



Warrensburgh Historical Society Quarterly

Volume 16 Issue 3

Fall 2011

[The following is an article that appeared in the October 1946 issue of Ford Times, a publication of the Ford Motor Company. Many Warrensburgh residents will remember this antique dealer and his amazing shop, and the "telegrapher" mentioned later in the article. Ironically, Warren Ford now occupies the site of the antique shop! - Steve Parisi]

Odds and Ends No End

By Burgess H. Scott

WARRENSBURG, NEW YORK

John T. Sullivan, who has been selling antiques and miscellaneous odds and ends in this Upstate town for 20 years, is proud of the reputation he has earned as a reliable dealer.

Not only the tourists who are his

principal clientele, but the townspeople who buy less frequently say that when Sullivan sells you something, you can relax and know that it's not misrepresented. Sullivan himself sums it up simply with, "I got my good name for selling exactly what it is," a statement which the reader is warned not to analyze, but which, nevertheless, gets his meaning across.

His shop is in a rambling old brown frame house, two stories and 12 rooms, on Warren street (Route 9) just south of town. At first glance the effect is that of a junkyard which has exploded.

Then, in the mass of cast-off bric-a-brac, you begin to spot things that look like they might come in handy. Then is when you stop and become a potential customer. His 12 rooms contain the bulk of the stock, but through the years it has overflowed onto his front porch and across the lawn. In one of the upstairs rooms he has made a small clearing which serves as his bachelor quarters.

All in all, it is probably the most heterogeneous mass of used things ever assembled by one man. Nar-

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The Saga of Bill's Restaurant

By John T. Hastings

It was a quiet Monday morning when my friend, John Farrar, and I strolled into Bill's Restaurant to have breakfast before heading out to our weekly hike into the great North Woods. I knew something was up when our waitress, Denise, had a question for us. She said that the customers kept asking her where Bill's Restaurant got its name. Knowing I was involved with the Warrensburgh Historical Society, she thought I might know the answer; I didn't, but my curiosity got the best of me. How hard could it be to determine the name source of Bill's? I was about to find out!

I started first at the Warren County Municipal Center to search the deeds to find the various owners of the restaurant. Maybe I could find an owner named Bill and get this answered quick. Knowing that the property had been owned by the Wilseys, I soon found that the lot was purchased

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Here's what's been happening in the Society over the past three months.

On June 1st, 65 of John Burns' 7th grade environmental science students took a bus tour of numerous glacial landforms and historical sites in Warrensburg. They also saw exhibits at the museum and enjoyed a presentation on logging and forestry by John Hastings. Mr. Burns' high school environmental science class will tour and hike glacial landforms, see historical sites, and visit the Museum this fall. The Grist Mill will be one of the stops, and Morg Crandall, who worked there for 37 years, has agreed to be present to tell about it.

The Warrensburg Historical Society, the Chamber of Commerce's 2010 Citizen of the Year, passed the torch to our none-more-worthy member, Teresa Whalen, as 2011 Citizen of the Year. The award was presented at a well-attended banquet at Grace's Restaurant on June 17. When it was noted that her first name is usually spelled with an "h," Teresa replied that she'd sacrificed her "h" to be restored back onto the end of Warrensburg!

Thanks to the efforts of Sandi Parisi, a Charles R. Wood Foundation grant has funded a large screen TV to be placed in the Museum for video presentations. It upgrades greatly our program capabilities. Gary Bivona also contributed to our grant application efforts with a grant for a Museum security system from the Glens Falls Foundation. We were surprised and delighted to receive a substantial donation of money for the museum from the former Warrensburg Economic Development Council.

Sandi Parisi continues to work on the major book and calendar for the Town's Bicentennial in 2013. Peggy Knowles is our Bicentennial Committee delegate.

"A Stitch in Time," a book of Abbie Hastings' and her sister Elda Monroe's recollections about the Shirt Factory was published in June. It makes a wonderful gift and is available at the Museum or via our Book Nook order form, enclosed.

Our Sticky Wicket Croquet Tournament and Picnic, organized by John Cleveland, was a wonderful success this summer, not least because the weather was perfect and the rain held off until after the event. The turnout was good and we raised a lot of money. Two-time defending champion Joelle Stonitsch was unable to attend. Katherine Chambers won the tournament with a perfect score for the two games - the third year in a row a lady has walked away with the coveted trophy, guys.

