

Sand Lake's religious history began with a log cabin Lutheran Church erected in 1776. It was rebuilt in West Sand Lake in 1816 to accommodate the growing congregation. The First Presbyterian Church of Sand Lake was founded in 1805. The Sand Lake Baptist Church was organized in 1831. The Methodist Episcopal Church was organized sometime before 1834. St. Henry's Roman Catholic Church was organized in 1868.

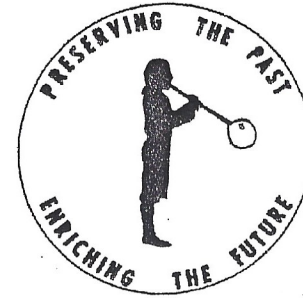
The Troy & New England Railway operated an electric trolley line from Averill Park to Troy from 1885 until 1925.

The Crooked Lake House was a stagecoach stop in 1870 on what was the Albany-Sand Lake Plank Road. Famous guests included Gov. Theodore Roosevelt and gangster "Legs" Diamond. In 1938 the Art Deco ballroom was built to accommodate the Big Band circuit. Glenn Miller, Benny Goodman and the Dorsey Brothers appeared on stage regularly, and NBC broadcast the performances live every Saturday night from 1941 to 1943.

The Glass Lake Hotel was a public house about 1820. It served as a Stagecoach stop for the Troy, Sand Lake and Stephentown stage line. In 1845 the present building was erected as Mechanics Hall which served as a residence for workmen who had no permanent home. The Hall was later divided into a private residence and the other part was operated as the Glass Lake Hotel. Joseph Hidley's famous painting of the Inn and Glass Lake was painted from an overlooking window in the Knowlson mansion.

Revised June 2010

Sand Lake Historical Society  
PO Box 492  
West Sand Lake, NY 12196



## *A Brief History of the Town of Sand Lake*

Sand Lake had settlers as early as 1747 and was formed in 1812. Early development of the town was aided by the offer of the Patroon Stephen Van Rensselaer to lease farms of approximately 120 acres. By 1875, the population had grown to 2572.

The premier physical feature that contributed to the settlement and prosperity of Sand Lake is the Wynants Kill Creek. The waters flowing from Crooked Lake in the southern part of town, thence to Glass Lake and Sand Lake, now Crystal Lake, and then on to Burden Lake from the headwaters of Wynants Kill Creek. It continues northwesterly to the Hudson River. Controlling the flow of this stream from lake to lake afforded a source of waterpower for the factories along the Wynants Kill.

In 1798, Jeremiah Van Rensselaer and others, who had been associated with Hamilton Manufacturing of Sloansville in Albany County, purchased 5000 acres from John Glenn near Glass Lake. Production of glass began about 1804. The owners imported glass blowers from Scotland. The factories were destroyed by fire in 1812 and again in 1816 and were rebuilt in 1819 by Crandall, Fox & Co.

The Wynants Kill Association, an association of mill owners along the Wynants Kill was formed in 1829. Their purpose was to gain control of the lakes that feed into the Wynants Kill and regulate the creek's flow to increase its energy for use as a source of power. By damming up the lakes, the flow could now be regulated to increase the power of the stream for milling purposes. The Wynantskill Association created Burden Lakes and in the process doubled the size of Glass Lake.

In 1825, Richard J. Knowlson, bought the Glass Factory and the Glass Factory Farm. He worked with the Wynantskill Association to build a dam at his site and control the water flow to the downstream mills. Mr. Knowlson had many famous houseguests, including the Marquis de Lafayette. The factories were destroyed by fire on December 25, 1852 and were never rebuilt. The factories produced some wonderful pieces, including a glass cane now in the possession of the Society. The factories employed over 100 workers.

The Wynantskill Creek provided not only for the Glass Works but also for a forge, a steam sawmill, a tannery, a grist mill, a plaster mill, a cotton mill, a furnace for iron castings, a paper mill and several textile mills. The textile mills produced a varied line of goods including woolens, hosiery, cotton batting and yarn. For a short time one Sand Lake mill owner manufactured work garb that was sold to southern plantation owners to clothe their slaves. All together, these enterprises employed several hundred people and made Sand Lake an important manufacturing site.

