

# Between the Lakes

A Newsletter of the  
Interlaken Historical Society

Volume 39 No. 3      January 2014

[www.InterlakenHistory.org](http://www.InterlakenHistory.org)

A Saturday evening at the auction, first floor of the Masonic Hall, Main Street, Interlaken 1980s.



## **The Community is Invited! Getting Past Your Genealogy Road Blocks Monday, January 27, 2014 New Time 7:00 pm**

Have you been working on your family's history for a while and have come to a road block? Are you just getting started researching the who, what and wheres of genealogy? On Monday January 27th join the Interlaken Historical Society as Diane Bassette Nelson examines some of road blocks to finding answers to keep your family tree growing. If you are just starting out, many of the points discussed will help you find answers before they become road blocks as well.

She has been involved with genealogy research for over 40 years, and has written and edited several family histories both for her own lines and for others who have links to our area. A former Certified Genealogical Record Specialist, Diane has learned her way in and through many of the forgotten and less used records needed to proceed with filling in the blanks on your family tree.

Some basic research materials and sample forms will be available. Additionally,

many of the Historical Society reference works will be on sale that evening.

Please note the new time for the meeting, 7:00 p.m. The program will be held in the dining room of the Interlaken Masonic Hall, 8396 Main Street (above Hubbard Heating and Plumbing). With the addition of a new user-friendly stair-chair the area is handicapped accessible.

The program is open to the public, and refreshments will be served. For more information contact the society at 607-280-2099.

In the event of inclement weather announcements will be made on the radio and local internet media.

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### **President's Message Celebrating Cooperation**

The January President's article is always a challenge to write with all the events of the holidays and year-end items, and yet, within that challenge is the idea of celebrations. As we celebrate the holidays with our friends and family we can also look back at the many times organizations within our community have worked together for the betterment of all.

Olde Home Day in June is certainly a high point each year of cooperation with the many organizations, businesses and individuals working together to celebrate our Community while sharing with those who come into town for the day.

Many people benefit from the cooperation between the churches, individuals and local agencies each week who provide assistance for those who need a bag of groceries. On any Friday afternoon you will find dedicated volunteers from all over the area at the Interlaken Reformed Church for the local food pantry. During the holidays many groups within our community have adopted a family to assist in making the holiday a better one. Others have donated non-perishable food items to the food pantries in lieu of holiday gift exchanges.

In recent years the Villages of Interlaken, Lodi and Trumansburg, along with the Towns of Covert and Lodi have worked together looking for answers to supplying additional municipal water to more people within our communities.

The list goes on, and rather than miss an event or some organization I will only cite

one more example of these areas of cooperation.

A few years ago a group of people

worked to bring about changes to Main Street, with new ideas for how the streetscape might look, and renewing the look of businesses along the way. This effort involved businesses, the Village, organizations and individuals. Grant applications were submitted and plans made for creating the new look.

As part of the Village's grant application for improvements, several building owners submitted plans for work that would be done, and how those improvements would benefit the community. The application included aspects of cooperative funding as well.

One of those organization/business cooperatives existed between the Interlaken Historical Society, the Masonic Hall Association and Hubbard Heating and Plumbing. The Historical Society made an application to the Delavan Foundation for assistance creating community access to the meeting, kitchen and dining facilities on the second floor of the Masonic Hall. Unfortunately, the Village grant application failed, but the Delavan Foundation approved funds to assist with creating the access.

For anyone who has attended dinners or events on the second floor in the past, you know there is a long stairway, and an old style stair chair. This fall, the Masonic Hall Association approached the Historical Society, which had been holding the grant funds, with a revised plan to create the access. Originally, and with more funding, the plan was to install an elevator from the ground floor to an entry on the second floor. The revised plan was to install a modern user-friendly stair chair. Today the second floor of the Masonic Hall is now accessible with a quiet, comfortable and safe ride from door to door. One of the benefits of the new

stair chair is that it will operate even if we have a power failure.

Some people may recall that in the 1960s and 1970s if you needed to take items up to the meeting or dining room area, you would stop at Charlie and Valetta Over-slaugh's liquor store right next door and borrow the key. Today the key and arrangements for using this public access space is handled through Hubbard Heating and Plumbing.

We would love to hear your stories of Celebrating Cooperation between organizations for use in future issues.

On behalf of all of the Interlaken Historical Society Trustees we wish you a prosperous 2014.