The canoe raffle was won by War-

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We welcome comments, corrections, articles, pictures, letters, and reminiscences. Send to:

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The Board of Directors meets at the Senior Center, 3847 Main Street, at 6:30 pm on the **FIRST** Tuesday of each month. Call Paul to confirm at 623-3162.

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Membership Information

Students \$5.00 Individual \$15.00 Family \$25.00 Senior (62+) \$10.00
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If you would like to join and receive the Quarterly by mail, please send a check for the amount of the membership classification, with name, address, and phone number to: **Warrensburg Historical Society, P.O. Box 441, Warrensburg, N.Y. 12885**

NOTICE

The recording of history is an interpretive and ever changing study. Therefore, the Warrensburg Historical Society or its Board of Directors or members shall not be held liable for the accuracy or authenticity of the material herein. **We welcome and encourage corrections, comments, and additional information.**

Upcoming Events

October 8: Hauntings in Warrensburg Trolley Tour*

October 21 & 28: Graveyard Walks*

October 23: Dinner with the Dead*

* See President's Column for more information.

CURRENT MEMBERSHIP:

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Warrensburg Historical Society

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WELCOMENEW MEMBERS:

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(Continued from page 1) Odds and Ends

row paths lead through the rooms, enabling browsers to see the top layer, but no one—not even Sullivan—knows what is underneath.

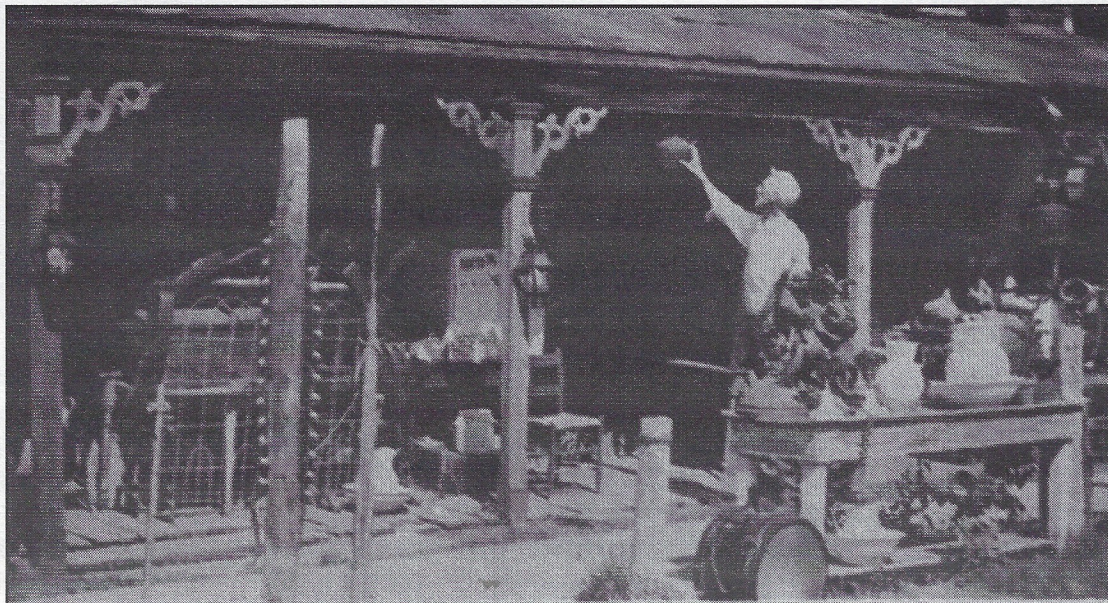
He doesn't know how many items he has, and will make no estimate other than to say they "run in the thousands," although by the time you get inside you think that tens of thousands would be a better

bought for \$25 and which is on sale for \$50. He has moved the light out to the curb in front of his house, a last-resort position which usually moves his stagnant merchandise. On the other hand, he has had a good sale of small boat lanterns to people who use them as wall lights outside their front doors.

Furniture, pictures, and statues

accomplished haggler, soon brought the price down to \$25. He kept it a few months and sold it to a tourist for a bargain at \$45.

