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**From the Director's Desk**

**TOWN OF WEBB HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION**  
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Minnowbrook District School

## New Exhibit – Early School Days in The Town of Webb

The Board of Trustees and Director Peg Masters were delighted to see so many people at our Open House, Sunday, December 5th at the Goodsell Memorial Home. We introduced our new exhibit which pays tribute to the first fifty years in the Town of Webb School District. The one-room schoolhouse exhibit will remain open throughout the summer. We are especially encouraging Alumni, Employees and Teachers from the Town of Webb Schools to visit during the Year 2000

and sign their own special guest book and share a remembrance with us. A number of wonderful photos of the little schoolhouses in the District and students from early in the century are featured. The exhibit is dedicated to two former Trustees and graduates of the Town of Webb – Rita Dennison and Bill Weedmark. Thanks to Dorothy Gifford and the TOW School for their help with this project.



Board Members Peter Shannon, Lisa Hudon, and Kathy Brombacher at the Open House

## Behind the Scenes

Since I began in February 1999, a number of volunteers have assisted with the work of the Association. **Joyce Haag** and **Rita Dennison** patiently helped me during the first few transition weeks. Joyce was appointed a Board Member in April to replace retiring **Mary Evans**. **Paul Hornick** graciously accepted an appointment to **Marie Flo's** Board Position To Mary and Marie - a *SPECIAL THANK YOU* for your dedicated years of service. In the spring, I recruited talented **Nicki Mills** to help with the Calendar project and the new Carriage Barn Exhibit. Also helping on this work and with the walking tours was **Therese Hayes**, a local resident and teacher in Herkimer. **Paul Sovias**, an intern from Lynn U., worked every day the museum was open this summer and I can't imagine how I could have handled all the visitors without him. After the first walking tour July 3rd, **Joan Armstrong**, a newly retired teacher and year-round 3rd Lake resident, began volunteering every week and is the creative genius behind the Little Schoolhouse Exhibit.

Scrapbooking, and indexing work is faithfully carried out each week by **Colleen Parent** and **Therese Bicklehaupt** who also kept our plants from dying of thirst this past hot summer! **Peg Montgomery** helps me update our new website. **Stella Morse** and I met at the Open House and now is a regular volunteer. Also, a special thanks to employees **Madja Russell**, who makes the place shine every week and to **Glen Yates**, who keeps up with the building maintenance and snow removal. Finally, to the **Board Members** - for all their support and assistance.

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Open House visitors and Dorothy Gifford enjoy school photos from the Bob Lindsay photo album

### Odds & Ends

- Wish list – map storage cabinet
- Used scanner for sale – call 369-3838

## Archival News

Several authors who are preparing new books on the region have asked for assistance. Mike Cunningham's students were in last spring researching "Women of the Adirondacks". Wonderful interviews with seniors were conducted & transcribed. Various families have been in researching the history of their camps. The Town of Webb School donated their microfilm reader, film and newspaper collection to us and it is now available in our new reference room. Additional copies of Adirondack Echos were donated by the Bob Liddle family. Several guided tours were given including a visit by an Adirondack Discovery group. A great deal of cataloging work needs to be done and volunteers and typists are always welcome!

A sampling of the donated artifacts this year include:

- ◆ The 1933 wedding dress of Lucille Marks Bisselle and family photos from the Bisselle family
- ◆ Minature leanto & portrait of Orley Tuttle from Edith Tuttle Morcy
- ◆ Gilded-framed portrait of Mathilda Rivett from Virginia Gross
- ◆ Early photos of the Given's pharmacy & Boylan Drugstore ledger book from Sandra Collard

**Dollars and Sense** Thank you to everyone who responded to our mailing in May and renewed your

dues. We also welcome many new members to our Association. Our fiscal year operates from April 1st to March 31st. Member support provides nearly a quarter of our operating revenue. Dues remains at \$5.00 for individuals, and \$10.00 for families. This year we added two new support levels: \$100 for patrons and \$200 for business sponsors. With your continued support, we are able to keep our museum open FREE to the public.

We also receive revenue from the Goodsell Trust and investments of money from Life-Time Members as well as \$9500 from the Town of Webb. A \$500 donation from the Adirondack Charity Golf Classic, sponsored by the Adirondack Bank, enabled us to open our Carriage Barn with an Exhibit on the *Hotels and Guest Houses of the Fulton Chain*. One of my first projects as Director was to design and develop a Millennium 2000 Calendar as a fund-raiser. Many were sold with the help of local merchants to which we extend our sincere appreciation They included: The Old Forge Hardware Store, Van Auken's Inne, The Woodmaker, The Homecoming, Twin Oakes, The Adirondack Scenic Railroad, The Big Moose Inn, The Norridgewock, Adirondack E-Z Mart in Inlet, Kowalik's Hotel in Otter Lake, Thibado's and The Village Square in Eagle Bay.

