhibits. Many participants took the "Ray Brook Ramble" train ride provided by the Adirondack Scenic Railroad, and for some it was their first time back on that run in many years. Special thanks go to Lisa G's for providing the delicious food and the Lake Placid Pub and Brewery and Swedish Hill Winery for providing refreshments.

The annual *Community Day Celebration* in September was again a great success. Due to the efforts of event chair Laura Jean Clark, many volunteers, and the businesses that made donations it exceeded the financial goals for this most important fundraiser. The second *Antique Appraisal Day* in September was also very well attended. Our appreciation goes to Ted Comstock, who donates his expertise for this fundraiser. Ted looked at over 50 objects brought in from far and wide and has expressed his willingness to do it again next year, so watch for the date. "Antiques Roadshow" has nothing on us!

The Adirondack Scenic Railroad saw an increase in their ridership this season, which also meant an increase in Museum visitors. We plan to continue joint marketing efforts in the future which will benefit both organizations in their operations.

Looking ahead, we have another interesting series of programs planned for the *Winter Lecture Series* (see details on page 1). This series has been extremely popular since its inception, and we hope you will be able to take advantage of these presentations on a wide variety of topics.

Museum Director Jennifer VanBenschoten resigned from her position as of Labor Day. Jennifer and her husband Tom are expecting their first child this month. We wish them all the best with the new addition to their family, and are grateful for all of Jennifer's efforts during the two seasons she served as Director. A search is underway to fill the Director's position, and we expect to have someone in place well in advance of the 2008 Museum season.

It is clear that the ability to continue our current operations and expand programming in the future is totally dependent on the support of our membership and other organizations which support our efforts. If you have not renewed your membership this year, or would like to make an additional end of year donation, please use the form enclosed to show your support. Your financial contribution, along with a dedicated corps of volunteers, will allow the Historical Society to continue providing service to the Lake Placid-North Elba community.

We thank you for your support and wish you a fine Holiday Season!

NOTICE

Position Available

Director

The History Museum

Part time-Flexible hours-Winter

Full time Summer

If you or someone you know might be interested in this position, please send resume and cover letter to:

Search Committee
Lake Placid-North Elba
Historical Society
P.O. Box 189
Lake Placid, NY 12946



Lake Placid – North Elba Historical Society

P.O. Box 189, Lake Placid, NY 12946

518-523-1608

thehistorymuseum@verizon.net

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Beverley Reid

The Path Forward ...

by Ed Lynch, Museum Committee

Historical societies undergo periodic renewal either because of age (the Society will be 60 in 2008), community involvement, budget requirements, loss of focus, lack of space, staffing needs or all of the above. Some Boards of Trustees will attempt solutions giving attention to the greatest needs of the moment, while a choice few see the wisdom of orderly pursuit with plans, policies and strategies. This has been the recent course for the Lake Placid-North Elba Historical Society.

The board began the process with the approval of a Curatorial Collections Management Policy passed in 2004. It was this endeavor that established the guidelines for the future themes (storylines) of the Society. The collecting of objects, photographs, paintings, prints and manuscripts (diaries, business papers, letters etc.) now has a relationship to these storylines and provides justification for the acceptance of gifts to the society's collections.

This vital policy preceded an eighteen

month task with board participation in the formulation of a Strategic Plan, effective 2006-2009. The combination of these two documents provided the strong base to make a decision to display local history in a new and exciting format for the Waiting Room of the train station. Ten themes were selected based on their appropriate connection to the overall intent and whether we had the objects to support the presentation. It was illuminating for everyone to discover huge gaps in the collections which prevented us from exhibiting the necessary substantive material, whether three dimensional or visual. As a result, the trustees are now focused on the many subject titles that must be enhanced by artifacts and we no longer indiscriminately accept objects. The guidelines in the Curatorial Collections Management Policy assist the trustees and staff in arriving at appropriate decisions.

Fortunately, the new appearance of The History Museum has been received most generously with renewed interest,



The Billings Guideboat, centerpiece of the newly installed Guides Exhibit, was built on Mirror Lake in the 1890's.

increased attendance, and numerous accolades. We hope this enthusiasm will further encourage the community to assist us in our efforts with historical material, gifts, donations and vitally important, badly needed volunteer hours.

Please contact our trustees to answer any questions or offer any service. **Your support is necessary and greatly appreciated!**

ACT ENDOWMENT FUND

The Lake Placid - North Elba Historical Society Fund at the Adirondack Community Trust has been established to receive gifts and bequests from individuals, families, and businesses.

Contributions may be made during the donor's lifetime or by bequest in a will. The Fund can accept cash, stock, insurance policies, IRA's, real estate, and life income gifts. Upon receipt of a gift, the donor will receive the maximum tax benefit allowed.

For information regarding the Society's Fund with Adirondack Community Trust please contact the Society or:

Ms. Cali Brooks, Executive Director
Adirondack Community Trust
2284 Saranac Avenue
Lake Placid, NY 12946
518-523-9904 www.GenerousACT.org

2007 Event Highlights



Ted Comstock provides an appraisal of a document at the 2nd annual *Antique Appraisal Day* in September.



Chris Ericson takes his daughter Grace on her first train ride at the *June Members Reception*.

The annual *Community Day Celebration* moved from July to September this year and was once again a very successful event. Many thanks to all the businesses and individuals that donated and supported the event!

All we want for Christmas is...

- Flat storage files for maps & documents
- Office chairs
- Desk Lamps
- Folding chairs
- *Lightweight* banquet tables



If you can donate any of these items, please let us know!

Bev's Bits... A report from the Town Historian

by Beverley Pratt Reid

About fifty years ago the high school hockey team was going strong under the coaching of Stan Pelkey. However, Coach Pelkey felt that there were many bad habits that the boys had picked up by playing "back yard hockey". This resulted in many parents assembling and eventually organizing the Lake Placid Pee Wee Association.

The first year it was for hockey only but as the years progressed, it included baseball, football, basketball, speed skating and soccer. Hundreds of children had the advantages of volunteer coaches in each of these sports.

The annual dues for adults were \$1.00 and the registration for each participant was \$5.00. Equipment and insurance was provided and no child was turned away. Moneys were raised by the sale of popcorn,

candy, etc. Radio-thons were held for special needs.

The organization is still very active and is now called the Lake Placid Youth Athletic Association. Some changes have been made but the advantages for the children have remained the same.

Another event that happened about fifty years ago is the erection of the Erdman Hall at the Adirondack Community Church. It was built to include new Sunday School rooms for the children as well as a kitchen and hall for meetings and dinners. Needless to say, the hall has been a wonderful addition to the community and has been used by hundreds over the years. A new handicap entrance has now been added which will make it even more accessible.

More "bits" next time...

If you have any questions relating to the history of the Town or Village, please do not hesitate to contact me:

Beverley Reid, Town Historian

518-523-2965

E-mail: bmpreid@roadrunner.com



LAKE PLACID-NORTH ELBA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P. O. Box 189, 242 Station Street
Lake Placid, New York 12946