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From: "Barbara Tourgee" <btourgee@cannell-perkins.com>
To: <sandlakehistory@aol.com>
Date: Wed, 3 Jan 2007 14:17:55 -0500
Subject: upcoming book

Hello,

I recently joined the historical society and noticed in the newsletter that you are soliciting for a sequel to the Images of America book. My family comes from West Sand Lake and I lived there for 20 years. Now I live in NH.

The only photos I have dealing with local business are ones of Alfred Middleton and his greenhouse (1930's ?) that was located on 150 south of the village of WSL and of my father and grandfather's sawmill (Howard and Eddie Lerch - 1940's) which was located on 150 where, the last I remember, the school playground now exists.

I have photos of the houses and fields in that area of WSL dating back between 50 and 100 years ago. I also have some class photos and graduation programs (1936 is the earliest), a photo of the WWII honor roll for District 2, a Sand Lake Advertiser from 1964, newspaper clippings with photos from 1947 when my father ran for office and won but was denied the position because he was not a property owner, photos of the Town of Sand Lake trucks loading sand or gravel from around the 40's, and miscellaneous photos of farm life, etc from early in the 20th century.

If any of this sounds like something you might be interested in please let me know and we will decide how to proceed from there.

Sincerely

Barbara Tourgee

Comments on Photos

It's too bad there is no date on the news clipping about the old timer, but look at the vehicles for sale on the back side. My great grandfather John Middleton was one of the "oldsters" who made a daily trek to the post office at 4:30. He was probably there when this occurred.

1. This is one of the few that was labeled - ball game in Averill Park. I don't know where exactly or when but judging from the cars probably in the 20's.

2. Alfred Middleton's greenhouse. Alfred was a florist from probably in the 20's or 30's until the 50's. I remember going there as a child in the early 50's. It was located on the right side of Rt 150 heading south from the village of WSL not too far past Sheer Rd. Sherwin's Laundry was either next door or close by. Alfred emigrated from England in 1911 at the age of 19 and died in 1959.

2a. Alfred watering plants

2b. Alfred in greenhouse

2c. Alfred at his potting bench

2d. Mary Middleton (1905-1940) in the greenhouse. She was the wife of Lester Middleton, builder, and mother of Robert Middleton, contractor (Middleton Mall, WSL.)

3. I think this is a picture of the district 3 (Best School District) school from 1910 or 1911.

4. This is Josephine Lerch taken ca. 1910 at the district 3 school. (Note top left corner - Taft was president 1909-1913.)

5 a,b,c. Burden Lake, probably in the 1920's.

6. General farm pictures: John and Maggie Middleton farmed in Sliters Corners from around the turn of the century until 1915 and then moved to another farm in West Sand Lake just south of the Elmwood Cemetery on RT 150. In the 60's the farm house was owned by Carl and Emma Wicks and the land probably had been subdivided.

6a. Emmor Middleton, WSL or vicinity about 1915

6b. Emmor Middleton at Middleton farm WSL, Elmwood cemetery in background, ca. 1920's

6c. Josephine and Howard Lerch ca. 1925-28, can't identify location

6d. What a fashion statement! Maggie, John and Josephine Middleton (left to right) harvesting potatoes, Sliters Corners, ca. 1912-14.

6e. Emmor and Josephine Middleton with stone boat, Sliters Corners ca. 1910

6f. Why did they label photos of the cows but not the people? "Our cows in pasture" Sliters Corners, early 1900's.

6g. John Middleton hauling wood, Sliters Corners or WSL, early 1900's

6h. hay ride - not sure who this is - Sliters or WSL, early 1900's

6i. John Middleton cutting hay, Sliters or WSL, early 1900's

6j. This is one of my favorites although I cannot identify the people or place, probably Sliters or WSL, 1920's?

6k. Haying -can't identify people, Sliters or WSL, early 1900's

7. John Middleton farm, West Sand Lake (1915- ca. 1930's):

7a. View from Rt 150 just north of Elmwood Cemetery. Youngans's Race Track is behind the hedgerow (later to be the site of the elementary school). The hayfield is part of the Middleton farm.

