



WANAKENA HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

Volume 2, Issue 1

Winter/Spring
2011

Great Memories Come From Simple Moments

Membership Drive A Must For 2010: The WHA has not collected membership dues since 2002, although according to the organizations by-laws, dues should be collected annually. As we move forward with Walking Tour maintenance and new projects we are asking those who has supported the Association in the past to join or renew your membership by completing the form in this newsletter. All members in good standing are invited to attend the **May 21 members meeting; at 9:30 AM** at the Wanakena Church!

Thanks to All from The WHA Board of Trustees.

Message From The President, Allen Ditch

Since being entrusted with this role, my immediate vision is to re-invigorate past and future WHA members to ensure that the Walking



Tour continues to relate our history at the highest standard, and that we start planning to periodically share the many artifacts that are currently in storage. I hope to plan summer events where artifacts and pictures, that are not included on the walking tour, can be available for the public to appreciate. There is also the rumblings of a desire to have a 'museum'. But, before we can even think about expansion, we need to be assured that there will be consistent funding. Not only to build a museum, but first and foremost, to maintain it. So, please let us know we can count on you as we plan to upgrade the Walking Tour and listen to ideas about expanding!!

WHA Board of Trustees (2010)

| | |
|---------------------|----------------|
| Allen Ditch (Pres.) | Sandy Conklin |
| Ron Capone (Treas) | Rosalie Lea |
| Sue Smeby (Secty) | Janet Rhodes |
| Wayne Allen | Marcia Smith |
| Judy Benzel | John Steinburg |
| Bill Gleason | Bruce Smeby |
| Polly Hamele | Maria Twyman |
| Judy Hastings | |

Special Thanks To:

- The Cranberry Lake Boat Club for sharing their tent and sound system for the TAUNY event
- Paul Flynn and Bill Gleason for cleaning and staining the two kiosks
- Bill Gleason for putting in and taking out the picture stations
- Virginia Peters and Rhody Lea for coordinating the printing and sales of the Cat's Meow bridge keepsakes.

WHA Looking for Pictures, Postcards, Family Stories, and Artifacts

Before more of Wanakena's precious history is lost, now is the time to go through those boxes in the attic or dresser drawers. Although the WHA has an impressive collection, we just don't know what we don't know! In other words, let us know those special stories about your grandparents, or your own! Send us a letter about why Wanakena is special to you, or how you or one of your relatives helped shape the community into what it is today!



The Helen & The Wanakena in front of the Hotel Wanakena

The WHA is currently in the process of documenting everything (pictures, postcards, artifacts, diaries) we have in our inventory and categorizing each item. 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). The categories are: Artifacts (e.g., train tickets, hotel dinnerware), Bridges, Boats, Documents, Diaries/Manuscripts, Store, Hotels, Mills, Railroad, Hiking/Camping, Fishing/Hunting, Camps, and People/Events. Contact Sue Smeby, Bill Gleason or Allen Ditch.

Sponsor a Picture Station Upgrade

At the September meeting, it was unanimously agreed to move forward with upgrading the pictures at the stations on the Walking Tour. Extreme temperature swings, exposure to the elements and continuous flipping have taken a toll on the laminated pictures. Bill Gleason led the effort to have one station upgraded in 2010 and the Board was pleased with the results. A new process called Dibond was used, where the pictures are digitally printed on non-flammable aluminum, with a solid polyethylene core. It is an extremely flat surface, that will not bow or "oil can".

If you are interested in sponsoring one of the stations, please contact **Bill Gleason** or **Allen Ditch**. Since each station has a different number of pictures the cost will vary from station to station. A Plaque will be placed on each station identifying the donor and/or a memoriam.

Wanakena Church's Restoration Project

We are a unique and privileged small community to have TWO sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Many supporters and members of the WHA have already generously donated towards the



\$35,000 renovation costs for the Wanakena Presbyterian Church. The \$5,000 gift requiring matching donations has been attained with about \$14,000 collected so far. Many of the repairs have already been done, to ensure that a very competitive bid for the work was not lost. If you would like to help with the costs of this project please contact the Western Adirondack Presbyterian Church at 315-848-3466, or send to:

WAPC, PO Box 186
Star Lake NY 13690.