Thank you for your time as you read, enjoy and participate in the activities of the Interlaken Historical Society.

*Diane Bassette Nelson*

View of Main Street circa 1905 from the Baptist Church Tower. The original roof-line of the Masonic Hall before the 1908 addition. The current library is also shown before the alcove was added on the southside.

#### **New Member**

Frank Zwolinski, Santa Rosa, CA

#### **New Life Members:**

Glenn Bucien, Interlaken  
Marilyn Crooker, Intlaken

#### **Donations to the Society**

Kings Cabins Post Card, from Penelope Scialla, Saint Paul, MN

#### **Financial Donations**

Tom & Betsey Salm, Trumburg, NY  
Marissa and Charles H. Crawford III (in honor of Pat Patterson), Atlanta, GA  
Penelope Scialla, Saint Paul, MN

#### **Gifts in Memory of Emily Brust**

East Williamson Fire Company,  
Williamson, NY

And others who did not want their names published.

A thank you to all who gave gifts.

#### **The Interlaken Public Library A Free Library**

“Shall we have a free library in our Village?...All those interested in such a project are asked to meet on Friday, November 8 [1901] at 7:30 p.m. in the parlors of the Baptist Church. If the way is clear, steps will be taken to form a library association to be incorporated by Regents in order to get State Aid.”



So begins the article about the library in Patterson's *Between the Lakes* volume, page 190. The report follows noting the election of officers: Rev. E. B. VanArsdale, President; L. M. Rappleye, Vice President; Georinanna Wheeler, Secretary; Ira C. Hall, Treasurer; and Dr Alfred Slocum.

The Farmer Public Library opened to the public on July 22, 1902, with the books being shelved in a closet of Dr. Slocum's waiting room. This first library was in the brick building adjacent to the Memorial Garden.

Annual reports are always helpful when looking at a history, and it is interesting to note that in the five months that the library was open in 1902 115 people checked out 583 books.

The library continued to grow and organized ice cream socials, musicals, tag days and the support of the Village of Interlaken and the Town of Covert. All still a vital part of the library today.

The Trustees rented various rooms in the village for the library after Dr. Slocum left.

In 1925 the village received a unique gift from the Hinman family. Lockwood Hinman built his home about 1826 and that year he and his bride moved into their new home. Mrs. Hinman would live in her Main Street home until 1902.

After her death, the home was sold, and the new owners would make exterior modifications. A grandson of Mr. and Mrs. Hinman, Lewis S. Hinman purchased the old

home, restored the exterior practically to its original plan, rebuild the fine old white fence, and presented the property to the Village of Interlaken, to be used as a library building in memory of Lockwood Hinman, his wife and family.

Over the years since 1925 additions have been made to the building both inside and out, with the front façade remaining true to the restored building of 1925. Most recently the children's reading room was added.

Today the library trustees and other volunteers staff the library, check-out and shelve books and plan many programs to support both the library and the people who use all of the resources available there.

If you haven't stopped in lately, plan a visit soon, you will be surprised at what you find.

## New Gift for the Archives

When Penelope Scialla, now of Saint Paul, MN send in her gift of a 1955 post card of the Kings Kabins in Kidders she included a note with it.

