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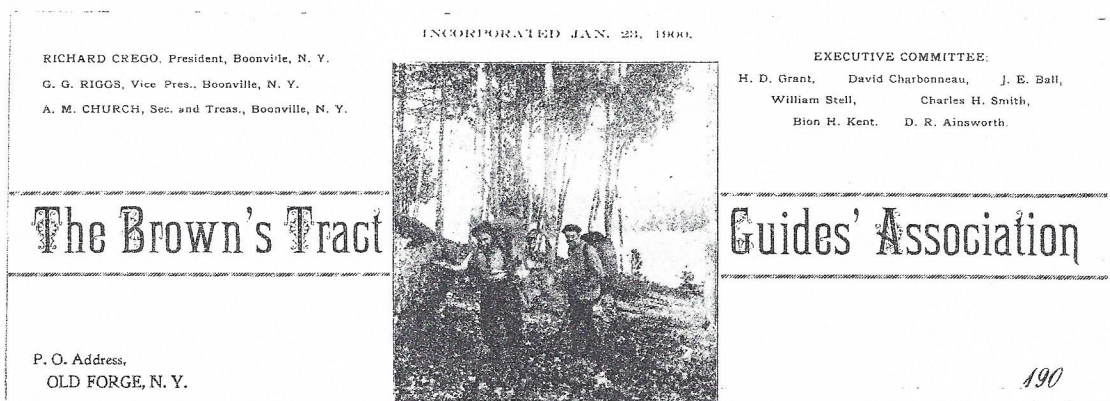
## Brown's Tract Guides' Association 1898-1920 "A Story of Love for the Woods and Water"

Our next feature exhibit will be in place at the Goodsell Museum right after Thanksgiving in time for Christmas on Main Street in Old Forge. The official opening will be held on December 6 at our Holiday Open House. Volunteers are collecting artifacts, ephemera, photos and history of the Brown's Tract Guides' Association from the Town of Webb and neighboring communities. Walls will be painted, displays arranged, and glass cases filled with artifacts. Maps and photos will be hung and mounted animals added to the exhibit that will be in place through October of 2010.

The Brown's Tract Guides' Association was incorporated in 1900. Over the next 20+ years, the Association became famous for policing the area around the Fulton Chain of Lakes; for their attempts to reintroduce moose and elk; for assisting in restocking the lakes; and for the successful reintroduction of beaver to the Adirondacks.

The Association was responsible for legislation condemning buoy or anchor fishing; preventing deer under one year of age from being shot; establishing a deer hunting season between September 1 and November 1, and prohibiting hounds or dogs capable of running deer to water within the forest preserve; requiring the number and quality of game protectors in the forest preserve to be increased and that inefficient protectors be removed.

If you love hunting, fishing, wildlife and the history of this area, you will enjoy this exhibit.



## Holiday Open House—Sunday, December 6, 2009

Please join the Historical Association Trustees at our annual Holiday Open House on Sunday, December 6, 2009 at the Goodsell Museum.

We invite you to stop in any time between 1-3 PM for conversation, refreshments, and holiday music.

From the Director's Desk

TOWN OF WEBB HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION  
2993 STATE ROUTE 28 PO BOX 513  
OLD FORGE, NY 13420  
PHONE: 315-369-3838



## Business Members

We are pleased to acknowledge the following Business memberships in 2009. Please note that in this area of many family run businesses, many choose to be recognized as Household or other level of membership support to the Historical Association.

### BUSINESS GOLD

**Enchanted Forest/Water Safari**  
**Helmer's Fuel and Trucking**  
**Old Forge Hardware**  
**Otter Lake Veterinary Clinic**  
**Wilderness Interiors**

### BUSINESS SPONSOR

19th Green Motel  
 Adirondack Bank  
 AnDix Indexing Associates  
 American Infrared  
 Artworks  
 B.J. Queen Enterprises, LLC  
 Birds Adirondack Real Estate  
 Blue Spruce Motel  
 Bob Kennerknecht Painting  
 Camp Danmark, Inc.  
 Camp Gorham  
 Camp Mark Seven  
 Candy Cottage  
 Christy's Motel  
 Community Bank  
 Daikers' Inn  
 DiOrio's Supermarket  
 Dunn's Boat Service  
 Five Corners Café  
 Heroux Construction  
 Herron Realty, Inc.  
 Knotty Pine Restaurant  
 Moore & Hart, CPA  
 Moose River Trading Co.  
 Nathan's Adirondack Bakery  
 Northeastern Loggers Association, Inc.  
 Old Mill Restaurant  
 Peter Shannon Law Offices  
 Steak House  
 Strand Theatre  
 StumpUgly Stump Removal  
 Sunset Nursing & Rehabilitation Center  
 Thendara Golf Club, Inc.  
 Thor Information Services, Inc.  
 Timm Associates, Inc.  
 Touch of Ritz  
 Town of Webb Teachers Association  
 Villiere Law Office  
 Waldheim Inc.  
 Water's Edge Inn  
 Wilmarth & Associates  
 Wrap City 'N Glue, LLC

