

Historical Highlights Official Publication of the Sand Lake Mistorical Society

Volume 48, Number 4 Our 48th Year Spring 2022

From our president

To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under the heaven. – Pete Seeger, originally from *Ecclesiastes*. It's spring of 2022, and the time has come for me to say goodbye as president. I have had a great time even though we had some obstacles, especially these past two years.

We got through most of our presentations, and they were top notch, I think. Great attendance! Without Andrew

Mace and all the trustees who have come and gone during my three-year term, I wouldn't have had such a successful presidency.

Hoping to see you during the next year at many SLHS presentations and events. We have our May Annual Meeting, our 2022 Gala and June "meet the authors" presentation at SLCA on the recently published *Murder at Teal's Pond!* [Details below – Ed.]

Our own Peter Finn did a fabulous job on Abel Brown in February, and the Kittle Family murders program was very interesting in March – practically in our own back yard! If you missed any of our presentations, go to SandLakeHistory.org and click on videos at the top; they're all listed there.

I'll be looking for you at the Show and Tell April 12. Don't forget to go through all your closets and drawers and old pictures and bring what you have that will remind us of Sand Lake, Averill Park and West Sand Lake! – *Jacqueline Tremont, President 2019-2022*

Upcoming programs

- Tuesday, April 12: Sand Lake Show and Tell II. What's in your attic, cellar, closet, junk drawer? Old bottles and such from Sand Lake Springs, Village Shop gift boxes, glass slag from Glass Lake, photos, posters and/or??? It's part of your history, but it's also part of Sand Lake's history!
- 1 Tuesday, May 10: Sand Lake Historical Society Annual Meeting. A bit different again this year; we'll meet in the Court Room at Sand Lake Town Hall at 7:00 p.m. for coffee and desserts (free of charge). Election of trustees and other business. The Nominating Committee report appears in the box to the right.
- 1 Sunday, May 22: An afternoon with artist Len Tantillo fundraiser and gala, at Tighe's Bistro Américain, Glass Lake. Details elsewhere in this issue!

Nominating Committee Report

The Board of Trustees has voted to increase the number of trustees to 15, in anticipation of increased activity as the Society approaches its 50th anniversary in 2024. In light of that action, the Nominating Committee recommended, and the Board of Trustees accepted, the following nominations for consideration by the membership at the annual meeting on May 10:

- 1 For second three-year terms (through 5/31/25): Peter Finn, Ann Winnicki.
- For initial three-year terms (through 5/31/25), to replace outgoing trustees Sharon Dawes (2nd term), Michael Perry (1st term) and Jacqueline Tremont (2nd term), respectively: Rebecca Hoffay Klimek, David Neubauer, Cindy Pitts
- For initial three-year terms (through 5/31/25), to fill vacancies created by expansion of the Board: *Alisha Clark, Eva Juliette Dacier*.
- To fill remainder of the term of Nancy Perry (one year, through 5/31/23): *Christine Codner*.

The Sand Lake Historical Society wishes to thank Sharon Dawes, Michael Perry, Nancy Perry and Jacqueline Tremont for their service as trustees and officers.

Elsewhere in this issue:

We'll share a review by Town Historian Bob Moore of Murder at Teal's Pond, look back on an 1876 tragedy on the Hudson River involving a member of a prominent local family, and reflect on SLHS members recently lost.

1 June 14: Murder at Teal's Pond: Hazel Drew and the Mystery That Inspired Twin Peaks. Authors David Bushman and Mark Givens will host a book signing and will discuss their book. \$5.00 admission; refreshments will be served. 7:00 p.m., at Sand Lake Center for the Arts, 2880 NY 43, Averill Park.

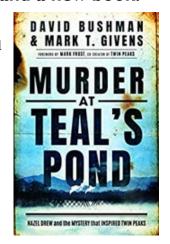
The April 12 and May 10 programs take place at 7:00 p.m. in the Court Room at Sand Lake Town Hall, 8428 NY 66, Averill Park, NY

Past programs

- 1 February 8: Abel Brown: Pastor, Abolitionist, Radical A Conversation, by Peter Finn.
- March 8: The Kittle Family Murders, by Jill Witbeck Knapp

Hazel Drew and a new book!

