



Wanakena Historical
Association
PO Box 73
Wanakena, NY 13695

WHA Board of Trustees (2010)	
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Next Meeting
Sept 7 - 9:30 am



WANAKENA HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Volume 4, Issue 1

Summer/Fall 2013

No Newsletters Since summer of 2012

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<i>Benson Mines & Wanakena—part 2</i>	2
<i>Special Thanks</i>	6
<i>Plans to add to the Walking Tour</i>	9
<i>Remembering Jake Adams</i>	10
<i>The Way to Wanakaena</i>	11
<i>Photo Contest</i>	12
<i>The Way To Wanakena</i>	13
<i>Wanakena Parade</i>	14
<i>President's Message</i>	15
<i>Membership Form</i>	15

We are very sorry that we did not issue a newsletter since the summer of 2012. Although we failed to get a newsletter distributed doesn't mean that the WHA has not been actively supporting our dedication to preserving and promoting the history of Wanakena. We will try very hard to get at least two newsletters issued each year. Many of these events are described in detail within this newsletter

Here is a fairly complete list of accomplishments since the last newsletter:

- Significant display of Wanakena historical information and artifacts at the 100th anniversary celebration of the New York State Ranger School at Wanakena Sept 2012;
- Coordinated the Photo Contest with 223 pictures entered with about 180 displayed at the Forest Festival;
- Received and added pictures, postcards, artifacts, and personal stories to the WHA archives;
- Provided personal guided tours for the Adirondack Architectural Heritage (AARCH) group;

TREASURER'S REPORT: JUNE 2013

RON CAPONE, TREASURER

As reported by the treasurer on June 1.

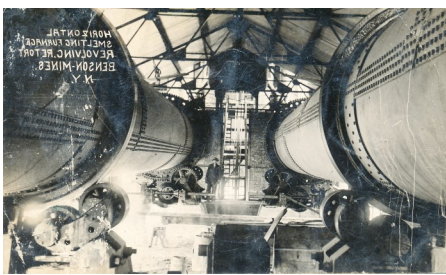
Balance Sept 25, 2011	\$6,462.42
Balance Sept 15, 2012	\$ 9,568.06
Balance June 1, 2013	\$ 8,923.58

Expenses included replacement pages to picture stations, postage, and keepsakes. Income included membership dues, donations, money raised at Wanakena events, and Jake Adams memorials.

BENSON MINES & WANAKENA:

PART 2 OF 2 BY: *SUSAN SMEBY*

1907 was a good year for Benson Mines. Magnetic Iron Ore was now the Benson Mines Company; after spending \$150,000 on new mining and milling equipment, full operations began. 1907 was a good year for Wanakena too; in June, a young man made his first trip to Wanakena, a place he would later refer to as “My Wonderland”. After traveling by rail from Ellicottville and switching at Benson Mines to the Cranberry Lake RR, Herb Keith was impressed by the wobbly 400’ trestle, as the engine and coaches backed the 6 miles to Wanakena. Met by his grandfather at the station, Herb was soon introduced to the best known of the local guides, Wilfred Morrison. Their



Nodulizing plant at Benson Mines; two horizontal rotary kilns.

adventures “up the Oswegatchie”, and other tales of early Wanakena would later be described in Herb’s book “Man of the Woods”.

1908 was a mixed year at the Mines, due to a general depression, but the company used idle time to experiment with refining its iron concentrates. A state of the art nodulizing plant - a long rotary kiln heated by gas – was planned, at a cost of \$1000. High temperatures fused the concentrates into nodules from ¼” to ½” in diameter;

the rotary motion of the kiln prevented formation of a solid mass. This process agglomerated small particles into lumps that were better suited to use in a blast furnace. The company constructed two of these inclined kilns, among the first in the country. Even though 1908 was a setback for mining, Benson Mines village was sustained by its connection to the NY Central, via the Carthage& Adirondack line – and by its link to Wanakena, the Cranberry Lake RR. Herb Keith recounted how the Mines’ saloons were a constant temptation to residents of Wanakena, which was alcohol-free by order of Rich Lumber. Herb praised Sam Spain, chef and proprietor of the popular Ellsworth Hotel, for his attempts to tame the local loggers and miners and provide a civilizing influence. On 9/21/1908, Spain presided over an event at Benson Mines he felt would do both: a night featuring movies and vaudeville, followed by a boxing match between 46 year old Bob Fitzsimmons, for-