## Coming Events

**November 15, 2009** — *Holiday Bazaar* Visit our booth at the Arts Center/Old Forge, noon-4 PM

**December 6, 2009** — *Holiday Open House* Stop by the Goodsell Museum anytime between 1—3 PM. Refreshments, music, new exhibits

**May 28 and 29, 2010** — *Memorial Day Sale* Avoid the hassle of set up, pricing, and staffing your own sale. Donate your clean, usable, table-top items (no clothes please) to the Historical Association to be sold to benefit the Goodsell Museum Fuel Fund. Call for pick-up or drop-off times.

**July 10, 2010** — *Benefit Auction* to be held under the tent at the Goodsell Museum. Details to be announced.

**Historic Walking Tours, Seasons to Remember Gala, Victorian Party on the Porch, programs on genealogy and the Civil War along with several other events are in the planning stages and will be announced soon.**

### Historic Treasures Donated to the Goodsell Museum

Lou (Louise) Foley has been documenting the history of her family. Recently, Lou brought several ledgers, journals, invoices, and bills to the Historical Association to add to our collection of the history of the Town of Webb. The ledgers are from the Geo. Deis & Son, Co., found in the buildings now owned by the Foley family. The information dates as far back as 1893. One of the records show that on May 31, 1916, George Goodsell bought \$994.68 of shingles and spruce and pine lumber for the Gifford family at Little Moose. With this documentation, one can assume that George, a contractor and Adirondack guide during that time period, was working on that particular building.

Lou also brought in information about the Fulton Chain Electric Company. The paperwork documents that the company existed from at least 1909 and we know it closed in early 1922.

Another interesting collection was dropped off at the museum by Maryellen Denio on behalf of a Hoffman family member. John Gilbert Hoffman came to the area before 1900, worked on one of the early steamers for a time and was appointed Superintendent of the Brown's Tract Lumber Co. Included in the Hoffman donation are photos, postcards, documents and a engraved 7-piece serving set.

These are just a couple of the interesting collections donated in 2009. We welcome any information of businesses from the past and present to add to our files.



**Winner Announced**

The Town of Webb Historical Association offered a free drawing for a book titled Adirondack Homes by Ralph Kylloe. Visitors only needed to fill out a coupon during their visit to the Goodsell Museum. The drawing for winning entry was held Columbus Day weekend. We are pleased to announce that Ann Ward of Rochester, New York is the winner.

**ILVEOLDFORGE.COM**

Where To See What's Goin' On

**VOLUNTEERS**

The Historical Association wishes to thank our many volunteers who have helped at fundraisers, organized our research library, copied newspaper articles, painted, filed, and organized. The list can go on and on.

We would like to invite others to come help. If you like to talk to people, love the history of our area, like to work with your hands, like to type, do research or organize closets, we can use your help. If you have a few hours a week to spare, please consider helping out at the Museum. Some of our projects include: data entry, labeling, filing, computer input, taking photographs of local businesses, assessment of our video collection, identifying local people in old photos and recording local oral history.

Please call 315-369-3838 to volunteer your time at the Goodsell Museum.

**Goodsell Memorial Home Museum**

2993 Main Street—Old Forge

**OPEN:** Tuesday—Saturday

10 AM– 3 PM or by Appointment

315-369-3838

[www.webbhistory.org](http://www.webbhistory.org)

**OUR MISSION**

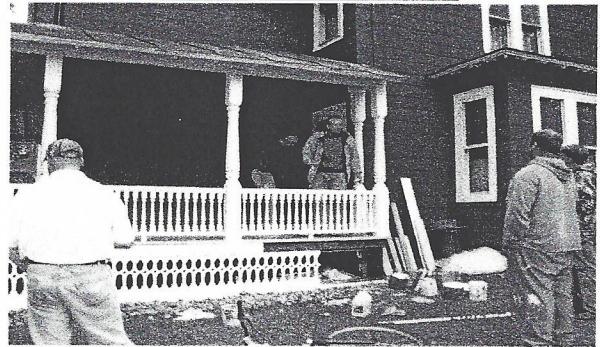
To preserve, protect, restore, and exhibit objects and properties of historic, natural and antiquarian interest for the education and enjoyment of the public.