In 1866 the Wynantskill Improvement Association had 12 members. The Tompkins Factory, Arnolds Cotton Factory, Knowlson Wool Factory, and James Aken's Knitting Mill were upstream of the diverting dam. The downstream members, all of which contributed to the cost of the project, were: Kidder and Akin

in West Sand Lake, Troy Woolen Company in Albia; The Smart Paper Mills off Campbell's Highway; H. Burden & Son; Corning & Winslow; and Winslow, Griswold, & Holley, all of Troy. There were also several local industries including maple sugaring, ice harvesting, apple orchards, charcoal burning and lumbering.

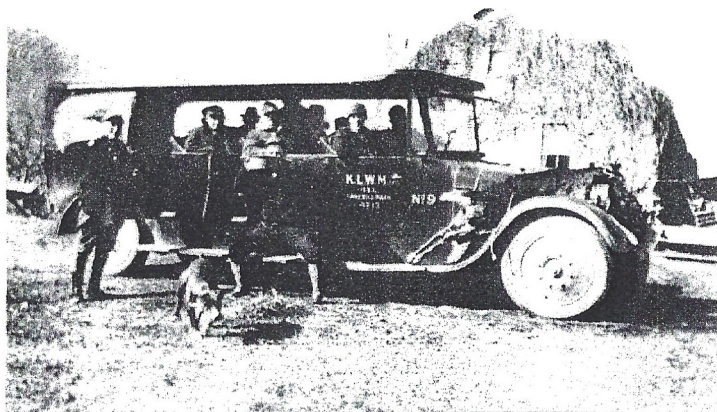
Sand Lake was represented in the American Revolution, the War of 1812, the Civil War, the War of 1898, World War I, World War II, the Korean conflict, Vietnam, Desert Storm and Operation Iraqi Freedom. In 1823, Richard Knowlson was appointed colonel of the local Militia regiment. During the Civil War, his son Andrew Knowlson, rose to the rank of colonel.

The Anti-Slavery feeling among residents of Sand Lake was evident in that many of its citizens actively participated in the Underground Railway. This secret and dangerous pursuit of assisting runaway slaves reach freedom, required the defiance of the Fugitive Slave Law.

The Fugitive Slave Law made it a federal crime to assist runaway slaves. Those persons who harbored runaways were subject to fine and/or imprisonment. "Hidden" rooms were constructed in homes to conceal the slaves on their trek to freedom. The Knowlson mansion has a stone "hidden room", with a vaulted ceiling and an air hole concealed in the kitchen fireplace where slaves were sheltered.

It is interesting to note that at one time slavery existed in Sand Lake. On February 2, 1824, Sand Lake resident Andrew Weatherwax, signed legal papers necessary to give freedom to his 21 year old slave, Jacob Brown, Jr.





After the trolley stopped operation in 1925, Edward Knapp, Willis Larkin Sr., Chester Wendell, and Samuel McNary began the KLWM Bus Company which ran from Troy to Glass Lake. Later it was sold to United Traction Company, which continued hourly bus trips for several years, until auto usage became so affordable, the bus service stopped for lack of passengers.

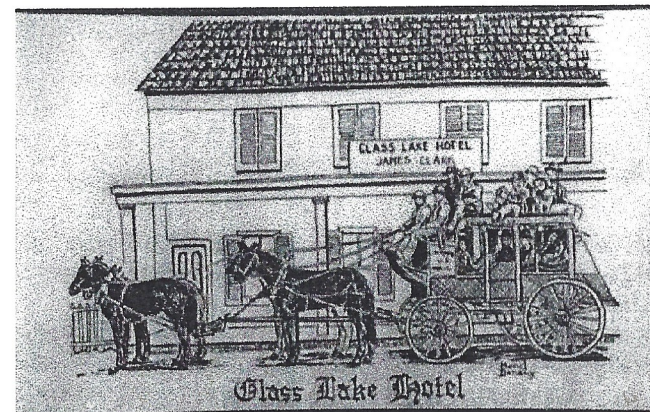
The goals of "Things That Go..." A Vehicle Parade are

- \* To have fun
- \* To raise awareness of upcoming Bicentennial in 2012
- \* To share the *Brief History of the Town of Sand Lake*
- \* To honor, support and promote local business
- \* To celebrate Work, workers, and local employment
- \* To express our Town of Sand Lake identity. What makes us, us?  
What we produce and consume helps to define us.
- \* To honor the Averill Park High School Girls' Basketball Team:  
The New York State Champions!!
- \* This event will be digitally captured. A copy will be placed into the bicentennial time capsule. So, please, share the images that you take today with us, and the future. When our future sees our images, will they see a mirror image of themselves?