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT: MARSHA SMITH



I am honored to have the WHA trustees place their trust in me to lead the WHA for the next year. I will do my best. I have enjoyed working with this active and dedicated group the past several years and look forward to our future together. I have been coming to Wanakena for 1 - 2 weeks each summer since I was 4 years old. That has made for many wonderful memories. So it is a privilege to be involved with saving peoples' memories and memorabilia of Wanakena for future generations. I hope that you will consider sharing your memories, pictures and keepsakes with us. We would be happy to accept them or copy them for our archives. We hope to one day have a permanent location for our archives and displays. With your continued support, we will be able to accomplish that.

Kudos to all who supported our role in the Ranger School's Fall Festival last September 28-29. There were lovely displays and wonderful memorabilia to be enjoyed by the hundreds of visitors. The beautiful photo contest was amazing thanks to Allen Ditch for all his hours of work.

Our walking tour and kiosks are in good shape as Bill Gleason continues to update pages or stations when the weather makes them unusable. Thank you to our hard working officers, trustees and members and friends for your continuing support of the Wanakena Historical Association.

WHA MEMBERSHIP: JOIN OR RENEW TODAY

Your current membership status should be indicated on the mailing label. If your membership is expired or you have never formally joined, please complete the form below and send form and payment to: **Wanakena Historical Association, PO Box 73, Wanakena, NY 13695.** All gifts, above membership are tax deductible.

Annual Membership: Individual Membership: <input type="checkbox"/> 1 year \$10 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 years \$25			
Family Membership: <input type="checkbox"/> 1 year \$25 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 years \$60			
Contributing Member: <input type="checkbox"/> \$50			
Lifetime Membership: <input type="checkbox"/> \$100			
<input type="checkbox"/> New or <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal			
NAME:		Date:	
Address:		City:	State: Zip:
Phone:		E-mail:	
Prefer to receive correspondence by:		<input type="checkbox"/> E-Mail	<input type="checkbox"/> US Mail
<input type="checkbox"/> GIFT MEMBERSHIP for:			
NAME:		Date:	
Address:		City:	State: Zip:
Phone:		E-Mail:	
<i>Gift recipient will be notified by mail</i> <i>All GIFTS are tax-deductible</i>			

The 2013 PARADE: Making Wanakena History

This year Wanakena had its 10th annual parade to celebrate the birth of our nation. What started in 2003 as a simple parade of decorated bicycles, pets and lawn-mowers has evolved into an amazing array of family and community units having a fun day dressing up and celebrating this special day with Bill Gleason (1st president of the WHA) manning the PA system to announce parade participants as they passed by the General Store and Z-Park. For the second year we had not only one band, but a family unit playing kazoo's as well as the "Fly Swatter" Band. There were floats, bicycles, boy scouts and of course the town Snow Plough that brought on laughs, cheers and boos. A fire engine from Cranberry Lake led the Wanakena Welcome Wagon Ladies passing out chocolate chip cookies. There was a civil war soldier, an Indian maiden, and a truckload of stuffed teddy bears.



The Wanakena Welcome Wagon ladies pass out chocolate chip cookies to the crowd.

The crowd had a good giggle seeing one of Wanakena's distinguished ladies riding in the shovel of a backhoe tossing beads like it was Mardi Gras in New Orleans. Wanakena at its best.

The (rubber) duck races were a big hit as usual, with the winning ducks passing under the footbridge in record time because of the recent heavy rains.

The **First Annual Wanakena Baked Beans Challenge** was a big hit. Ten delicious entries were in the gazebo for the public to taste and judge. For \$1 you could taste each of the recipes and vote for the best. The event planners were very pleased that the contest added even more joviality to this community day, as the tasters mingled and compared notes.

