

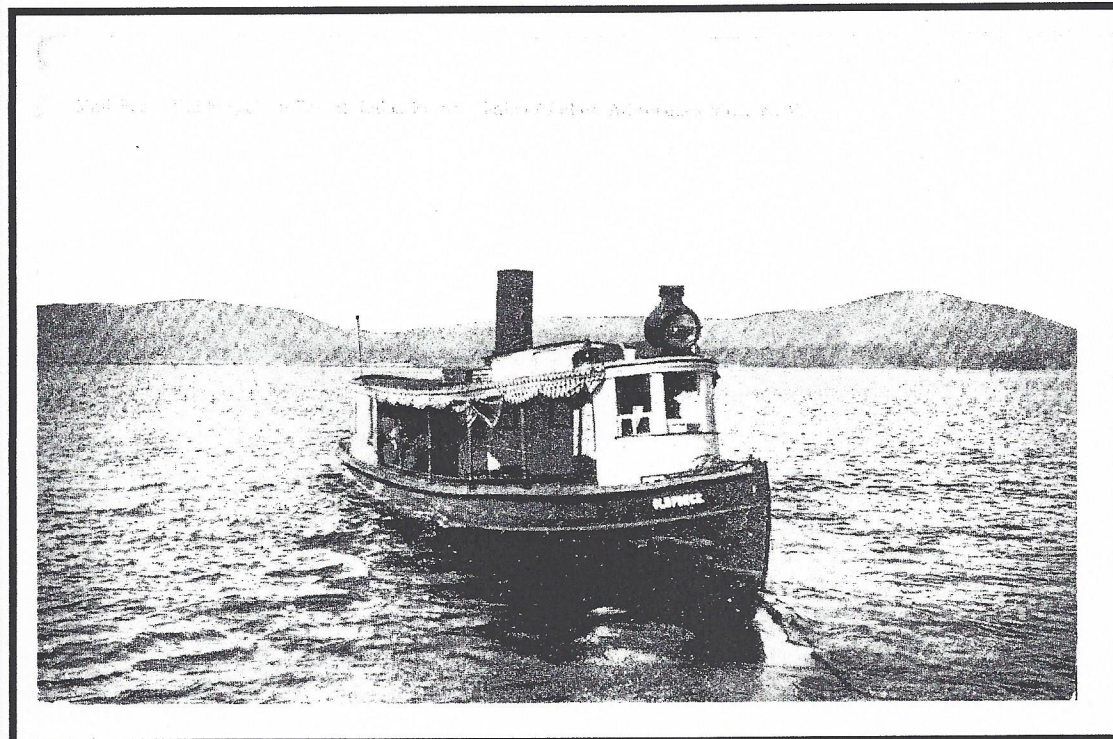


## Floating Letters

The Town of Webb and its over 480 square miles of land and water holds many interesting stories of the history of this area. The Museum Committee, chaired by Terry Rozycki, selected the topic of the Mail Boat for the next exhibit to be featured at the Goodsell Museum from November 26, 2010 through October 31, 2011.

This exhibit will present the history of the delivery of mail by boat in the Town of Webb on the Fulton Chain, Big Moose Lake and Twitchell Lake—from the early 1880's until today. For a few months each summer, on some lakes, mail delivery by boat continues to be an important service and a social event enjoyed by children, grandchildren, seasonal residents, visitors, and man's best friend—his dog.

Soon the front room of the museum will display many items such as photographs, certificates, ledgers and maps; and many examples of mail bags, donated or on loan, that will show the varied materials used to make the bags that held the mail for delivery by boat. The committee is grateful for all the information, pictures, artifacts, and stories shared for this exhibit that will also add more documented history to our files. Additional information and artifacts are welcome at any time.