- ◆ Two extraordinary fungi with artistic drawings of Earl Covey's Twitchell Lake Inn - dated 1907, donated by Elizabeth Barlow
- ◆ The 1897 Law Book used by Emmett Marks, Town of Webb's first Justice of the Peace, donated by Joan Marks Fisher
- ◆ Four antique yellow birch porch chairs from the Birches on 4th Lake from the Severinghaus family
- ◆ "Look" magazine article found in Maine featuring Bob Goodsell in 1942, donated by Alan Woodruff
- ◆ Fishing creel that belonged to Lyon deCamp from Mr. & Mrs. David deCamp
- ◆ Dr. Longstaff's dental chair from Alberta Aldrich
- ◆ Many more wonderful manuscripts, photos, postcards and other artifacts. Thank you to all our donors who continue to remember us and future generations with such beautiful historic items.

Quote of the Day!  
The only news that is really new, is the history that we don't know."  
Ken Burns



**Traces of the Past – Pioneer Families**



The **Rivest** (Rivet, Rivette, Rivett) family story provides a wonderful look at the history of white settlement in the Old Forge region. It begins with a young French Canadian widower, Joseph, born in 1812 in St. Sulpice Canada. Joseph descended from four generations of merchants who worked as fur traders in an area that stretched from Montreal to Illinois. These colorful men were typically small of build; thin, swarthy voyageurs who traveled by canoe for months at a time, surviving the perils of nature in uncharted terrain. Not much is known about Joseph's first wife, Appoline Moreau-Desorcy but according to church records, they had two children. In 1850 he married **Mathilde Dubeau** and the following year, the first of their seven children was born. In 1865, Joseph traveled to Syracuse, New York to collect money he was owed for horses he had sold to the Union Army during the Civil War. Joseph, however, was unable to collect for the horses and suffered a severe financial hardship. Working at odd jobs, he eventually sent for his pregnant wife and children.

The family soon moved to Lyons Falls and then to the tannery settlement of Moose River in the town of Lyonsdale. St. Anthony's Church tower dominated the landscape. Most of the men found work at the local mill or the tannery or drove buckboards of supplies and a few tourist from Boonville to "**The Forge**" along the ol' Brown's Tract road. A school was built in Moose River in 1871 and Mathilde made sure the children attended. Pioneer Joseph was employed at the tannery. By age 15, his son Peter left school and went to work along side his father. Soon he followed his older brothers Alfred (Fred) and Jack into the woods to The Forge where they found work guiding and building camps. Sister Bridget married Phil Christy and built their house on Main St., which remains today. Sister Emma married James Hill and opened up a hotel on Fourth Lake. Patriarch Joseph died around 1892, having fallen upon hard times along with the dwindling number of settlers in Moose River. Five generations have descended from Joseph, many still living in the Old Forge area today. Mathilde's portrait is among the recent donations to the Historical Association. Read more about pioneer settlers on our website in the genealogy section. ([www.masterpieces.com/history/](http://www.masterpieces.com/history/))

**Coming Events**

- Annual Meeting – Monday, May 8th, 7 pm
- July-August – Beach Postcard Exhibit, Goodsell House Carriage Barn
- July 1st & every Saturday in July & August – **Historic Walking Tour of Main Street, Old Forge, 10 am.**
- August 5th – POSTCARD SHOW

**Postcard Photographer – Henry Beach (1863-1943)**

Since the turn of the century, visitors to the Northwoods have sent postcards back home to their friends and relatives. Robert Bogdan, author of a new book entitled "**Exposing the Wilderness**", takes us behind the camera into the lives of six photographers who specialized in postcards from the Adirondacks and surrounding region. Of local interest is his chapter on Henry Beach who photographed many Town of Webb businesses and events from early 1900's to the 1920's. Thanks to Mary Moore of Syracuse University Press, we now have a copy of the book at the Historical Association for visitors to enjoy.

**Brandreth as photographed by Henry Beach in 1913. Logger C. J. Strife's house is on the far left.**



Many of Beach's area postcards will be on exhibit in the Carriage Barn this summer. Plans are underway for the Historical Association to sponsor our first annual POSTCARD SHOW, Saturday, August 5th. Author Robert Bogdan will be here to meet local collectors and sign copies of his book. Be sure to put the Postcard Show on your calendar and we'll keep you updated on the details.