This year all proceeds went to the WHA, which received \$140 from this fun event. Andrew Augustine, this year's champion, claims he will retire his recipe so that he can remain undefeated. We will see if Wanakena will allow that to happen!??



Happy throngs of onlookers in Z-Park cheered on the participants in the parade.

mer world heavyweight champion, and Jim Paul, champion lumber camp brawler. The 4-round exhibition – an actual match was illegal – was attended by most of Wanakena, including 13-year old Herb Keith, and visitors came by train from as far away as Watertown and Canada. The *Watertown Times* reported that Sam Spain sat ringside with a baseball bat, while the referee had difficulty inducing Paul to accept the general rules of boxing – no kicking, biting, gouging, or bare knuckles. The lumberjacks bet heavily on Paul, but after 3 rounds of Paul swinging wildly with little effect, Fitz settled the bout in the 4th round with a left to the body, and a right to Paul's head. Herb reported that Jim Paul later summed up the fight: "De more I heet, de more I mees". Operations at Benson Mines were nearly continuous from 1907 to 1915, despite fluctuations in the iron trade. In 1911 the company built a new concentrating mill, separating the magnetite with dry magnetic belt and drum machines. A storage capacity of 10,000 tons of dried ore allowed continuous work in winter. In 1912 the company built a power plant at Brown's Falls on the Oswegatchie River. In 1914 the mill was again rebuilt to take advantage of new, more efficient technology, using wet magnetic separators. By 1915 however, all Adirondack magnetite mines were at an economic disadvantage. They were competing with mines in the Lake Superior area and Mesabi Range, where rich ores could be mined and shipped without concentration. Demand for iron during WWI created a brief reprieve for Benson Mines, which continued in active operation from 1916 to 1918. By 1919 the war was over, followed by a depression in the iron industry. Benson Mines' high production costs led to abandonment of the works late in 1919. It would take another world war to revive the Mines, when in 1941 the Jones & Laughlin Ore Co. leased the property and rebuilt the crushers, concentrators, and sinter plant. Many of the homes in Benson Mines were moved to Star Lake, and the old village and works were engulfed by the new pit, or flooded when Little River was diverted. The Mines closed for good in 1978.

Rich Lumber's logging and mill operations in Wanakena continued through 1912. The connection of the Cranberry Lake RR to Benson Mines was vital to those operations, and to the village. Wood products were freighted to Benson Mines and beyond, while tons of grains, meats and other staples were hauled to Wanakena. Thousands of visitors came yearly to Wanakena, staying in the village or using it as a jumping-off point to the Cranberry Lake region. The Hotel Wanakena was kept busy with guests from New York City, who could take a Pullman sleeper car and spend the weekend in Wanakena. The Ranger School



Ellsworth Hotel at Benson Mines. Depot and RR cars at left; nice lineup of early autos.

began its mission of practical forestry training in 1912, continuing to build and expand for many years. After Rich Lumber moved to Manchester, Vermont, the former homes of Wanakena mill workers were sold, as well as camp lots the company had laid out along the north and south shores of the river. While Rich's locomotives were gone after 1913, the railway to Benson Mines was still in place, and transportation continued via two gas-powered speeder cars. In 1917, the rails were sold for scrap, and a car road made out of the old grade. According to Herb Keith, this – and the construction of Route 3 in 1926 – was the death knell for the Hotel Wanakena and other area inns and resorts, as newly mobile vacationers had no reason to spend their summers in one location. Even Sam Spain, after his Ellsworth Hotel burned in 1925, moved to nearby Sunny Pond and built a much smaller hotel. Both Benson Mines and Wanakena existed in a quieter form after 1920; both would eventually see a revival of interest and activity, but on very different levels.



Gas speeder car used on the Cranberry Lake RR between Benson Mines and Wanakena. Previously a was a sightseeing bus.

The Mines would enjoy boom times between 1941 and 1978, only to be abandoned entirely, left in ruins. Wanakena would slowly become one of the most attractive destinations in the Adirondacks, for vacationers, campers and sportsmen who appreciate its proximity to state wilderness lands, lack of commercialization, and the charms of a friendly village not remote, but well “off the beaten path”.