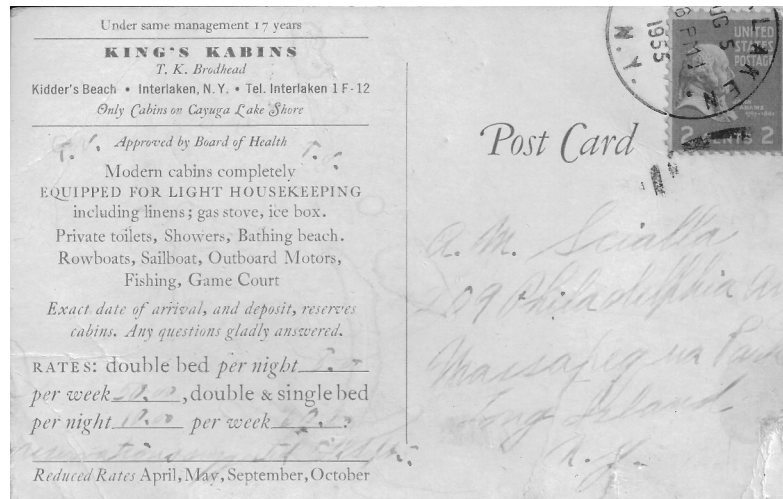
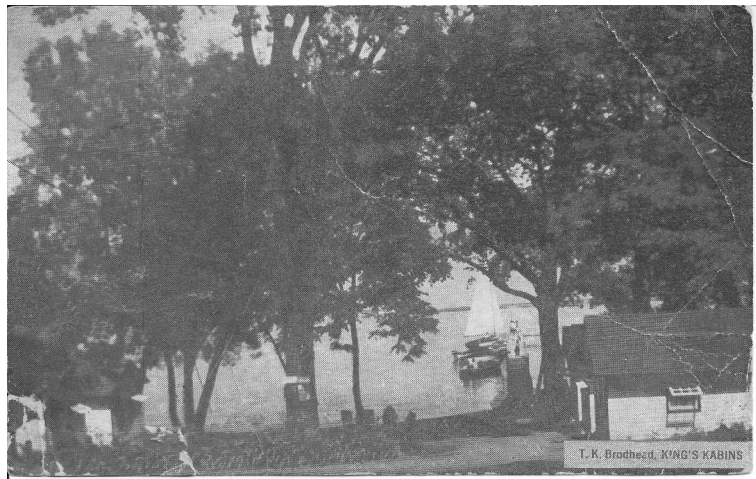
We were a typical suburban family: both (yes both) my folks were in the Army and after discharge in 1948 we were one of the first families to rent a house in Levittown – the streets weren't even paved when my folks moved in. In 1952 we moved to our own house in Massapequa Park where my parents lived until 2002.

I remember this vacation very clearly. The cabin was clean and nice and the owners accommodating and welcoming. It cost a quarter for 30-minutes of television on the very small black-and-white set in the cabin. We didn't watch it at all after first experiment because a quarter was a lot of money!

The three of us had a wonderful week in the Interlaken. My parents taught me to float on Lake Cayuga; we lived on the south shore of Long Island and there's not much opportunity to teach swimming in the ocean.

I remember visiting the shoe factory in Endicott and being fascinated with the glassworks in Corning. We so appreciated the gorgeous scenery Upstate.

When my Midwestern friends ask about New York I tell them it's not all on that little island with the big buildings-- there's much much more great history, phenomenal, breathtaking panoramas if you go just a bit north of the hub-bub.



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### **The Masonic Hall and its Occupants**

In the 1976 *Between the Lakes* Bicentennial volume, Pat Patterson and others recorded histories of many of the organizations within our community. Those histories tell the story of both the people and the places where they met to conduct business.

As with many business places on Main Street in Interlaken, one or more turning points or key dates may well revolve around one of the fires that have changed the face of Main Street. Such is the case with both the Masonic Lodge and the Masonic Hall Association.

Farmerville Union Lodge 183 had its beginnings in the 1850s when Masonry became active again in Farmer and other communities. This followed the decline of this ancient organization in the 1820s.

Among the people associated with that revival of Masonary were Nathan Wheeler the first Master of the newly reorganized Farmerville Lodge, and Ira Almy its first Secretary. The members met on the second floor of the former American House. In the 1870s the Lodge rented the second floor of the adjacent building and held their meetings there until the 1891 fire which destroyed the Gambee House (formerly the American House) and several of the buildings to the south, including the building where the lodge was meeting. Patterson's history tells us that the members were able "to rescue most of the Lodge furniture, jewels and records from their rooms." For a

time following the fire the Lodge rented space on the second floor of the former Minor Shoe factory.

The December 1880 fire consumed the block from what is now the Masonic Hall south to the corner, and then across the street and back North to the current Jay's Diner. Other buildings in the path were soon rebuilt.

In 1893 the Masonic Hall Association was incorporated, and it purchased the current property from Oscar G. and Henrietta Wheeler for \$850.00. The new building, which cost \$3,240 to construct, incorporated retail space on the first floor, with a meeting room and kitchen on the second floor. Its distinctive windows on the second floor with the Lodge emblem easily identify the building.

As membership grew, and community needs for public spaces increased, the building was expanded in



1908. The aerial photograph of the building taken in the 1960s clearly shows the growth, with the flat sloped roof line being the original building, and the peaked roof the 1908 addition.

During the early 1970s the building received a facelift both inside and out. The meeting room was paneled, and a new ceiling installed which highlighted the “dome” in the center of the room. The kitchen and dining room also had improvements made, and the original chairlift was installed.