Most of his customers being tourists, his biggest volume of business is done in the summer-time when this section is overrun with thousands of vacationists from Manhattan prowling the hills, valleys, and highways in shorts and hal- ters. The rest of the year is spent repairing, renewing, and acquiring new items. Sullivan picks up additional items himself on short jaunts, but most of them come from roaming wholesalers who comb the countryside for the peculiar bits and pieces featured by Sullivan's and similar establishments. Antique dealers call these



guess. There is no order or plan to anything that appears on his premises, and no apparent reason for the weird groupings he makes. One display, for instance, consists of a pair of bear traps, a bed-spring, and a bouquet of dried cattails.

Because of an uncanny ability to price his merchandise, Sullivan uses no price tags or marks of any kind. Even though he has totally forgotten a piece dug up by a tourist from the depths of a pile, he needs only one quick look to quote a price.

Many of his items are extremely slow moving, cluttering his place for months before the right person comes along. Such an item is an umpty-thousand candlepower steamboat searchlight which he

are, perhaps, his most numerous items. The statues run in all sizes, from miniatures and figurines scattered on shelves throughout the house to a life-sized, nude, white marble nymph out in the yard. One statue he is currently featuring in the curb row is a bronze work showing a mounted Arab being attacked by a lion. He asks \$35 for this—a lower-than-usual price, he said, because the Arab's sword and the lion's tail are missing.

Sullivan once bought a large bronze statue of a woman with a cigarette in her mouth which, so the seller assured him, was posed for by the first woman who ever smoked. The seller told him the rare piece was worth \$10,000, but Sullivan, an

wholesalers "pickers."

The pickers get out in the remote sections and buy or swap country people out of dusty antiques. They say the antique business in this neighborhood was started 25 or 30 years ago by a man from Boston who rented an unused school down in Lake George as a base of operations. He would leave his headquarters early in the morning, his cart piled high with shiny new cane-bottom chairs, and would re-turn in the evening with the cart equally loaded with fine old period pieces. A similar practice was followed years ago up in New Brunswick and Quebec when buyers from New York department stores would

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(Continued from page 3) Odds and Ends

give farm wives all the nice new linoleum their hooked rugs would cover.

The extent to which a picker will go to obtain an article that appeals to him is illustrated in the following story involving the telegrapher here.

The telegrapher, who also runs a sort of sundries and notions store, bought an old bench for \$2.50. The bench held no interest for him beyond the fact that it fitted exactly into a gap of his sidewall between the door and the counter. Not long after he moved the bench in, a picker spotted it. The picker first talked casually about the bench. When he learned what the telegrapher paid for it, he more casually offered to take it off his hands.

The telegrapher refused and the picker began pleading. After several visits his offer had risen to about \$30. Still the telegrapher was unmoved because, as he had pointed out to the picker early in the encounter, the bench fitted the gap perfectly.

The picker left and was gone for several days. When he returned he had with him a new rattan bench exactly the size of the gap. When he made a final offer of the new bench and \$50 for the old one, the telegrapher at last weakened and accepted the money and the new bench.

Sometime later the telegrapher learned why the picker was so eager for the old bench. It was one of a very rare pair, valuable together, but worth little apart. The picker had one, and had searched until he found its mate. He promptly sold the pair for \$100 each.

Some of his items look positively too good to miss, and you wonder how they could go unbought long

enough to gather the dust that is on them. For instance, there is a large door that he priced at \$20. It has 1,100 different kinds of wood in it from all over the world, according to Sullivan, and it takes two men to carry it. Another is a full-length pier mirror on a marble base and enclosed in a fancy gilt frame for which he asks \$30.

One article that frankly has Sullivan baffled is a 100-pound practice bomb hanging from his porch eave. He bought it on speculation for \$4 from a man who didn't say for sure how he got hold of it. He had it on sale for \$5 until the bomb got so rusty he had to lower the price to \$2, a loss he will have to make up on some other item. An umbrella stand is the only use for it that has occurred to him.

His stock of freak buttons is one of his best moving items nowadays, snapped up by people who go in for button collecting, a fad which is becoming increasingly popular.