7b. View from the same spot looking along the north edge of the cemetery. The land was cleared all the way to Best Road in the far distance. The ground was slightly swampy back there and my grandmother told me sometimes the cows would get stuck in the mud and have to be extricated.

7c. Elmwood Cemetery from Rt 150 ca. 1920's.

7d,e. Middleton farm house, ca. 1920

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7f. Middleton farm buildings looking toward RT 150. The cemetery and entrance to Shaver Rd is visible as well as the hill across 150 that was later excavated for gravel.

7g. John Middleton in a potato field. I don't know if this was taken at Sliters Corners or WSL, early 1900's

8. Trucks:

8a. You might be able to distinguish the writing on the side of the truck that says Town of Sand Lake. I believe the man standing in the back of the truck bed with the fork is Howard Lerch. 1930's

8b,c,d. Three photos from the same roll of film. The man on the right in the first could be Victor Jeannin (1882-1948), a supervisor of large construction projects, locally and abroad. He lived in West Sand Lake until the late 20's, then moved to Nassau Lake. He was my grandmother's nephew. I do not know the location the photo was taken.

8e,f. Two more similar photos, equally unidentified.

9. West Sand Lake village 1940's and 50's:

9a. John Middleton residence on Rt 150 on the north side of the Methodist parsonage, looking north toward the four corners. He (or they - his wife died in 1933) moved there when he retired from farming. I remember going there with my grandmother to help with his housework. John later moved in with his daughter Phenie after 1954 and the house was sold.

9b. Looking up Rt 150, north toward the four corners, 1947. Residences right to left: Bethman, DeGraaf, Sewell.

9c. View from Eddie and Phenie Lerch's yard across 150 to Bethman's. 1940's

9d. WSL elementary school from Eddie and Phenie Lerch's back yard, 1940's before the addition to the back of the school which was completed by the time I went there in 1952.

9e. Present home of Ray and Jane Barnes, Rt 150 looking toward the WSL elementary school. I can't tell if the school is there behind the house or if this photo was taken before the school was built. The land would originally have been part of the Middleton farm; Elmwood cemetery not far to the left. Rt 43 is visible in the background. I don't know who built the house but it was probably a relative. Early 1900's.

9f. Phenie and Barbara Lerch (in the wagon) on the sidewalk in front of DeGraaf's residence 1948. The houses across the street belonged to Ewigs (right) and Sylvester and Clara (Middleton) Hermance (left). The schoolyard is behind their properties.

9g. View across Rt 150 of Kenneth VanValkenberg's (right) and Eddie and Phenie Lerch's (left) residences, 1949. Except for the Barnes residence these were the last houses on the southern edge of the village.

9h. Phenie Lerch residence, 1958. The porch had been removed and the house updated with asbestos siding. It was no longer the last house in the village. Catherine Lerch built a home next door in 1955.