TAUNY: Wanakena Bridge "An Important Cultural Landmark"

On August 7, 2010 TAUNY (Traditional Arts in Upstate New York) recognized the suspension bridge at Wanakena as an important cultural landmark in the North Country and a Very Special Place by presenting the WHA with a slate plaque.

Varrick Chittenden of TAUNY, presented the plaque to Allen Ditch, President of the WHA, and the four women who worked for over five years to get the bridge listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1999. The four women who led this successful effort were: Carol Cassidy, Polly Hamele, Kathie Nevil, and Rene Reed.

Wanakena was a buzz of activity on that day. In addition to the TAUNY ceremony: the WHA put together an historical display of pictures and documents in the Wanakena church and had a membership drive; the Wanakena church held a very successful bake sale to raise money for the church restoration work; and it was Alumni weekend at the Ranger School.

Allen Ditch officiated at the ceremony, which included: Kathie Nevil giving a summary of the committee's dedication and work to get the bridge on the National Register; Virginia Peters read a poem written by Edwin Reid, 'Our Wanakena Bridge'; and Janet Rhodes ended the ceremony by singing, 'God Bless America'. It was another great day in our own Very Special Place, Wanakena.



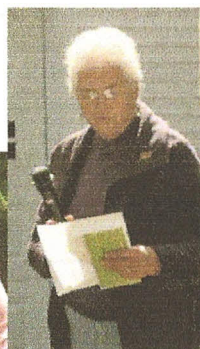
From left: Carol Cassidy, Polly Hamele, Allen Ditch, Rene Reed, Kathie Nevil, and Varrick Chittenden (TAUNY)



Carol Cassidy studying one of the historical displays presented by the WHA in the Wanakena church.



Janet Rhodes



Virginia Peters

Roger Rich Remembered,

By: Polly Hamele



Roger Rich at the bridge ceremony in 1999

In 2007, the Wanakena Historical Association (WHA) received numerous donations in memory of Roger Rich from his family and friends. These monies provided a significant boost to our assets. Roger, who passed away in October 2007, was the grandson of Herbert Rich, President of the Rich Lumber Company and founder of the village/Hamlet of Wanakena. Roger came to Wanakena in August of 1999 for the dedication and unveiling of the bronze plaque for the footbridge when it was placed on both the State and National books of historical structures.

Roger and his wife Jean returned to Wanakena several consecutive summers after the dedication, including participating at Wanakena's 100th Anniversary celebration and the dedication of the Walking Tour in 2002; because Wanakena was a special place to Roger.

We miss Roger and will always be thankful to him and his wife Jean, for supporting and helping the Wanakena Historical Association continue to share and promote the history and culture of this Very Special Place.

Otto J. Hamele Walking Tour As Popular As Ever: By Bill Gleason

Since the historical walking tour was established in 2002, many individuals and organizations have visited Wanakena and viewed the kiosks and flip-chart stations in our community. We have been visited and supported by organizations, such as The Cranberry Lake Boat Club, TAUNY (Traditional Arts of Upstate New York), ADK Club chapters, Adirondack Architectural Heritage group, and Daughters of the American Revolution. The Wanakena Historical Association tour has received financial support from outside the community as well as local residents, including students from the Clifton-Fine and ESF Ranger schools. Many paddlers, hikers and leaf peepers also enjoy and support the tour.

We estimate that 350 people a year visit the Wanakena Walking Tour, due to the number of tour guide/pamphlets that are taken from the main kiosk.

With the Continual support from current and past residents of Wanakena who have given both material properties and proud backing, along with their heart-felt efforts to raise funds, the Otto J Hamele Historical Walking Tour will be here for future generations to view.



Polly and son, Richard Hamele, cut the ribbon on the OttoJ Hamele Walking Tour in 2002

Mail To:
 Wanakena Historical
 Association
 PO Box 73
 Wanakena, NY 13695

| | | | |
|--|---------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Annual Membership: Individual \$10, Family \$25; Contributing \$50; Lifetime \$100 <i>Please Circle membership type</i> | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> New or <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal ----- MEMBERSHIP for: | | | |
| 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"/> New or <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal ----- 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> | |



Wanakena Historical Association
 PO Box 73
 Wanakena, NY 13695

Great Memories Come From Simple Moments

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 Mailing Address Line 2
 Mailing Address Line 3
 Mailing Address Line 4
 Mailing Address Line 5

Membership Information:
 [Type, Date of Expiration]

Time to Join or Renew Your Membership