**Estate Planning**

The Town of Webb Historical Association set up an investment fund with the Community Foundation of Herkimer and Oneida Counties Inc. in 2005 to help make certain that funds are available for the operation of the Goodsell Museum and Historical Association for future generations. Perhaps you, too, are making investment plans for your family's future. We would be grateful for any remembrance you may include for the Town of Webb Historical Association and will welcome any questions you or your attorney may have in this regard.

**Work Day—September 9, 2009**

**Thank you volunteers!**



**Recent Grants Received**

**Glenn and Carol Pearsall Adirondack Foundation**—Dedicated to improving the quality of life for year-round residents of the Adirondack Park. — \$700 for technology improvements. [www.pearsallfoundation.org](http://www.pearsallfoundation.org)

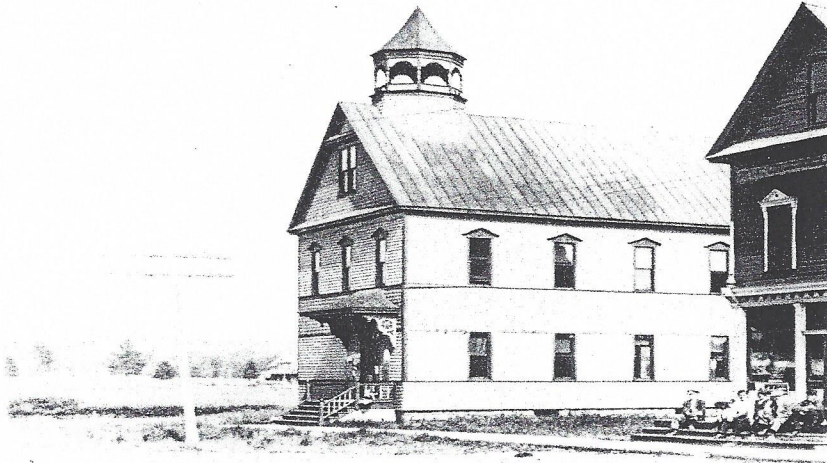
**Town of Webb Fund of the Community Foundation of Herkimer and Oneida Counties, Inc.**—\$2,500 for General Operation.

**A. Richard Cohen Fund of the Community Foundation of Herkimer and Oneida Counties, Inc.**—\$5,000 for General Operation





The history of our area can also be found in its buildings. Below is an example of adaptive reuse of an old building with historic significance and interesting architectural features.



### **Thendara Town Hall**

By Stuart deCamp

Town Hall: Circa 1890s conceived, designed and built from local lumber. This local architectural gem remains today the same as it did more than 100 years ago (short of the bell tower removed after a lightning strike). This building, for the first half of the century, was the community center for all social events, dances, parties, theatre, games, Church services, Town Hall, polling place and even the jail in its earliest years.

Since 2002, careful repairs and necessary updates have been made to bring it back to its previous glory. Beautiful original tin ceilings on both floors and vestibules have been carefully cleaned and repainted boasting ceiling heights of 12' and 22'. The arched stage area has been repaired and stage draperies have been donated by the Town of Webb School. Original hardwood maple flooring and original wainscot walls are being refinished as is the double width grand staircase.

New electric, plumbing and heating systems were installed and the building has been insulated and all new thermo pane windows installed. Every attempt has been made to preserve anything original to the building and the updates made, done so to complement the building.

This September 2009, the Town of Webb Planning Board approved the use of the Thendara Town Hall for events and gatherings and the Town of Webb Schools donated their salvaged stage curtains so they could be used in the original stage area. Once again, demonstrating the community's involvement and interest in this local landmark.

You can view two local historical buildings, the Thendara Town Hall and the Moose River House Bed & Breakfast on "Fawn" Landing @ [www.mooseriverhousebb.com](http://www.mooseriverhousebb.com). Both are owned by H. Stuart de Camp, great-grandson of William S. and Julia L. de Camp, grantors and major landowners of Township 7. It is Mr. de Camp's intention to preserve the family's buildings and local importance as centerpieces of the history and heritage of Thendara (Fulton Chain ).



## PIONEER SETTLER NED BALL – A GUIDE “*SANS PEUR ET SANS REPROCHÉ*”

By Peg Masters, Town of Webb Historian

In 1904, “*Woods and Waters*” editor Harry V. Radford used the French phrase for “without fear and without reproach” to describe the State’s newly appointed game protector “Ned” Ball, an Adirondack guide who had worked in the Old Forge region for more than two decades. A few years later, Radford wrote, “Ned Ball is one of the best known members of the Brown’s Tract Guides’



*Association and is a game protector by natural inheritance, his father and grandfather having been keepers on the English estate of the Duke of Buccleuch. Ned has more experiences than any other person in handling and liberating live game in the Adirondacks for the State—moose, wapiti, and beaver. What he doesn’t know about the Adirondacks and their wild inhabitants is not generally learned in the course of a lifetime.”*