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Comments on Photos

10. Howard Lerch in baseball uniform standing in his parents' yard looking south along Rt 150 in West Sand Lake, ca. 1930. The present Barnes residence and Elmwood Cemetery are visible in the background. In the field behind him would later be the sawmill he operated with his father Eddie and much later the home of his widow Catherine.
11. Howard Lerch with deer, 1939 in the schoolyard behind the houses on the west side of 150 south.
12. Frank and Dorothy Wolfe and their daughter Judy in front of the entrance to WSL Elementary School, mid 1940's.
13. Lerch sawmill on the west side of Rt 150 heading south out of the village on the present elementary school playground. Early 1940's.
 - 13 a, b, c, d. Howard and Eddie Lerch collecting logs. I don't recognize the location.
 - 13 e, f. Howard (left) and Eddie (right) Lerch working at their sawmill. Rt 150 and the present Ray and Jane Barnes residence are visible.
14. Howard Lerch in front of his parents' home on Rt 150 looking north toward the four corners. The house on the far right is Bethman's. 1943
15. Howard Lerch in front of his parents' house on Rt 150 looking north toward the four corners. The house on the far right is DeGraaf's (funeral director). 1943
16. Howard Lerch (right) and Frank Wolfe (left) in the far reaches of the WSL elementary school yard. The north end of the school (main entrance) and the houses of the village are visible in the background. 1943.
- 17a, b. WWII honor roll, second election district, Town of Sand Lake.
18. Lerch sawmill, ca. 1953. After Howard Lerch returned from the war he married and bought a house and 49 acres on Springer Road in West Sand Lake. He moved the sawmill from its location next to his parent's house on 150 to his property. Howard made a living delivering coal, oil and bottled gas to homes in the area. As his business grew he hired his cousin Raymond Barnes. Ray took over the business when Howard died from a sudden illness in 1954. Ray ran the business from his home on Rt 150 next to the former location of the sawmill. These pictures show Howard and Ray at the sawmill on Springer Road. I remember big stacks of lumber drying in the field next to our house.
 - 18a. Howard (right) and Ray (left).
 - 18b. Howard (left) and Ray (right)
 - 18c. Ray (left) and Howard (right)
19. Class of 1936. Unfortunately the only one I can identify is my father Howard Lerch, 3rd from the left, second row from the bottom. Some of the names in the graduation program are familiar but I cannot match them to faces. Is there someone else in town who might be able to remember?

Comments on Photos

I thought West Sand Lake was a wonderful place to grow up. We lived right next to the school yard with its swings, slides, "teeter-totters", sand box and "monkey bars" and the pond in back for catching pollywogs in summer and skating in winter. I walked to elementary school and came home for lunch each day. There were plenty of children to play with and I had acres and acres of woods and fields to wander. Almost half the people on my street were relatives. I visited Elmwood Cemetery often with my grandmother for many of our people were buried there. I joined the Browine Scouts and the 4-H and attended the Methodist church just down the street, becoming more active as I grew older, until I married in 1967 and moved to New Jersey.

20. Mrs. Slocum's first grade class, West Sand Lake Elementary School, spring 1954. This photo was taken on the playground facing the Hermance and Ewig back yards. I only wish I had labeled it when I could still remember all the faces. Some of them are familiar but no name comes to mind. Others do not even look familiar!

Front row seated left to right: Robert Ketchum (maybe) ?, ?, ?, Frank Hager, ?, Robert Quillinan, Paul VanValkenberg, ?, Robert Nible, Kim Carpenter.

Front row standing left to right: Jackie Watts (maybe), Susan Colter (sp?), Pamela Murdock, Maria Heggen, ?, Dorothy Swan, Barbara Lerch, Linda Droste, Mary Jane Niemiec, Sharon Shoemaker

Back row standing: Betty Pulenskey (maybe), Charlene Blackburn, Betsy Liebeck (sp?), Sharon Miller, Mrs. Slocum, ?, Ruth Wilke (maybe), ?, probably Nancy Spence, ?.

21. West Sand Lake Elementary School playground 1958, VanValkenburg's and Lerch's backyards in back. Left to right: Judy Lerch, Debbie Ramella, Barbara Lerch, Jean Ansonia, Karen Ramella, and Beth Ansonia in front.

22. Catherine Lerch's residence (daughters Barbara and Judy). After Howard died in 1954 Catherine sold the property on Springer Road and built a house between Phenie Lerch's and Ray and Jane Barnes' property on Rt 150 at the southern edge of the village. She enlarged and made improvements to it over the years until selling it and moving to Locke Rd in 1965. Catherine, known as "Kay", was school tax collector for a few years in the late 50's, early 60's and when taxes were due had a small white sign with black letters that she hung out front by the driveway that said "School Tax Collector". People would stop by with their money. She also collected at specific times in various locations around the school district, accompanied by a state trooper after the tax collector in Troy had been robbed. I remember helping to seal all the envelopes of the tax bills she put in the mail and putting up flyers announcing the times and locations she would be available. She kept a safe in the closet and the troopers would drive her to the bank. Catherine, at the age of 91, is now living near me in Keene, NH.