He also does a brisk business in metal spread-eagles, birds which originally decorated the tops of flagpoles or weather vanes. Some of them bring as high as \$35 or \$40, but the only one he has in stock now is so battered that he doesn't expect more than \$10 or \$12 out of it. He said some people find them nice on fence posts, or on a plain pole in the yard.

Sullivan appears set for many-years of selling items of the type which moved a little girl to say, when confronted with a birthday-gift: 'It's exactly what I've always wanted!—What is it?'

Charles Holloran & The Spruce Camp

By John T. Hastings

One rainy day while perusing through my post card collection of Warrensburgh, I came across a card of the "Spruce Camp," which I had obtained a number of years ago. With the current ability to search the Warrensburgh News, I decided to see if I could find any information about this place. The search resulted in two "hits" one of which noted that the cottages at the Spruce Camp were owned by Charles Holloran and located on the Glen Road. So, who was Charles Holloran and where exactly was this camp located?

My search found that Charles was living in Blue Mountain Lake from about 1901 through 1910. In 1903 he and his wife were running a saloon in North River. Frequent trips were made by Charles and/or his wife to visit his mother-in-law, Mrs. Kate Casey who also lived in North River. (Note; Mrs. Kate (Smith) Casey and her nephew, Frank Smith started the Smith Bakery in North Creek which eventually became Smith's Restaurant) On March 17, 1910, the Warrensburgh News reported that Charles Holloran and Dudley Menzie of Blue Mountain Lake had purchased the Forest House from Frank Owens. The Forest House is located on the road between Indian Lake and Blue Mountain Lake. It was built in 1881 by Samuel Davis and at that time was a convenient stop for stagecoaches. It burned in 1934 and was rebuilt by George Menzie. It still exists today.

Sometime after this

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(Continued from page 1) *Bill's Restaurant*

by Stella (Saville) Wilsey from Lewis Thomson in 1906. From then until 1966 the lot was owned by the Wilsey family. Joyce Witz ran the restaurant from about 1960 to 1966,



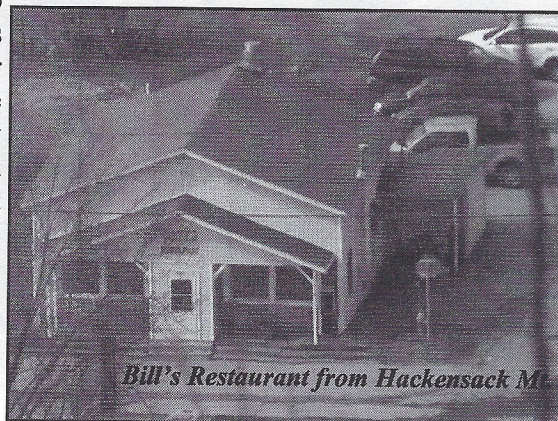
Wilsey's Market Photo Courtesy of Frank Wheeler

but a phone call to her resulted in no new information. In 1966 the restaurant was purchased by Fred DeVries, long time Town Justice. Fred owned it until 1973 when he sold it to Eileen Crewell. Eileen ran it for about two years and then sold it to Ginger Culver. Ginger ran it until 1987 when James Wallace purchased the property, which is still being run by the Wallace family. No Bills here, but Fred did have a son named Bill. Could this be it? No such luck; a conversation with Bill DeVries confirmed the restaurant wasn't named in his honor.

My next step was to search the Warrensburg News to see what I could discover here. The July 19, 1951 issue revealed that "Charlie Wilsey is having a building completed on the corner of Main Street and Second Avenue next to his market which will be operated as a restaurant." By August, it was open and doing business. Various ads continue to appear

about Wilsey's Restaurant until January of 1963. Nothing more was found until January of 1967 when an ad appears for Bill's Restaurant noting that it was formerly Wilsey's. Other ads reveal tidbits of the restaurant's history. In March of 1970, it notes that the restaurant was under new management. Obviously Fred was leasing the restaurant and not running it himself. In January of 1980 the Warrensburg News reported that a fire did considerable damage to Bill's Restaurant, but that owner, Ginger Culver, expected to reopen after repairs were made.