As with most organizations, members came from all walks of life, and all served the organization with dedication both locally and at the district/state level. A few of the gentlemen who have served the Grand Lodge as officers include: Rev. Elias B. VanArsdale, first in 1908 as Grand Chaplain, and again in 1910 at District Deputy Grand Master; Henry G. Wikoff was a Grand Representative in 1944; others who served as District Deputy Grand Master were Charles J Wickes 1953, Emmett D’Arcy 1963, G. Douglas VanBenschoten 1970, and Donald Dill

In 1979 with membership declining



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around the area, and older structures hard to maintain Farmerville Lodge consolidated with Union Lodge #114 of Ovid and in 1984 Lodi Lodge #345 was added .

The 2014 officers include John Hubbard, Master, Bruce Radloff, Sr. Warden; James McKee, Jr. Warden; Donald Dill Sr. Deacon; Eric Banta Jr. Deacon and Treasurer; Everett Nelson, Secretary, Joseph Borst Chaplain, and Daniel Borst Tiler.

Members of Farmerville Union Lodge continue the tradition of contributing to the larger Masonic Charities, including the Masonic Home at Utica, the Masonic Medical Research Center, and Camp Turk in the Adirondacks. Funds come from a number of events. I wonder how many recall the chicken Bar-B-Qs, fly-in-breakfasts and other fund raisers held by the Masons?

In recent years the Masonic Child ID program has been a yearly event with the South Seneca Elementary School. The Lodge also sponsors CPR programs.

If you haven’t attended one of their Silent Movie programs, be sure to watch for an announcement of these wonderful evenings. Enjoy a glimpse into the past as the silent film rolls and live music is provide by Nancy Radloff.

In addition to Farmerville Union Lodge and the Masonic Hall Association, another organization continues to meet in the rooms on the second floor, South Seneca Chapter #200, Order of the Eastern Star.

Interlaken Chapter #335 Order of the Eastern Star began meeting in October 1904 with a dispensation from Grand Chapter. One year later in 1905 they received their Charter and have held meetings ever since. At the same time, Shining Light Chapter #334 was being formed in Ovid,

and a few years earlier, Lodi Chapter #200 was started. These early members were wives, daughters, or sisters of Master Masons.

The first Worthy Matron for Interlaken was Artie Leonard, with John B. Moore as Worthy Patron. In looking at the list of ladies who served as Worthy Matron one quickly finds the names of ladies well known in the community, but also on the list are those ladies who quietly served their community through the years.

The ladies of the Eastern Star not only assisted in preparing meals for the local Masons, but they provided socials to which the whole community was invited. They sponsored skits and programs at the Boyer Opera House, box socials, and whist parties in their early years. The tradition of whist parties was revived in the 1980s, with a pot-luck supper before an evening of cards.



From the youngest players (8 to 10 year olds) to the oldest (80s and 90s) all enjoyed an evening of fellowship and good times.

Like the Masons, declining membership in the 1980s prompted the three local chapters to discuss merging. Ovid declined, but in May 1988 the members of Lodi Chapter # 200 and Interlaken Chapter #335

merged to form South Seneca Chapter #200, taking a new name, but retaining the number of the older chapter. Ovid would continue meeting for a time, eventually turning in their Charter as their members passed away, or moved to other chapters.

Today members of South Seneca Chapter are very active in the community, sponsoring an Easter Egg Hunt the Saturday before Palm Sunday; a visit from Santa Claus in early December and they have begun plans for Family Movie Nights.

Several of the members of Interlaken Chapter and now South Seneca Chapter OES have served as District and State Officers: District Deputy Grand Matrons: Zobedia Boyer 1918, Josephine Fuller 1945, Ferne Patterson 1960, Shirley Jerger 1976, Diane Bassette Nelson 2002, Nicole Nelson 2010-2011. Grand Representatives to other states Ruth Casebeer 1965, Annette Bassette 1979-1980. Gentlemen who have served as District Grand Lecturer: Fred J. Freestone 1924, Harold J. Barnard 1949, Oran T. Casebeer 1957, Maurice L. Patterson 1971, Everett L. Nelson 2002 and 2010, and Louis F. Jerger, Jr. who served multiple terms and also served as Associate Grand Sentinel.

The 2014 Officers for South Seneca Chapter include: Nicole Nelson Matron; Everett Nelson Patron; Nancy Radloff Associate Matron; Bruce Radloff Associate Patron; Esther Swarhout Conductress; Michele Caci-Rogers Associate Conductress.