22a. This picture is labeled Barbara and Judy but actually I took the picture and the children are Judy and Jean Ansonia, our cousin who lived next door in half of Phenie Lerch's house. This is what the house looked like when it was first built. There is a garage attached with a breezeway not visible in the photo.

22b. house in 1961

22c. house in 1962 from Phenie Lerch's yard. Barnes' residence and Rt 150 visible in background.

23. Mrs. Robinson's Brownie Scout Troop of West Sand Lake. Meetings were held weekly in Mrs. Robinson's home on Rt 43 a few houses past the fire station. This picture was taken in the Methodist church hall in November 1955 following some sort of ceremony. Unfortunately there are a few faces I cannot name, but I have sent the picture to one of the people in the photo with hopes she can identify the ones I can't. I will let you know if I get more information.

Left to right: ?, Patricia Bashford, Gertrude Cook, Eunice Rescott, ?, Susan Service (probably), Anna Hoffay, Sharon Miller, Barbara Lerch, Jane Robinson, Nancy Spence, Dorothy Halligan, Susan Colter (sp?) Jill Morelock, Joyce Hitchcock, Sharon Shoemaker, Linda Droste, Pamela Murdock, Marion Bort (probably), Cheryl Turner, ?.

Class of 1936

Top Row

Evelyn Culver
John Shafer
Edna di Domenica
Charles Kowsky
Iona Mosher *Grandrum*

Row two

Mary Butler
Oakley Bink
Helene Shafer
Fred Orr
Helen Rogers
Barney Motilage
Margaret McNary
Dorothy Brown

Row Three

Laddie Milkiewicz
Shirley Jasper
Howard Lerch
Albertine Brown
George Karl
Frances Stan-
Mildred Gardner
Grace Foster
Elizabeth Griffin

Row Four

Gertrude Vines
Frances Krause
Doris Gardner
Isabel Sowalski
Alma Robertson
Mary Helen Bethman
Stanley Motilage
Helen Milkiewicz
John Capelle

ca. 1950's & 60's

N ↑

4 corners West Sand Lake

Rt 43

Rt 150

Miller's
stone

John
Middleton
mid 50's

parsonage

Methodist
church

Ewing

Clara &
Sylvester
Herman

VanValkenburg

Eddie &
Phenie
Hersch

Catherine
Hersch

Sawmill

Raymond &
Jane
Barnes

Elmwood
cemetery

Shaver Rd

John
Middleton
Farm
later Carl Wickes

Sewell

DeGraaf

Bethman

woods

gravel
pit

WSL
elem.
School

I hope some of this will be useful. I tried to organize the material for you from oldest to newest - essentially three or four generations. I put stickers with numbers on the backs of the photos and written comments for each on a separate sheet. If there are any questions feel free to call me at 603-363-8280. I am usually home.

It might be helpful to give you a basic family tree (including only the people in the photos) so you can see how these people are related.

John (1871-1964) and **Maggie** (1871-1933) **Middleton**: John came from England in 1890 and spent his life farming. Maggie Mixer's roots go back several generations in the Town of Sand Lake. Their children are:

Clara (1893-1986) married **Elmer Barnes**, a farmer. Their son was **Raymond Barnes**, oil dealer, retired and living in WSL. She later married **Sylvester Hermance**, custodian at WSL school.

Lester (1895-1968) married **Mary McKenna** (1905-1940). He was a builder. Their son is **Robert Middleton** (1927), also a builder in the West Sand Lake vicinity.

Josephine ("Phenie") (1897-1967) married **Edward Lerch** (1893-1954). He did some farming and various other jobs. Their only son was **Howard Lerch** (1918-1954), fuel dealer in West Sand Lake.

Howard married **Catherine Donahue** (1915). Their daughters were **Judy** (1951) and me, **Barbara** (1947).

Emmor (1902-1967)

Alfred Middleton (1892-1959) was John Middletons's nephew. He married **Ethel Sheer**.

On the next page is a quick sketch of where everyone on my street lived in the 50's and 60's to help you visualize where the pictures were taken.

Barbara (Lerch) Tourgee

Barbara

*Please don't bother reimbursing me
for postage.*