It appears that the restaurant was renamed at about the time Fred DeVries purchased the property. Although Ginger Culver registered the name "Bill's Restaurant" with Warren County in 1975, the name appears long before this (1967) in the Warrensburg News. A 1994 obituary for Julia Herrington of Warrensburg, notes that she had "formerly owned and operated Bill's Diner." Nothing in the record indicates that she had owned the restaurant, but she may have ran it, possibly for Fred DeVries. However, a discussion with William DeVries, Fred's son, revealed that the name had already been changed to

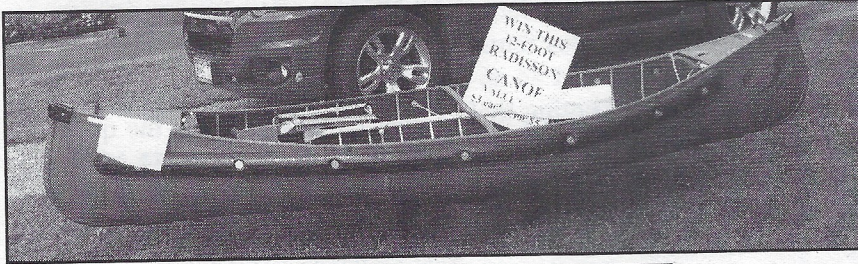


"Bill's Restaurant" when his father bought the restaurant in 1966. A conversations with Jean Hadden shed no new light on the question, either.

So, who did name Bill's Restaurant and when? My next appeal is to our readers. Does anyone have any knowledge as to how Bill's Restaurant got its name? or have any information about the restaurant that may help clarify this? Call or e-mail John and we'll have an update in the next issue of the Quarterly.

Orson Wilsey (1869-1946) married Stella Saville (1879-1956) in January of 1900. They had two sons, Charles and Harold. Orson's parents were James and Louisa (Turner) Wilsey, who were originally from Darrowsville. Stella's parents were Charles H. and Juliett (Tabor) Saville. Harold was born on 1902. He married Jesse Carpenter in 1923 and they had three sons (Douglas, Harold Jr. and Robert) and two daughters (Louise and Joyce). Charles was born in 1909 and married Katherine Fisher about 1930. She died in 1936 and Charles remarried ? by which they had a son Charles Jr. Orson, first entered the grocery and meat business in the late 1890s and was originally located in the Aldrich-Thompson block. He then moved to the Pasko building before finally being established at the location on upper Main Street. In 1925 the market was completely renovated and enlarged. Also, at the same time, Orson constructed a garage on upper Main Street. In November of 1932 William Maltbie, brother-in-law to Charles, purchased a partial interest in the garage. Seven years later he obtained complete ownership and soon after (1940) it became "Maltbie's Chevrolet."

Winner of the Canoe Raffle: Betsey Remington



Croquet Master, Delbert Chambers with the 2011 Sticky Wicket Winner, daughter, Katherine Chambers.