Murder at Teal's Pond. by David Bushman and Mark Givens, was released by Amazon on January 1, 2022. Being involved with the creation of this work has been very exciting and rewarding for me, so my review [next page - Ed.] might be a little biased. I think the backstory is worth covering first; this will give me a chance to recognize all the people from our community that were involved in the project.



In 2016 I discovered a blue folder with 2008 *Troy Record* articles, reprints of the 1908 articles of a young woman found dead in Teal's Pond – Hazel Drew. I began to ask around town hall if anyone was familiar with the case and the location of Teal's Pond – no luck.

A few weeks later, Ron Hughes appeared at my office, asking if I had heard of the Hazel Drew murder case. After a long conversation, I learned that Ron had also read the 2008 articles and, having lived in the neighborhood where Hazel worked, was determined to write a book about the unsolved crime. His book, Who Killed Hazel Drew?, was about to be published, and Ron asked for help locating the areas where the Drew family lived in Sand Lake. I wrote an Advertiser article asking the community for help. Shortly after, John Walsh came in to tell me that Mark Frost, the writer of the cult classic TV show Twin Peaks, had heard stories from his grandmother about the ghosts of Teal's Pond. Mark spent summers in Taborton with his family. I credit John, a former student, with presenting this connection.

Somewhere around this time, Mark Marshall came on the scene. I knew Mark well from working at Averill Park Schools. Mark is an historian, a reenactor, an artist, a musician and was about to add detective and investigator to his talents. Now throw in a *Twin Peaks* reboot in 2017, and the scene was set.

I called in a favor from Channel 13 journalist Phil Bayly, asking him to post what I expected would get some interest fast from his many Facebook followers. *Twin Peaks* fans began to call asking for info; within a week, Annette Witheridge and a photographer from the *Daily Mail* appeared to do a story that appeared online internationally.

Requests started to come in for me to speak about this unsolved 110-year-old murder. Mark Marshall and I did a mini course at Hudson Valley Community College as well as numerous presentations at historical societies around the capital district. It was in these early stages that we heard from David Bushman, author of Twin Peaks FAQ: All That's Left to Know About a Place Both Wonderful and Strange, and Mark T. Givens, creator of a Twin Peaks podcast in the Washington DC area. (They'd had it in their minds from the beginning to write another book on Hazel and the Twin Peaks connection. The early working title was Blonde, Beautiful and Dead. With a change of publishers came a change of title. Six years later, Murder at Teal's Pond has hit the bookstores. It has been very well received and listed as Oxygen Book Club's January 2022 pick.)

Meanwhile, I purchased the *Twin Peaks* DVD and began watching. It was true: Mark Frost had tapped into something unexplainable. The stories go deeper than the two women being found murdered in or near the water. The logging industry, the Great Northern Hotel and the isolated hunting camps of *Twin Peaks* seem oddly related to the Sand Lake of the late 1800s and early 1900s. Hazel was found in a pond just beyond a sawmill near Taborton Road. Now, with a 2017 reboot of the *Twin Peaks, Fire Walk With Me*, things were getting interesting!

All this interest brought local filmmaker John Holser to my office. I've known John for many years and was excited about his idea to make a film on the subject. I was able to attend a shoot on a farm near Hudson where the scene near Teal's Pond was recreated, complete with costumed actors in horse-drawn wagons and carriages to bring life to scenes that occurred In 1908. Kathy Sheehan and the Rensselaer County Historical Society opened the Hart-Cluett Mansion for interiors to be shot; again, another chance to see history recreated.

Unfortunately, because of COVID, John's openings planned for the Troy Savings Bank Music Hall and the Cohoes Music Hall were cancelled. The video, however, was "premiered" on Facebook and is still available for sale as well as for loan from the Sand Lake Town Library.

A review of Murder at Teal's Pond

Let me note before I begin the difficulty of writing a review of a project that I have been so involved with. I can say that this book has been thoroughly researched. It was six years in the making with numerous visits to Sand Lake, Troy and the various locations mentioned in the book. As the authors mentioned in their *Introduction* and *Acknowledgements* sections, they had the cooperation and help of the Sand Lake community.

