

IMAGES

...THEN AND NOW

From the Indian Hill Historical Society



**Buckingham Lodge
1861**

Traditional Events of the Camargo Hunt, Part I

The Camargo Hunt is a venerable institution in Indian Hill. For more than ninety years it has had a positive impact on this community and the national hunting scene. Throughout the decades, it has adapted to the changing environment and changing times. Examining some of its events provides a glimpse of its glorious past and current activities in the Village.



There are about 150 members of the Camargo Hunt. Categories include junior, intermediate, associate, and senior rider (defined by age). There is also a professional membership. Currently there are more social members than riders. Members appreciate the sport, the lure of the countryside, the bonding of man and animals (horses and hounds) and the camaraderie. They are passionate about their sport. As the world has evolved, the Camargo Hunt has adjusted and updated its activities and rituals. Village residents are welcome at hunts. If they do not ride, they may follow in the Tally Ho wagon.

The hunting season lasts from Labor Day until the end of March. The first hunt in September usually begins at Clippinger Field. Previously known as Cubbing Season, the younger hounds learn the terrain and become accustomed to the huntsman's directives. For several weeks Camargo Hunt riders dress in "ratcatcher" (tweeds and brown boots) and branch out on Indian Hill's bridle trails following the hounds in search of prey. Now this period of time is called Autumn Hunting.

Before the official formal hunting season starts, the Blessing of the Hounds occurs. It has taken place at Clippinger Field as well as at the Little Red Schoolhouse. This gathering, like many others, commences with a stirrup cup for riders and onlookers. This year there was a buffet breakfast and an outdoor firepit where people kept warm. Hunt members donned formal riding clothing—red or black coats adorned with the colors of the Camargo Hunt (grey and yellow). Clergyman Darrin Elin directed the proceedings in front of the Schoolhouse. Mounted riders formed a gallery, through which all the hounds proceeded as Reverend Elin blessed them. Then the priest laid hands on each horse and rider, praying for their safety in the upcoming season. This was Opening Day. Prayers honoring St. Hubert, the patron saint of hunters, were shared with all attendees in the solemn moments before the actual hunt began. Then the horn sounded, and they were off!



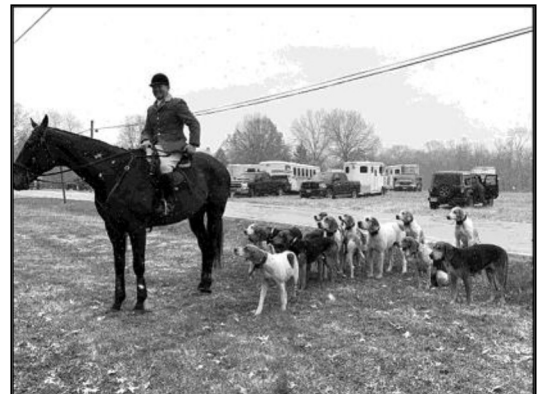
Blessing horse and rider



Gathering around the firepit for warmth



Rebert Reid serenades the day



**Rhodri Jones-Evans, Huntsman, and hounds
await their blessing**

To be continued next month...

Thanks to Natalie Nesbitt, Master of Fox Hounds, for assistance with this article.