According to census records, John Edwin “Ned” Ball immigrated to the States in 1875. He was born in South Luffenham, England in February of 1855, the son of George and Elizabeth Adams Ball. He worked his way to the Northwoods, according to family members, because he had relatives in nearby Lewis County. Ned erected a log cabin along the Fulton Chain near Old Forge in 1880. His woodland skills were acknowledged early on by famed naturalist Clinton Hart Merriam in his book “*Mammals of the Adirondacks (1882-1884)*”. In the summer of 1883, Ned helped portage a Rushton canoe called the Sairy Gamp for George Washington Sears. George, who used the pen name Nessmuk, was a leading contributor to *Forest and Stream* magazine and was traveling the length of the Adirondack river system.

Two years before the construction of the Mohawk and Malone railroad, Ned built a new home in the winter of 1890 for his young bride along the channel leading to First Lake on property he had acquired from the deCamp family. Ned’s pretty, 22-year old wife was Flora Burke from Lowville, the daughter of Hiram and Ursula Burke. Hiram Burke was a lead guide for railroad builder Dr. Webb into Smith’s Lake in 1891 that later was renamed Lake Lila in honor of Webb’s wife. Flora’s brothers William, a fish culturist, and Frederick, a guide, also became pioneer settlers in Old Forge in the early 1890s. In their forest dwelling known as “The Homestead,” Flora and Ned raised their four daughters and four sons to adulthood.

Few game laws existed to protect the wildlife in the forest preserve in those early days. Entire species of birds and mammals in the Adirondacks were being eliminated by lawless guides with their city-bred sportsmen and bounty and pot-hunters who harvested game for profit. Four-fifths of the deer killed during 1885 in the Fulton Chain region were does and fawns. Alarmed by the new data collected by the State, Ned Ball met in January of 1886 with fellow guides John Brinkerhoff, Lon Wood, Ed Arnold, Will Sperry, Richard Crego, Josiah Helmer, James Higby, Josiah Wood, Artemus Church, Chris and George Goodsell, Jack Shepard, Garrie Riggs, and H. D. Grant to issue what was called the “*Boonville Memorial*.” The declaration was among the first ever in the nation to call for stricter enforcement of game laws, a shorter hunting season, and a moratorium on killing does and fawns for the next three to five years. This visionary band of woodsmen pioneered the settlement of the Fulton Chain region and later formed the nucleus of the Brown’s Tract Guides’ Association’s membership roster that formally organized in 1898.

Ned Ball was a lifelong advocate of the organization’s mission to protect Adirondack wildlife and habitat. Over the next two decades, he served on the Association’s executive board beginning in 1898 and as Vice-President or President for several years. Concerted pressure on State officials by his peers and influential Brown’s Tract Guides’ Associate members led to his appointment as the local game protector, a position he held for sixteen years. It required a man with extraordinary physical stamina and a fearless dedication to duty. Ned died at the Ball Homestead following a brief illness in April of 1927. His death was mourned throughout the region. Ned was “*everyone’s friend*,” noted a front page editorial on his passing, a veteran guide and one of the history makers in the pioneer settlement of Old Forge. Flora and Ned Ball’s historic Homestead property is still owned today by their grandchildren.



**Reminder—Open House**  
**Sunday, December 6, 2009 1-3 PM**

Visit our website [www.webbhistory.org](http://www.webbhistory.org) for more information  
previous newsletters, collector ornaments, upcoming events

**Memorials**

The Town of Webb Historical Association is grateful to the many members and non-members who  
choose to remember the lives of loved ones with memorials to our organization.

The names below reflect donations from April — October 31, 2009

In memory of Evie McAllister: Jennifer Evans-Fitzgibbon and Robert Fitzgibbon; in memory of Lois Barnum Luther: Sue and Rick Wilson; in memory of Harold H. Luther: Alan and Ann Barnum, Linda Cohen and Sarah Cohen, James and Judy Foley, Janet Parent, Brian and Martha Boyle; In memory of Pat and Stan Thompson: Sarah Cohen and Linda Cohen; in memory of Rosco Deis: Arthur and Annette Eyre; In memory of Courtney and Patricia Hemmer Dolan: Rolf and Patricia Brown and families; in memory of A. Richard and Judith Cohen: Richard and Barbara Hart; in memory of Pat Thompson and Adeline Seymour: Margaret Vandelinder; in memory of David D. Smart: John and Deb Munyan; in memory of Dixon Kunzelman and Barbara Osborn: Mark and Littlepage Hannah; in memory of the Rozen Family: Ceil Buckley and Betty Rannels; in memory of Carmella Gemelli: Okara Lakes Association; and in memory of Craig Sears and Matt Girouard: Betty Rannels.

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Old Forge, NY 13420  
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