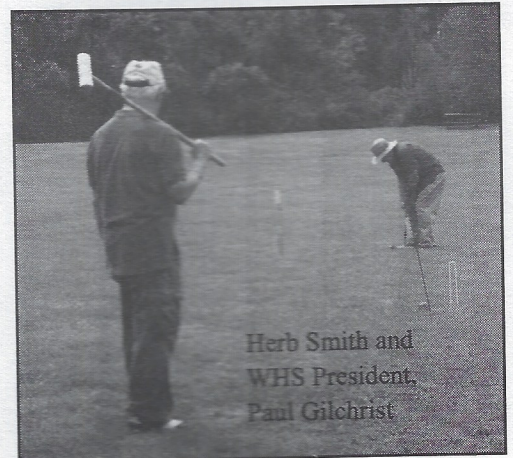
**STICKY
WICKET
2011**



The Spectators



The Players



Herb Smith and
WHS President,
Paul Gilchrist

(Continued from page 4) Holloran

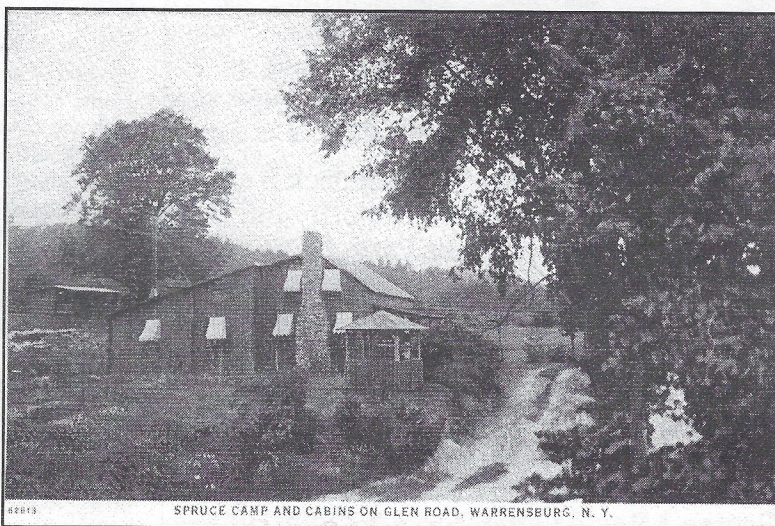
Charles sold his interest in the Forest House and became manager of the North Creek Bottling Plant. As the Warrensburgh News of September 13, 1917 reported. "Charles Holloran, former manager of the North Creek Bottling Works, became employed by Al's Clothes Shop, located in the Crandall Block." Charles was to be "a traveling salesman and will make a tour of northern towns to secure orders." Al's Clothes Shop was owned by Al Heisman who had recently moved to Warrensburgh from Lake George. It was around this time that Charles moved to Warrensburgh.

In the spring of 1922 Charles opened the Toll Gate Inn which had been the old toll gate house on the Warrensburgh-Chestertown Road. His refurbishing included a new screened dining room on the north side of the building. He continued running the Toll Gate Inn, which was about two miles north of Warrensburgh, until 1925. Walter Wright and Alfred Stone worked at the Inn at various times. Early in 1925 a garage was built nearby and was run by Harry Wells. Shortly after this, in May, thieves smashed the gas pump and entered the garage, removing a large hammer. Then, in September of 1925, while heating asphalt for a new roof, a fire started which eventually destroyed the entire building. Two years later in 1927, he sold the site to E. C. Snider of Schenectady.

Meanwhile, he was still running his Spruce Camp on the Glen Road and then purchased the Noxon Millinery Store and residence on Main Street in Warrensburgh. This store had been run for many years by the Noxon family. The purchase was

the result of settling the Amos Noxon estate.

In the spring of 1928, Charles was making extensive alterations and improvements to his cottages (Spruce Camp). Harry Wells was doing the work. The cottages were located on the crossroad between the Chester Road and the River Road to the Glen. The buildings were a "Rustic Style" and were "very picturesque and comfortable". (Warrensburgh News). A month later these cottages were sold to Henry Lyle, whose father had run the Half-Way House in Glens Falls. He renamed the establishment the "Rustic Inn." It's not



clear what happened during the next three years but in April of 1931, the Warrensburgh News reported that Mr. & Mrs. J. L. Norton were "moving to the Rustic Inn, in the Chester Toll Gate area, which they recently purchased from Charles Holloran." At this same time Charles purchased the former James Warren farm (Thurman) from Mr. Norton.

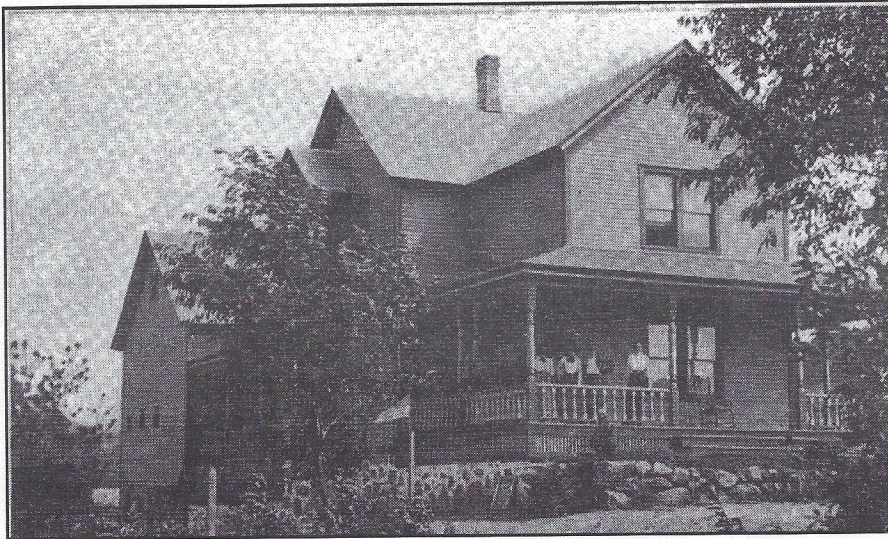
The Rustic Inn was managed by a number of people over the years. Eventually it was renamed the Glen Road Inn when Thomas Murphy took over in 1949, and then became the Pine