Mail Boat "Old Forge" on Fourth Lake

### OFFICERS

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#### Co Vice Presidents

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Gail Murray

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#### ASSISTANT

Kate Lewis

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#### MANAGER

John DeVoldre

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 2010. 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. \*indicates Lifetime Member

### BUSINESS GOLD

Adirondack Homes  
Adirondack League Club  
Enchanted Forest/Water Safari  
Helmer's Fuel and Trucking  
Old Forge Hardware  
Otter Lake Veterinary Clinic  
Timm Associates  
Wilderness Interiors  
Wilmarth & Associates

### BUSINESS SPONSOR

19th Green Motel  
Adirondack Bank  
AnDix Indexing Associates  
Brynilsen's Viking Village  
Bob Kennerknecht Painting  
Camp Danmark, Inc.  
Candy Cottage  
Christy's Motel  
Community Bank  
Daikers' Inn  
DiOrio's Supermarket  
Five Corners Café  
Four Seasons Cottages  
Gallery 3040  
Hannah Contracting  
Heroux Construction  
Herron Realty, Inc.  
Knotty Pine Restaurant  
Moore & Hart, CPA  
\*Moose River Trading Co.  
Nathan's Adirondack Bakery  
Northeastern Loggers Association, Inc.  
Old Forge Lake Cruises  
Peter Shannon Law Offices  
Rainbow Zen  
Souvenir Village  
\*Strand Theatre  
StumpUgly Stump Removal  
Sunset Nursing & Rehabilitation Center  
The Old Mill Restaurant  
The Tow Bar  
The Waldheim Inc.  
Thendara Golf Club, Inc.  
Thor Information Services, Inc.  
Villiere Law Office  
Water's Edge Inn  
Winslow Services  
Wrap City 'N Glue, LLC

## Coming Events

**December 5, 2010** — *Holiday Open House* Stop by the Goodsell Museum anytime between 1—4 PM. Refreshments, music, new exhibit.

**May 17, 2011**—*Annual Meeting* Election of new or renewing Trustees, By-Law changes, refreshments, 7 PM

**May 27 and 28, 2011** — *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 9, 2011** — *Benefit Auction* to be held under the tent at the Goodsell Museum. Preview 1 PM, bidding at 2 PM.

**August 1, 2011**—*Victorian Party on the Porch* Fundraiser to be held at the Goodsell Museum, 2-4 PM admission \$15 per person

**Historic Walking Tours and programs about the Civil War and Adirondack Ice, along with other fundraisers and events are in the planning stages and will be announced soon.**

## Thendara Historic District

As a result of the efforts of H. Stuart deCamp, owner of Moose River House Bed and Breakfast and the Thendara Town Hall, a section of Thendara (formerly called Fulton Chain until late in 1919) has been listed on the New York State Register of Historic Places as an Historic District. Included in this new Historic District are Van Auken's Inne, Thendara Train Station and the Thendara Train Maintenance Building along with deCamp's two businesses.

This listing is simply a recognition of historic importance. It can be viewed as a source of community pride and identify an area for heritage development and tourism.

It does not protect any of the buildings from being torn down or remodeled. It does not limit the use of paint, roofing, siding or building materials.

This recognition does open opportunities for certain grants, possible tax breaks, etc. The State Review Board shall now forward the nomination to the Keeper of the National Register in Washington, D.C.

## Fulton Chain Mailboat – The S. S. Old Forge

by Peg Masters, Town of Webb Historian

In April of 1901, Dr. William Seward Webb came to Old Forge to oversee the purchase of the Crosby Transportation Company's franchise that included a 2-mile spur railroad through town, the waterfront docks and the steamers Fulton, Stowell, J. L. Connell, and the Zip. All of the boats were repainted, carpeted and refurnished throughout and given new names. The fastest boat in the fleet, the Zip, was now called the S. S. Old Forge. The elegant steamboat Clearwater, put into service in 1900, was also purchased by Webb and his associates.

Four months later in August, Dr. Webb was issued a certificate to operate a Railway Post Office (RPO) onboard a mailboat to service more than 100 camp owners and hotels along the Fulton Chain. Even though Captain Jonathan Meeker exchanged mail bags along the route as far back as 1883 when he put the first steamboat Hunter on the lakes, this new RPO status entitled an official post office employee to cancel the mail onboard and perform other postal duties.