I was very impressed by the general historical research, which gives the reader a better understanding of the times and a feeling for what it must have been like for a young girl from the country to leave home and make her way in the city of Troy. I especially liked their imagining what was going on in Hazel's mind as she walked up Taborton Road. I had done the same thing many times as I visited Teal's Pond and retraced Hazel's steps from the trolley station in Averill Park. The politics of Troy was another important part of the story and was accurately depicted.

A small issue that I found and was mentioned to me by a few Sand Lake readers was the incorrect distance from the trolley station to Crystal Lake and from the trolley to Teal's Pond. Also, the Poestenkill Creek that divides north and south Troy was identified as the Champlain Canal. The divide between north and south Troy is to some Division St. and to others Canal St. These are minor but significant details in the murder investigation and to local readers. I think David and Mark did a great job with the revisiting of a crime that took place more than a century ago and offering a plausible resolution of Hazel's story.

It is interesting to read other reviews on Amazon, but the best ones are from *Publishers Weekly* and the author John Brendt (*Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*). *Publishers Weekly* first:

"In this taut true crime page-turner...the authors effectively summarize five years of research, and paint a convincing picture of events that make the reader feel like they're experiencing developments in real time..."

"In the literary equivalent of an archeological dig, the authors Bushman and Givens unearth the details of a sensational murder mystery that gripped the nation in 1908 and inspired the sinister cult favorite Twin Peaks...this drama proves to be every bit as darkly compelling as the TV classic -- if not more so..."

David Bushman and Mark Givens are scheduled to present a book signing and talk on Tuesday, June 14, 7:00 p.m., at the Sand Lake Center for the Arts. – *Bob Moore, Sand Lake Town Historian*

A. Gregory Fox...and "[E]stella"

An article appearing in the January 4, 1940, edition of Troy's *The Times Record* noted the collapse the week previous of what once had been the home of the Washington Volunteer Steamer Co. and proceeded to reminisce about the history of said Company, whose history dated back to 1812. That *Times Record* article noted that "[o]n July 20, 1876, one of the most fatal and distressing accidents in the history of the personnel of the Troy Fire Department occurred when five of the Washington Volunteers lost their lives in the Hudson River near Round Shoals between Troy and Albany." One of those volunteers had a strong "Sandlake" connection!

The following account is transcribed as printed in the *Troy Daily Times*, July 23, 1876:

THE YACHT ESTELLA CAPSIZED
FIVE MEMBERS OF THE WASHINGTON VOLUNTEER
STEAMER COMPANY DROWNED.
THE STORY OF AN EYE-WITNESS.

Shortly after 10 o'clock last night the terrible news reached this city that the new steam yacht Estella, built for Jerome E. DeFreest, engineer of the Washington Volunteer Steamer company, had foundered in the river, having been capsized by the swell from the steamer City of Troy. It was reported that all on board, nine in number, had perished. Knots of persons gathered on the street corners and discussed the sad calamity. On investigation, the loss of life was found to be less than reported, but the true state of facts proved that the lives of five promising young men had been suddenly ended, and their bodies consigned to a watery grave.

THE EXCITEMENT.

Great excitement prevailed throughout the city, and many eyes were dimmed with tears. The facts appear to be a s follows: Yesterday morning Jerome E. DeFreest, engineer of the steamer; Thomas Edgley, Jr., a clerk recently in the employ of Geo. H. Levy; Jonas C. Faulknar, receiving teller of the National State bank; George Bloomfield, a painter residing in the rear of No. 218 First street; A. Gregory Fox, a clerk in the employ of Peabody & Son [a drug store on Congress Street – Ed.]; Harry Manicke, a carpenter residing on North Second street; George Baker, a clerk in the employ of E. W. Stoddard; Archibald M. Aston, a clerk at present out of employment, all members of the Washington Volunteer steamer company, and Gilbert Jewett of West Troy, the builder of the vessel, embarked on the yacht for

A PLEASURE EXCURSION TO CASTLETON.
The weather was fine but hot, and the cool breeze on the river promised that the journey would be an enjoyable one. Providence decided otherwise. Castleton was reached in safety, and after a short stay a fresh supply of coal was obtained, and the excursionists started on their trip homeward, little dreaming of the terrible fate awaiting five of their number.