Realizing that the organizations which would use the building meet only a few times a month, the Masonic Hall Association constructed their building with the intent that the first floor would be used as re-



tail space, thereby providing income.

Do you recall the many merchants who called the space home? H.E. Peterson; Leo and Anna Braden, John Whittier all had department stores. These were followed at various times by a used clothing store, a video store, and who remembers the entrainment, if not the chance to make an occasional purchase, when Jerrilea Garfield-O'Neil had her Saturday evening auctions.

Today Hubbard Heating and Plumbing occupies the first floor offering the Historical Society display space in one window.

For more on the history of these organizations please see Patterson: *Between the Lakes, A History of South Seneca County* 1976.

the early 1900s and the 2013 visit by Santa Claus.



Pictures from the Historical Society archives: page 6 the building as it appeared shortly after construction in the 1890s, aerial view taken circa 1970s showing the roof lines created by the additions. Page 7 1967 recognition of several 50-year members. Page 8 circa 1965 picture of the officers Interlaken Chapter Order of the Eastern Star. This page H. E. Peterson's Dry Goods Store, an Interlaken Grange meeting held in



## Burkett's Restaurant

Bob Dickerson

I was thinking after reading the last historical paper of something in the past that is a great memory for me.

Back in the late 30s and early 40s there was a small restaurant in between Hanford's Hardware and Wickes's Drugstore. Its name was Burkett's Restaurant and was owned by folks we called Ma and Pa Burkett. I can't remember their real first names.

During the early 1940s the Army was building the Seneca Army Depot. Many of the workers were living in and around Interlaken and Ovid. My father even rented his summer cottage to a few of them.

Anyway, I was 14 at the time and the Burkett's offered me a morning job there before I went to school. I went there at 4:30 every morning and swept the place out. I made coffee and got the place ready to open at 5:30 or 6 a.m.

Then I stayed till about 8 a.m. and helped wait on the many workers who came in for breakfast each morning before going to the Depot. Can't believe back then the tips I made, sometimes fifty cents. During the summer I was working at the grocery store for a dollar a day, and a dollar and a half a day on Saturdays.

Ma Burkett made pies early each morning while I was still there to help with serving. When it was time to go to school, she always came and thanked me and gave me a hug. Little did I realize when she hugged me she would also give me a goodbye pat on the rear with her floured hands from making pies. Finally I was tipped off at school about the handprints, after a lot of laughs.

All in all the Burkett's were a wonderful older couple. I later became friends with their son, and he and I were building a model airplane in their back room when Pearl Harbor was attacked. We had the radio on and had no idea at the time how that day would affect both of our lives. I wound up in the Navy and he went in the Air Force during World War II.

I'm not sure how long the restaurant was there, maybe others have some information on that.



*Detail  
from  
a  
1915*

*photograph. The Burkett Restaurant would be in the area of the second awning, Hanford's Hardware is first, then Burkett and then Wickes.*

**INTERLAKEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
GIFT SHOP ORDER FORM**

_____	<i>So Good A Time: Life in the 1870s as Documented in the Diary of Olive Williams 1873 to 1878</i> , 2010 Nancy Saultz Radloff Softcover	\$12.95
_____	<i>Historical Images of Interlaken</i> a coloring book based on historical photographs 12 full page drawings of historical buildings with descriptive text.	\$3.50
_____	<i>Town of Covert</i> , 1976 Wayne Morrison	Hardcover \$35.00* Softcover \$25.00*
_____	Index to the Interlaken and Ovid Newspapers 1822-1994	\$55.00*
_____	<i>The Covert Family</i> , 1989 Carl W. Fischer, Wm. V Covert M. L. Patterson	\$35.00*
_____	<i>Between the Lakes</i> , 1976 Maurice L. Patterson	Hardcover \$25.00 Softcover \$15.00
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**PO Box 270**  
**Interlaken, NY 14847-0270**

www.InterlakenHistory.org

### **Mark your calendar**

January 27, 2014 Getting Past Your  
Genealogy Road Blocks. Second Floor  
Masonic Hall, 8396 Main Street, 7:00  
p.m. (note the new time, and location)  
April 28th, program to be announced  
June 14th Interlaken Olde Home Day and  
All Class Reunion.  
Summer Saturdays: More History on the  
Sidewalk.  
Coming this Fall: Plowing Day 2014, watch  
for details.

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