The steamer Zip was brought to the Fulton Chain in 1894 for Captain John Sprague and William Sperry. It was built several years before as an Erie Canal excursion boat for Captain William A. Walker of Rome, NY. Walker, a watchmaker by profession and a skilled mechanic, was a veteran of the Civil War. His son, William N. Walker, was a close friend of Dr. John M. Barton of Rome, an early camp owner of an island in Fourth Lake. This connection may have led to the relocation of the Zip to the North Woods.

Captain Sprague issued dark blue suits and caps to Zip employees similar to those worn later on by S. S. Old Forge pilot Seth Burton Youmans and engineer Chauncey Covey in this wonderful photograph. Postal clerk Curtis "Curley" Ervin wears the derby. Sprague also

installed the enormous headlight, patented by Irvin A. Williams of Utica. Irvin amassed a fortune by manufacturing headlights for locomotives and had a summer home on Big Moose Lake.

In those days, the mail and express packages on the Zip were delivered twice a day and once on Sundays. From ice-out in the spring until late autumn when thick fog enveloped the lakes, the sound of the mailboat's horn was a welcoming notice of its pending arrival. Foot-soldiered postal employees were noted for delivering the mail despite rain, sleet or snow, but the crews onboard the mailboat had their own unique, unimaginable experiences. A serious accident occurred on a stormy night in September of 1898. The Zip had just left former President Benjamin Harrison's dock on Second Lake when it was struck midship by the steamer Stowell. The mailboat sank 40 feet to the bottom of the lake. Three crew members and a NYC passenger were fortunately rescued from the chilly water. The little steamer was disabled again in 1899 when it struck a log near deCamp Island in First Lake. On its second day of mailboat service in July of 1901, the refurbished Zip, now called the S. S. Old Forge, crashed at full force into Gull Rock on Fourth Lake. It survived a fire in 1910 when the headlamp exploded as the mailboat approached the dock of the Wood Hotel in a severe windstorm.

Despite the construction of roadways on both sides of the lakes and the decline of steamboat travel, Maurice Callahan and several partners purchased the Fulton Navigation Company's remaining fleet in 1923. The S. S. Old Forge again needed repairs the following summer after colliding with a stump in Third Lake. The most tragic mailboat accident occurred in July of 1926. Mail clerk Cecil Sheley died after falling through a rope barrier into Fourth Lake following an exchange of mail bags with camp owners at a dock near the Onondaga Hotel. The resilient little steamer S. S. Old Forge's days however were numbered in spite of her faithful service to her owners for over 30 years. When the mailboat contract was awarded to the Burnap family in 1929, the S. S. Old Forge was retired. Her hull was laden with heavy stones and it was sent to the deepest part of First Lake where she rests today. The Goodsell Museum's new exhibit chronicles the technological history of all of the mailboats and the powerful human stories of their dedicated crews that have provided this important service for residents and visitors to our region for more than a century.

### Civil War 1861-1865

This area of the Adirondacks was not very populated when the Civil War broke out in 1861. A few veterans did live in Old Forge after the war. No Civil War veterans are buried in Riverview Cemetery.

Bruce Bonfield will present a program "Civil War-Fight for Freedom" tentatively scheduled for July 27, 2011 at the Thendara Town Hall. The talk will be based upon the Civil War letters and diary of Lt. Gilbert Cooley, Company "D" 21st Iowa Volunteer Infantry.

Plans are being made to hold a couple additional programs on the subject of the Civil War that same week to recognize the 150th anniversary of the beginning of the war. Check the local newspapers or our website for more details in the future.

### Volunteer Work Day October 2, 2010

The Historical Association wishes to thank the following volunteers: Leon Davis, Jim Hofer, Jim Kiefer, Tony Lawrence, John Munyan, Deb Munyan, LaVern Phillips and Terry Rozycki who worked with TOWHA Trustees Laura Cooper, Tom Down, Sue Freese, Bob Lowenberg, Lance Maly, Skip Oswald, and Ron Walker on many projects Saturday, October 2nd.

Work was done to improve the look of Hemmer Cottage, create better housing of artifacts, and preparation of artifacts for new displays. The volunteers helped with jobs such as weeding flower beds, putting up siding, relocating guide boats and canoes, moving artifacts, and display cases, and made dump runs.

The Historical Association is very grateful for their community spirit, knowledge, muscles, ideas and tools.