THE RETURN.

Everything was favorable until the boat arrived near the Fish House bar, where the steamer City of Troy was met on its trip to New York. The yacht hugged the west shore for safety, but owing to the narrowness of the river at this point, the huge waves from the City of Troy washed the yacht, dashing it from breaker to breaker. The danger was apparent, and every effort was made to avert accident. All attempts, however, were useless. Wave after wave washed

over the little craft in quick succession. The excursionists saw that the boat could not ride the troubled waters, and SHOUTED LOUDLY FOR HELP.

Their cries could not have been heard by those on the City of Troy, for that vessel continued on its passage, and the Estella foundered. The scene was terrible. The night, owing to the storm of a few hours previous, was dark as Erebus. The unfortunate excursionists could not even see the shore, and consequently could not render each other assistance. Fox and Bloomfield were unable to swim, and their cries for aid were agonizing. Jewett pushed a cask to Bloomfield. and DeFreest sent a plank to Fox, but the poor fellows could not hold themselves up, and sank to rise no more. The others struck out for the east shore, and Baker, DeFreest, Aston and Jewett saved themselves by getting on the dyke.

AN ATTEMPT TO RESCUE THEIR COMRADES.

The brave fellows immediately divested themselves of their clothing and jumped in again to save their drowning comrades, if possible. They called loudly for the missing ones, but no answers were received, and in a despondent mood they again returned to the east shore, faintly indulging the hope that possibly the others had reached the west side. Hope was vain, however, for nothing was heard, and it became evident that Bloomfield, Edgley, Fox, Faulkner and Manicke were dead. The others immediately started for the city, the news spreading with terrible rapidity upon their arrival, and efforts were at once made to recover the bodies.

THE VICTIMS.

George Bloomfield, a painter, is a son of John Bloomfield, a brakeman in the employ of the New York Central and Hudson river railroad company. He is the second member of the family who has met with a violent death within two years. He was, married and leaves a wife and one child.

Thomas Edgley, jr., is a son of Thomas Edgley, for many years a bookkeeper in the employ of Corning & Co. He was 23 years of age and unmarried.

A. Gregory Fox was 23 years of age, a son of Hon. A. R. Vox, a wealthy and prominent resident of Sandlake. He had resided in this city for some time, and was a promising young man. His father is almost frantic with grief, and his appearance this morning created much sympathy. Fox's body, which was recovered, was taken to Sandlake, and will be buried Sunday.

Jonas C. Faulkner is a son of Jonas Faulkner, for many years a boot and shoe dealer on River street. He has been employed in the State bank several years, and was very much respected. In addition to the duties devolving upon him at the bank, he carried on a small job printing business. He was married to a daughter of Solomon Darling of 88 Federal street, and leaves a wife and one child.

Harvey Manicke was unmarried, 23 years of age, steady and industrious, and was esteemed by all w a o knew him. He was to be married in a few weeks. The deceased was a brother of Robert Manicke, an architect in the employ of G. B. Post, who prepared the plans for the Music hall building. His brother has been notified of the occurrence.

THE SEARCH FOR THE BODIES.

There was no lack of volunteers to search for the bodies. The tug M. A. Newling of West Troy was obtained soon after the news of the disaster was received last night, and with a fleet of small boats proceeded to the wreck. A line rigged with large fish hooks was stretched across the river, and the river was dragged all night. At daybreak the body of Faulkner was found by George Baker and Archie Aston, and at 8:30 o'clock the bodies of Fox and Edgley were found in shallow water.

Faulkner was found at a distance from the wreck, but Edgley was found near where Fox was recovered. One of Edgley's shoes was missing, and it is believed he lost his life in trying to save Fox, as he was known to be a good swimmer. The bodies of Manicke and Bloomfleld had not been recovered at noon, although the search has not been abandoned.

THE WRECK.