Unusual panoramic of the Wanakena Hotel, by famous photographer Henry Beach.

WHA Accomplishments *Continued from page 1*

Continued on Page 13

- Presented a lecture on the history of Wanakena to the Adirondack Council at their 2013 "Forever Wild Day" meeting held at the Ranger School;
- Wanakena Presbyterian church reached their goal of \$39,000 for major repairs done in 2010;
- Added two new plaques relaying historical information on the Wanakena Water Company and sewage treatment processes;
- Replaced deteriorating pictures and materials at the picture stations on the Walking Tour;
- Held three meetings of the WHA Board of Trustees;
- Elected Marsha Smith as new President in June;
- Elected 11 Trustees to the Board for a 3 year term;
- WHA presence at many Wanakena events on the Wanakena Green (a.k.a. Z-Park);

Public Address System to be Purchased

The board of trustees met on July 27 to consider purchasing a PA system. Due to conflicting needs the Cranberry Lake Boat Club PA system is not always available for Wanakena use. After much discussion about whether it was a necessity, it was suggested that it would be useful, not only to the WHA, but also as a resource for the Wanakena community. In the past, a PA system has been used to commentate the July 4th parade participants, announce winners of the duck race and to promote this years First Annual Baked Bean contest. It was suggested that it could also be used for the Memorial Day ceremony and other memorials at the cemetery. It may also be useful when we have large groups visit our walking tour.

A cost comparison was done on different systems and the best system for the best price was good only until July 31. That system included a high quality wireless microphone, rechargeable battery, stand and speakers. After much discussion, a large majority voted to purchase the system.

This discussion made us think about the future role(s) that the WHA may play in our community. Do we want to be involved in only historical things or do we want to play an active part in the community? As the only association in Wanakena, many of us think we should try to do both. We would be happy to hear your thoughts and have your input. We would like to come up with a mission statement for our WHA and how best to serve our membership.

2012 Photo Contest

The photo contest sponsored by the WHA in 2012 was another major success. The response for this first-time event surpassed our most hopeful expectations with 223 photos entered into the contest! Fifty-three entries were in the youth category and one hundred seventy in the adult category. All money received from the entry fee was awarded to the winners with a small amount used to purchase the award ribbons.

The grand-prize was a two-night stay at the Pack Basket Adirondack Lodge in Wanakena for the one picture chosen as "Best In Show" by the public who visited the exhibit.

Three judges, who were experienced in different areas photography, received all of the images blinded and only knew if the photographer was adult or youth. Miraculously the judges agreed on several award categories on the first review of the entries. It took three more reviews before all categories for 1st, 2nd and 3rd prizes. Comments noted by a judge were posted with the pictures that were displayed at the Forest Festival.

As the 'Peoples Choice' votes were counted the outcome was unimaginable. With 223 entries there was a tie! The photo, "The Footbridge" by Ellen Giraud-Jenkins from Utica NY and the photo "The Old Grade Road" by Jack Williams from State College PA had the same number of votes. With so many amazing, creative, beautiful pictures to choose from the public decided that two were the best of the best!



Display of winning photos chosen



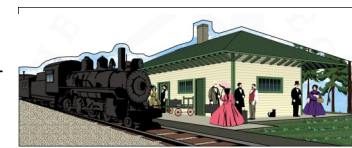
The two photos that tied for "Best in Show" by the public were submitted by (L) Ellen Giraud-Jenkins and (R) Jack Williams.

To view the winning photographs visit our Face Book page; [Wanakena Historical Association](#).

Wanakena Historical Association

WANAKENA TRAIN DEPOT 2013 KEEPSAKE AVAILABLE

Rhody Lea, Gail Simmons, Marsha Smith and Carol Cassidy diligently worked together and with the Cat's Meow Company to design a new Wanakena historical keepsake. The keepsake is a compilation of several postcards in our archives which depict the Wanakena Train Depot with locomotive and passengers standing around the platform. The actual size of the piece is 3" High x 8" Wide.