### Goodsell 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.

### Wish List

The Town of Webb Historical Association is in need of the following items or volunteers. If you can help, please call 315-369-3838.

- Battery operated hand drill—new or used
- Needle-nose and regular pliers, wire cutters - new or used.
- Book "Santanoni: From Japanese Temple to Life at an Adirondack Great Camp", by Robert Engel, Howard Kirschenbaum & Paul Malo
- Book "Adirondack Churches: A History of Design and Building", by Sally E. Svenson
- Book "Adirondack Attic, Vol. 6, by Andy Flynn
- We need volunteers to help identify people and places in photographs taken during the past 2-20 years.

### Town of Webb Businesses and Organizations

Updating our files at the Town of Webb Historical Association is an on-going project. If you have photos, letterhead, bills, business cards, etc., or know anything about the following subjects or where they were located, please call us at 315-369-3838 or drop us an email at [director@webbhistory.org](mailto:director@webbhistory.org). *Thank you*

Donald R. Russell Agency

PJ's Pizza & Deli

Eta Rho sorority

Shwamle Agency

Mountain Stitchery & Gifts

Joe Watling Roofing

Taekwando Classes

Whitbeck's

Village Cleaners

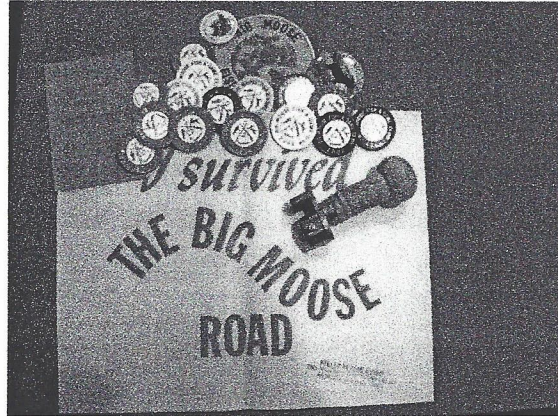
**I LOVE OLD FORGE.COM**

Where To See What's Great On

The following people made donations to TOWHA in honor of Lynda and Ash Kellogg

- Ed and Sue Girtler
- Bob and Lois Lowenberg
- Jeff and Robin Craig
- James and Judith Denio
- Doc and Judy Foley
- Randy and Diane Kull
- Robert and Ann Baggett
- Bernard and Brenda Thibado
- Paul and Sarah Morin
- Dave and Carol Clark
- Mark and Page Hannah
- Margaret Beckingham
- Fred and Judy Ehrensback
- Terry Ritz
- Sharon and Dave Kleps
- Beth and Mike Pashley
- Carol Hornick

Donations to the Historical Association's Collection



Over 75 people have given items to the Historical Association to preserve and protect for future generations to enjoy so far in 2010.

Pictured above, is part of a collection received from Sally Ann Smith, former owner of the Moose Mart in Big Moose Station. Among the many items included in her collection were several Big Moose Fish and Game Club buttons, a booklet—Constitution and By-Laws of the Big Moose Fire Company amended March 31, 1993 and a Big Moose, NY cancellation stamp dated 1925. Also included was a sample screen print on a piece of paper -“I survived the Big Moose Road”. T-shirts and sweatshirts with this message were sold back in 1988 when residents and visitors were frustrated with the bumpy condition of the road.

The Historical Association is very grateful to receive items such as those shown above and welcome additional information related to the Town of Webb history from any time period. If you have anything to share, please call 315-369-3838 or stop at the Goodsell Museum Tuesday-Saturday, 10 AM—3 PM.