When the City of Troy was seen approaching, DeFreest signaled for it to slow up, but, as no heed was paid to the signal, it was probably unnoticed. The waves struck the Estella with great force. Bloomfield and Fox sat in the bow of the boat and were drenched by breakers. DeFreest ordered all the persons aft, and attempted to get rid of the water by setting the the syphon at work. It was unsuccessful, however, and while the men were busy bailing out the water, the bow gave a lurch and went down. DeFreest and Aston were the last to leave the boat, and the water had reached their shoulders before they departed. The yacht went down out of sight, but the Newling struck against it several times last night, and when the Thomas Powell came up this morning it struck the sunken boat and knocked it keel upward. The boiler and engine fell out, and the hull, which is badly broken, was dragged to the west side of the river. The bow was split in two, and it is believed the breakers did the mischief.

THE SCENE.

The Estella sank in the channel at a distance of 100 feet from the dyke. The channel at this point is not more than 20 feet wide. The remaining distance can easily be forded. From the point where the boat sunk to the west side the water is quite shallow. The excursionists knew nothing about these circumstances, however.

ALMOST ANOTHER CATASTROPHE.

Complaint is made that the captain of the Powell did not slow up this morning when signalled. Over 60 persons were on the Newling, and it is a wonder that a second catastrophe did not occur. As it was the persons on the tug boat were badly washed.

FORTUNATE DETENTION.

Capt. A. M. Sage, E. Ray Thompson and John A. Brannan intended to accompany the excursionists yesterday morning. Fortunately two of them were detained by business, and the other was indisposed. Had Sage been one of the party he would doubtless have been drowned, as he is afflicted with rheumatism and hardly able to walk.

SPECIAL MEETING.

The Volunteer steamer company will hold a special meeting this evening. The exempt firemen are requested to take part.

The "City of Troy" was a wooden, side-wheel steamboat, 280.6 feet long and 38 feet in breadth,



drawing 10 feet of water. She was built in Brooklyn in 1876 for passenger service on the Hudson River for the Citizens' Steamboat Company. She cost \$250,000 originally. Her gross tonnage was 1,527, and net tonnage 1,280. The steamboat had a crew of 48 men and 200 staterooms. (Information and image from the Hudson River Maritime Museum)

In comparison, the "Stella" (or "Estella," depending on the newspaper account), was a far smaller steampowered yacht, "83 feet over all, with seven feet beam and seven feet depth of hold..." "[The] Estella could carry 14 to 16 passengers..." (Archibald M. Aston, one of the survivors, and Jerome E. DeFreest, another survivor and engineer of the Volunteer Steamer Co., respectively, from a *Troy Daily Times* account of the Coroner's Inquest into the death of Jonas C. Faulkner, one of the victims).

Gilbert Jewett, who had built the (partly finished) yacht, further testified: "A thunder storm threatened us all the way up [the Hudson], and caught us at Albany; when we met the City of Troy it was raining hard and the lightning was very vivid; we ran diagonally across the side swell, and when we straightened up in the channel the rollers followed in our wake; the waves acted very curiously: we were caught in the worst part of the Hudson river...I do not think the accident could have been avoided..."

Not surprising for that era, coverage of the tragedy was found in newspapers well beyond the Troy-Albany area, including newspapers in New York City, and even the Washington, D. C. *Evening Star*, having

picked up the story from the *Albany Argus*.



Thanks to a donation from SLHS member Evelyn Murray, we have a wonderful professional portrait of Abraham Gregory Fox, taken at the C. R. Clark studio in Troy!

Remembering Al Hayner



There's a new star in the heavens. A local icon has left us. Albert "Al" Hayner passed away at home, in his sleep on Saturday, January 29. He started and ended his long life on Sheer Rd. in Averill Park.

He's survived by his daughter, Alyson, son Art, four grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. In the afterlife, he has joined his beloved wife, Marilyn, and daughter Arlene. I am so grateful he was able to live on his own terms, in his own home for 95 years.

Al had a ready smile, endless energy, and a "can do" attitude. He loved motorcycles, boats, planes and cars and all kinds of adventure. He was the consummate story teller. Al worked and played hard, but he loved people and was never too busy to help anyone in need. He truly lived the commandment, "love thy neighbor as thyself," and he personified " The Lord loves a cheerful giver."

As a fifteen year old, he was ready to work and to have spending money. He applied at Faith Mills, but was told he was too young. Thus, an entrepreneur was born. Al took over a store his father rented (below), overcame multiple issues like start-up money and was very successful providing a place to purchase ice cream and soda, to eat, dance and enjoy the summer weather. He was a natural born salesman.