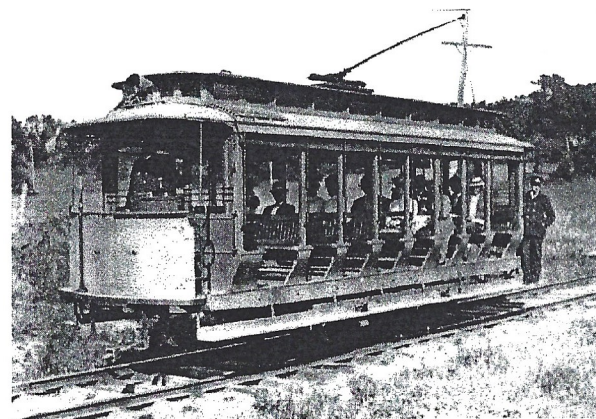
Keep up-to-date through The Advertiser as well as on the Bicentennial Planning Committee blog at [Sandlake200.wordpress.com](http://Sandlake200.wordpress.com). There is also a link on our Town of Sand Lake's website.

## SAND LAKE ON DISPLAY Things That go....Vehicle parade

May 8, 2010  
10:00 AM – 2:00PM

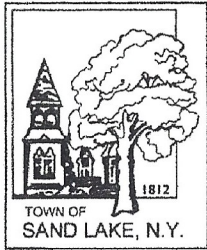


The Troy, Sand Lake and Stephentown stagecoach made a daily run and delivered mail between Troy and Stephentown and stopped at the Glass Lake Hotel.



In summertime an open car was used on the Troy & New England Railway. As many as five cars would be in tandem when the demand for travel to lakes in Sand Lake reached its peak.





Burton Rounds  
Supervisor of the Town of Sand Lake

It is a privilege to greet you today at the  
"Things That Go... Vehicle Parade"

What makes the vehicles that we see in today's parade special? It's kind of funny but what makes them special is that we see them every day and as a result we don't see them. We recognize their paint jobs or shapes as they approach and they are forgotten before they appear in the rear view mirror. But they are there, on the roads, every day going from job to job. They are doing the tasks that keep our communities and our lives humming. So today we see the trucks and the cars. We see their purpose. We admire their custom paint jobs and their task specific designs. This assembly of vehicles tells us much about our community and ourselves. Today we honor and support our local businesses. We honor the drivers and workers who operate them. Today we honor and celebrate work, diversity of tasks, and the job well done.

The Bicentennial Planning committee put together this event to raise awareness that the Town of Sand Lake will be 200 years old in 2012. Plans are underway to have a 200<sup>th</sup> birthday, which will be long remembered.

We invite all to participate in the various programs and dinners. There will be something for everyone from the youngest child to the oldest senior. Sand Lake has a long and historical history, going from Albany County, to Rensselaer County as part of Stephentown in 1790. Then it became part of Berlin in 1806 and finally was formed as the Town of Sand Lake in June of 1812. We've grown and are still making history.

Please bring any ideas for projects and programs to the Bicentennial Planning Committee, which meets the second Thursday of each month at 7PM in the Town Hall meeting room.

*A place of  
picnics  
porches  
progress &  
preservation*

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of the Sand Lake Bicentennial Planning Committee is to organize a celebration worthy of this beautiful and historic town, paying tribute to our past while embracing the shared vision for our future. The committee will strive to include the many diverse talents, interests and expertise of Sand Lake's citizens, civic groups, organizations and businesses, while honoring our history, people and future.



This horse-drawn pumper with a 45-horsepower gasoline motor was purchased in 1911. It could throw a stream of water over the tallest church steeple in the town. The introduction of gasoline power was a major advancement for the Averill Park and Sand Lake Fire Company.

Bicentennial Events to-date

- 2008 Kick-off Dinner honoring Sidney Gallant and Doris Gauch
- Sponsored two blood drives
- Featured monetary beneficiary of Salute and Scoot 5K walk/run sponsored by The Fitness Coach in 2008 & 2009
- Bicentennial slogan received approval:

A PLACE OF PICNICS, PORCHES, PROGRESS & PRESERVATION

- 2009 Dinner Celebration honored Sand Lake Baptist Church as the oldest public building in the Town of Sand Lake

- "Articles in The Advertiser – "Did You ask About?"