Grove Inn around 1958. In December of 1960 it was completely destroyed by fire. It was owned by Mrs. David (Hazel) Culver at that time.

During these last three years, Charles was not idle. In 1929 he built a new camp on the Kellum Pond Road, which included a pond created by damming the stream from Kellum Pond to Millington Brook. The following year he sold and installed a "lighting plant" to supervisor Don Cameron of Thurman. He was also one of the principal stockholders in the Warrensburgh Land and Timber Company, Inc. which was authorized to acquire real estate, property, timber, logs, pulp, etc Other principal stockholders were Jesse Soper and Frank Sage.

Charles passed away on June 18, 1931. In his obituary it was noted that he had managed the Grand Army House in Warrensburgh, as well as the Shamrock Inn on Friends Lake. His estate of over \$23,000 was left to Miss Jessie Soper of Warrensburgh.

Addendum: Charles was born in Conklingville in December of 1869. He and his family lived in the Luzerne area for many years. Although his obituary lists him as 53, he was actually 61. His parents were John H. and Margaret Holloran. Known siblings were brothers Thomas, Frank, John, James, Daniel, William and a sister, Mrs. William Clear. Charles last name was spelled both "Holloran" and "Halleran" in the Warrensburgh News. I have used the former spelling which is consistent with his obituary.



Mystery Photo
Places in Warrensburg's
History

Can you identify the building at the left? Or where it was located? Or any of the previous owners? Contact John at 798-0248 with your answer or email at jthastings@roadrunner.com. The picture in the last Quarterly was taken at the Sit-N-Bull Ranch. Congratulations to **John Cleveland, Gretchen Countryman Conaway, Chris Nemec, and Dennis Martinez** for correctly identifying this building.

(Continued from page 2) President's Column

Warrensburgh Historical Society's 5th Annual
STICKY WICKET Croquet Competition & Picnic

Fish Hatchery Sunday, August 14, 2011

First Place Winner: Katherine Chambers

Our thank you to these sponsors:

Croquet master's Circle: Cronin's Golf Resort

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Another success, thanks to a good crowd, good weather, Croquet Master Delbert Chambers and Super Chef Brian Engle!

Warrensburg alumna Betsey Remington '60, who lives over in Bolton (MA, that is) and has a nice 30-acre pond close by her home.

Graveyard Walks this year will be held on October 21 & 28, with desserts at a location to be announced on the 21st and at the Maher's, 2 Cloverleaf Dr., on the 28th. Dinner with the Dead will be on Oct. 23 at Grace's. Rita Ferraro and Rosemary Maher are in charge of the ghosts and scripts. Reservations for the Walks can be made with Marilyn Hayes at 623-3436 and for the dinner at Grace's, 623-2449.

Speaking of ghosts, we're involved with two ghost tours on Oct. 8 (10 am, 2 pm) that will visit, by trolley: Emerson House B&B, Raven & Ring Antiques, Thomas House (Senior Center), Grace's at the Griffin House, and the Warrensburg Museum, formerly Odd Fellows Hall. Tickets are \$20; call 623-9961.

The Society has given its Certificate of Appreciation to Garrett Ferraro for bringing members of his Boy Scout Troop 100 to the Museum to introduce them to the local history of their town.

The commissioners' plaques, atop the ends of the old Woolen Mill Bridge since 1895, are now situated at the Museum and the Farmers Market. Thanks to Bill Lamy for overseeing their restoration and to Wayne Anderson, Walt Haws and Tracy Benoit for their installation.

We wish it were possible to restore the old Emerson coal elevator on Mill Avenue. Firemen did a superb job to save the shirt factory; from behind which Engine #354 was very impressive.

Until next time, keep looking backwards.

Paul Gilchrist