At eighteen, in 1945, to serve his country, he joined the U.S. Army Air Corp. When Hayner returned home, he attended Albany Business College, and worked as an executive at the Legislative Index Company. Meanwhile, Al started an appliance store and a boat storage business. He realized there was no place to advertise his businesses and other businesses in town. Thus, *The Sand Lake Advertiser* was born on his dining room table. Al was both the sales force and the publisher.

Al loved his community and did all he could to make it a better place to live. Hayner was a true philanthropist. Above all he loved his family. I am proud to have called him my friend.

If the town of Sand Lake had a wall of fame, Albert A. Havner would be there ! – *Dee Erickson*

[Ed. note: Dee worked for Al at The Advertiser for over 23 years and wrote about the 60th anniversary of that iconic local weekly in the Winter 2018 issue of Historical Highlights. Al was a longtime SLHS member.]

Other recent passings. We also lost members James E. Smyth on June 20, 2021, and Helen Howe on August 11, 2021. The Sand Lake Historical Society offers condolences to their families, and this year's Averill Park High School Memorial Awards will honor all three.

Errata

In our last issue, we noted in the Fox Mansion article that "[the] general store, also depicted in the post card below, exists to this day in the collections of Adirondack Experience, The Museum on Blue Mountain Lake." The image was inadvertently omitted, but it is reproduced here!

go to press, the page has a total of 973 *likes* (of a total of 1,054 *followers*)!

New on Facebook in September 2019 was Sand Lake (NY) History, a companion *group* to our Sand Lake Historical Society *page*. This group allows members to share information and to ask or answer questions about our Town's history. This, too, is proving popular, currently with 968 members!

And there's always our website, sandlakehistory.org/!

SLHS member notification list

Those of you who have shared your email address with us should be familiar with our list called "slhsmembers@googlegroups.com." This is an *announce-only* list to quickly get word to members regarding cancellations, postponements and/or program reminders; it is *not* a discussion list. Postings generally run about 1-2 per month, and you can always opt out (although we hope you won't).

We would love to add members whose email address was not on file; just let us know, as it is our

best chance to get important news out quickly! This list will supplement any notifications on the School Closing Network (local TV stations and newspaper websites) or on our Facebook page and website.



Officers and Trustees 2021-2022

Officers:

Jacqueline Tremont (2022), President; Holli Boyd-White (2024), Vice President; Peter Finn (2022), Recording Secretary; Ann

Winnicki (2022); Corresponding Secretary; Nancy Perry (2023), Treasurer.



Trustees: Sharon Dawes (2022), Linda Henchey (2024), Doug Kelley (2024), Michael Perry (2022), David Post (2024), Jim Powers (2023), Michelle Mosher Schultz (2023), Wayland Whitney (2023).

SLHS online

If you haven't already done so, find us on Facebook: facebook.com/SandLakeHistoricalSociety! It's a great place to get the most up-to-date news on meetings and events, along with other items of interest from us and from other places and groups in the Capital District. And you might see things you won't see in our newsletter or on the website!

Our page is getting noticed more and more! In December 2019, we hit a milestone: 500 likes! As we



Sand Lake Historical Society Membership Application/Renewal 2022-2023

2022 Gala Ticket Purchase

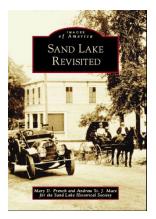
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\$100 per Lifetime (Individual)	\$150 per Lifetime (Family – two persons)	
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Would you prefer to receive news	letter via: Email∐ or Postal M	Iail
Do you have any particular histor	ical interests or expertise? If so	o, please let us know:
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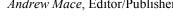
Please make checks payable to *Sand Lake Historical Society*. Mail to: Sand Lake Historical Society, Post Office Box 492, West Sand Lake, New York 12196

Spring 2022

NOTE: Memberships run from June 1 through May 31. New memberships will be good through 5/31/2023!



https://sandlakehistory.org E-mail: sandlakehistory@aol.com Historical Highlights 48:4 Andrew Mace, Editor/Publisher







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Laying the cornerstone of St. Henry's Church Averill Park, N.Y. on September 14, 1902. Pastor, Rev. Henry Miller.