Wanakena Depot wooden keepsake to be sold in 2013 for \$20.00

On the reverse side is printed: "The depot was built circa 1902 by the Rich Lumber Company. It was used by passengers arriving from many places in the Northeast to visit the Wanakena Hotel or take trips into the wilderness. After the logging company moved out in 1912, The Wanakena Depot was unused until the early 1930's. It was then moved by skidding it about a mile down the frozen Oswegachie River and hauled up the opposite bank. It was converted to a residence where it remains today on South Shore Road."

The WHA is selling these for \$20 and will display them at scheduled events. Contact a Trustee (see list on address pg of newsletter) if you would like to purchase. You can order for delivery by US mail, but there will be an additional charge of \$4.00 for shipping and handling. Sorry but we can't accept credit at this time. Please send your request and check (\$24.00 for each) to:

WHA—Wanakena Depot Offer
PO Box 73
Wanakena, NY 13695

Correction "History of the Wanakena Cemetery" Article

In the last newsletter, the article on the Wanakena cemetery was inadvertently cut-off. The last paragraph should have read in its entirety: A bulletin showing the current trustees, and all lot and interment information is posted on the community bulletin board located on the Wanakena General Store porch. Anyone having any inquiries or interested in purchasing a lot(s) can contact any one of us and we will be happy to accommodate you.

In addition, the cemetery association now has a website, which can be accessed at <http://wanakenacemetery.webs.com>

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

The many successes and accomplishments of the WHA are due to the generous contribution of the time, talent and treasures of our members and friends. I hope that we have not left someone off this list. If we have, please let us know and we will recognize your contributions in a future newsletter. Here are some of the people to whom we want to express our heartfelt appreciation.



- The many people who worked for weeks to prepare, display and manage the historical displays at the Sept 2012 Forest Festival.
- Sue Smeby for her competent dedication as secretary of the WHA and her generosity in sharing digital copies of the pictures and post-cards she collects.
- Kim Schneider and Tom Bietz for their contribution of 2 nights at Pack Basket Adventures as 1st prize for the photo contest.
- Ray & Judy Keith who compiled the exhibit on the career and artwork of Ray's mother, Mimi Keith.
- Volunteers from the Western Adirondack Railroad Modelers who built and displayed the working train exhibit of the Railroad in Wanakena everyone loved it!!
- WHA members and friends who shared pictures, postcards and personal stories that were added to the WHA archives. A Very Special Thanks to:
 - Mari Fehr (grand-daughter of the Conroy's) who donated the wedding dress her mother wore when she was married at the Conroy Hotel. She also generously donated a banjo and silver serving items from the Conroy Hotel. She conscientiously mailed these items special delivery to ensure that they were received in time to display at the Forest Festival;
 - Paul & Peggy Peacock, for the pamphlet, "Health and Recreation in the North Woods" (still in the envelope), an advertising tool for the Wanakena Hotel (a.k.a. Inn of the North Woods).
 - Carol Castagnozzi, who shared stories and pictures . She moved to Wanakena at age 5 in 1949 when her father was a student at the Ranger School and later became the Director;
 - Doris MacDonnell who shared stories of growing up in Wanakena, including the girls who were rescued after falling through the frozen river and her fathers' business at Thumper Press in Wanakena.
 - Ray Keith and Sue Smeby for making it possible to create a digital copy of the presentation that Herb Keith gave at the 50th anniversary of the Ranger School, which includes many details of growing up in Wanakena, after the lumber company closed operations, as well as a very early recording of the logging train pulling into the mills.

"The Way To Wanakena" A Community Photo Documentary

For the month of September (2012), Kristen Rehder, a Wanakena seasonal resident and member of the WHA, exhibited her photo-documentary thesis project, entitled "The Way To Wanakena". Kristin completed this work for her graduate degree from Skidmore College's Master of Arts in Liberal Studies program. The exhibit comprised twenty-four amazing color portraits of year-round and seasonal Wanakenans.



Wanakenans and visitors study the photography of Kristen Rehder at the Ranger School. The "Way To Wanakena" captured the essence of what a special community that Wanakena continues to be.

Each of the photo subjects also provided a synopsis of the community of Wanakena in their own words. The Way to Wanakena explored the concept of community, inviting viewers to form their own definitions of community and to imagine ways to deepen a collective capacity to work together for Wanakena's future.