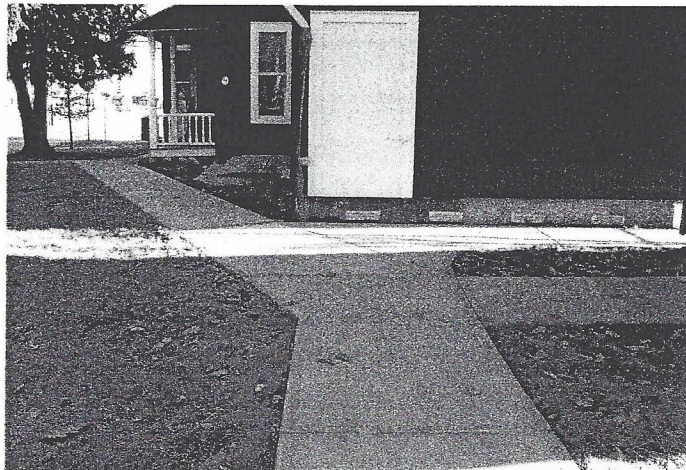
ADDITIONAL DONATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE FOLLOWING IN HONOR OF BIRTHDAYS:

- Marilyn Hughes in honor of Ceil Buckley's 97<sup>th</sup> Birthday
- Betty Rannels in honor of Alvin “Red” Ritz's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday
- Betty Rannels in honor of Ruth Brussel's 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday
- June and Charlie Kiefer in honor of Ida Cohen's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday

**Main Street Grant**

With the signing of an agreement between TOWHA and CAP-21 in September, work on selected projects were started knowing that 50% of the funding would be provided by a New York Main Street Grant.

On the right is a photo of the completed handicap walk at the Goodsell property. Additional work scheduled is replacement windows for the aluminum triple-track windows on the second floor and attic. Work already finished includes replacement porch skirting boards and a new sign in front of the Goodsell Museum.



**THANK YOU FOR YOUR MATCHING DONATIONS!**

**Bequests**—Consider remembering the Town of Webb Historical Association in your estate planning—it will be greatly appreciated. You may also remember a loved one or a friend by making a donation to Town of Webb Historical Association in their memory. Memorial gifts may be used as you so direct, such as our Endowment Fund, Operating Expenses, or Preservation of archives. **The following people sent memorial donations to the Historical Association since our last newsletter:**

Russ Brombacher in memory of Paul Hornick; Sue Kiesel in memory of David Levis; Edgar VanderVeer in memory of Marie VanderVeer; Charles J. Wilcox in memory of Charles E. Wilcox and son Roy D. Wilcox; Fred T. Wilcox III in memory of Claire P. Wilcox; Susanne Barrett in memory of Richard Barrett; Robert Palmer in memory of Bette W. Palmer; Don and Marty Lawson in memory of Geof Birtle; Carol Searing in memory of Robert T. and Jon F. Searing; Sandi and Ed Nathan in memory of Tina and Myron Wolfe, Norman Nathan; Joseph and Natalie Placious in memory of Ray and Julia Placious; Albert and Linda Bostwick, Jr. in memory of A. Richard Cohen; Geraldine Brodock in memory of William Brodock; William and Joan Waldorf in memory of their parents; Leona DeLong in memory of Ed DeLong; Mr. & Mrs. Clarence McDonough in memory of Jamie McDonough; John and Sally Ten Eyck in memory of David Smart; Eileen Chaffee in memory of Jack and John Chaffee, Colleen Chaffee Horton; Barbara Watson in memory of Dorothy Mazanek; John and Margaret Hopsicker in memory of Tina Schmalhofer; Albert and Izzie Worthen in memory of Bonnie Russell; Sue Kiesel in memory of Kathryn Van Slyke and Margaret Dowd; Debbie Graydon in memory of Austin Down; David and Paula Weal in memory of the Legends of Old Forge; Tim and Jody Gross in memory of George and Virginia Gross, Ken and Dot Rivette; Michael Farmer, Aggy and Sam Chase, Mike and Kelly Hunkins, Betty Rannels, Xi Gamma Iota/Beta Sigma Phi, Linda Caufield, K. Fredrick and Dorothy Muckinhaupt, Linda Cohen, and Sarah Cohen in memory of Frank Burnap; Okara Lakes Association in memory of Maria Balduzzi; Omer Hudon in memory of Peter Bishop; Sarah Cohen in memory of Hamilton Biggar; Betty Rannels in memory of Audrey Crafts; Suzanne and David Firsching in memory of Ada Mulvihill; Patrick and Carol McCann in memory of Betty Gonyea; and Philip and Marsha Hazen in memory of Carl Overstrom (match for Main St Grant). *Thank You*

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