On September 1, the exhibition included a talk and reception with Kristen in the Ranger School cafeteria, which was attended by many, if not all Wanakena residents. If you would like to view and experience Kristin's conceptual presentation of the Wanakena community, visit the website <http://thewaytowanakena.com> Be sure to read the many positive comments on this wonderful piece of artwork.

The photo show went on to two more exhibitions, one at Skidmore College and one in Philadelphia PA. Thank-you Kristin for creating this wonderful perspective on Wanakena 2012, with a digital version maintained in the WHA archives.

Remembering Jake Adams

On August 6, 2012 Wanakena lost a good neighbor and friend when Jake Adams passed away.

Gerald B. "Jake" Adams, 85, a longtime resident of Wanakena, until recently was seen walking and even jogging around town . Jake was born on February 7, 1927 in Oswegatchie, to Bernard and Cloy (Paro) Adams. He grew up in Oswegatchie, graduated from Oswegatchie High School, and then entered the United States Marine Corp. Jake married Lucille Bassett on July 19, 1947. The beautiful gardens that Lucille and Jake maintained with loving care on the corner of First St and Front St were well-known to everyone in Wanakena and were often commented on by tourists taking the historical walking tour.

Jake worked for J & L Steel in Star Lake for 32 years as a millwright foreman. After retiring, he became a one-man company specializing in carpentry and construction. Many of the homes in Wanakena have Jake's handy-man touch. He was a fine-finish wood worker and built his own home Jake enjoyed fishing, canoeing, kayaking, down hill and cross country skiing, snow boarding and jogging. We would like to convey special thanks to the Adams family for designating the WHA as the charity for donations in Jake's name in lieu of flowers.

Each of us can continue on our own life's journey with fond memories of Jake. Condolences to Lucille, his wife of 65 years, their four children (Gary, Terry, David & Linda) and grandchildren.

WHA NEEDS YOUR PICTURES, POSTCARDS, FAMILY STORIES AND ARTIFACTS

Before anymore of Wanakena's history is lost, now is the time to go through those boxes in the attic or garage. Although the WHA has an exciting collection, we just don't know what we don't have! In other words, please share your old keepsakes, pictures or postcards. We would love to hear your personal stories about your grandparents, or yourself! Send us a letter about why Wanakena is special to you, and we might publish your story in the next newsletter!

The WHA is a federally recognized tax exempt organization and donations are fully tax-deductible; and has a provisional charter from the NYS Board of Regents.

If you have items PLEASE, PLEASE consider sharing. You can donate, or let us make photographic or digital copies and we can return the original to you (although we would love to have originals for our forever archives).

Contact **Sue Smeby, Bill Gleason, Marsha Smith or Allen Ditch.**

- Bob & Gail Simmons for donating the old newspapers (1921—1947) that they found stored in their home on Second Street. They also placed the newspapers in storage boxes to help preserve the aging paper.
- Bill Gleason for winter storage and Spring installation of the walking tour picture stations every year, as well as overseeing its maintenance and upgrades;
- Allen Ditch and Pam Lea-Maida for making the photo contest a success;
- Dave and Sue Ziemba for letting us use their property and gazebo on the Wanakena Green (a.k.a. Z-Park) whenever we asked;
- Lester Allen and Steve Moyer for initiating a matching donation challenge to finish meeting the goal of raising the \$39,000 for critical repairs to the Wanakena Church;
- Rick Kovac and Angie Oliver for offering proceeds from one Concert BBQ to the WHA;
- Sandy Conklin and Allen Ditch for manning the BBQ grill and selling sausage & Pepper sandwiches during the concert in Z-Park;
- Rhody Lea, Gail Simmons, Marsha Smith and Carol Cassidy who worked on the design and production of this years Cat's Meow Keepsake; and
- Kim Schneider, Tom Bietz, Skye Opel, Andrew Augustine and Allen Ditch for coordinating the Baked Beans Challenge at the July 4th parade and donating proceeds this year to the WHA.

Decendents of the Rich Family Visit Wanakena

Imagine our surprise to be meeting with the trustees of WHA on July 27 and have Timothy and Larisa Rich, relatives of Herbert Rich, arrive at the Wanakena church during a special meeting of the WHA and introduce themselves!

Timothy is the great nephew of Herbert Rich and came with his wife to spend a week in Wanakena camping in the lean-to on the Narrows. They shared their new-found love for our little town and admired how picturesque the village still is.

They were especially impressed by how much history has been saved and is on display for all to share. They were happy to spend time paddling and hiking in our wilderness setting.

Timothy and Laurisa joined the WHA and were very kind to leave us with a generous donation. . They hope to come back to visit in the fall and winter.

2012 'Forest Festival' Celebrates 100th Anniversary of the Ranger School

On September 28-29 2012, the Wanakena Ranger School, which is the longest-operating forestry school in the country (now called the SUNY-ESF Ranger School) celebrated its 100th birthday. The Ranger School began in 1912 when the Rich Lumber Company donated a large piece of land to New York State to establish a school at Wanakena to teach forest conservation. At that time, the forest had been largely clear-cut in lumbering operations and the first students set to work planting trees and learning how to restore the ecosystem. The first class graduated in 1913. A century later, today's students learn to manage the James F. Dubuar Memorial Forest and the broader ecosystem for harvesting timber, surveying, managing wildlife and providing valued space for recreation



Model Train exhibit of Wanakena showing mills & river, by the Western Adirondack Railroad Modelers group.

The WHA was invited to be part of the planning committee, and a group of volunteers worked very hard to compile many extensive exhibits for the event. Two of the large classrooms at the Ranger School were filled to capacity with storyboards of pictures, historical artifacts, artwork, a working model train exhibit of Wanakena & the mills, as well as the photo contest entries. In addition to exhibiting photos, antique postcards, and artifacts which are part of the WHA archives, several Wanakena residents loaned and/or donated new materials that were displayed to the public for the first time. A constant stream of visitors passed through the two rooms with volunteers manning the exhibits to

answer questions. There were many many positive comments about the content and quality of the displays. The exhibits included:

- a wedding dress, banjo and silver set that were rescued from the Conroy Hotel on the day that it was destroyed by a fire;
- items that were once in the Conroy Hotel and Wanakena Hotel
- logging and carpentry tools
- Bowling ball and pins from the bowling alley that used to be on Front St.
- Wanakena baseball team uniforms
- souvenirs and other items that were sold by the old Wanakena General Store;
- examples of crafted items made by Wanakena residents over the years;



Exhibit of items that could be purchased at the Wanakena General Store.

- Tickets, schedules and paraphernalia from the Cranberry Lake Railroad;
- personal items as well as many exquisite paintings by local artist, Mimi Keith; and The original manuscript and scrapbooks maintained by Herb Keith (author of Man of the Woods).

None of this would have been possible if it was not for WHA members who support the association with their annual membership dues and generous donations. **Thank-You, Thank-You, Thank-You!**



Display of information on Wanakena Mills before they closed and left in 1912.

Additions to be made to the Walking Tour

At the June meeting of the WHA it was agreed to move forward with several projects to improve the Otto J Hamele Historic Walking Tour. We have applied for a grant that, if approved will be used for these upgrades.

The first project is to add a new picture station depicting the footbridge in pictures and story. Included in the pictures to be displayed will be photos of ice jams that nearly took the bridge away from us; pictures of maintenance and repair over the years; pictures of the bridge in different seasons, and pictures of the bridge at different times in its history.

The second project is to move the "Wanakena Library" which is an interesting landmark in itself. The library was initially erected by David Hedger on Ranger School Rd. Several years ago it was moved to the hillside at the entrance to the car bridge. Since moving to the new location, there have been complaints that it is not accessible for some individuals who cannot climb the embankment, especially in the winter. The library is stocked by Wanakenans who use it on "the honor system". It contains fiction, non-fiction, as well as books on history. The library will be rebuilt on Front Street near the Wanakena Beach and will be an interesting addition to the historical walking tour.



Wanakena Library to be moved and added to the walking tour.