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Rummage Sale 2017

This year's rummage sale was only 3 days after the July 4th, so it was a scramble. The weather being the way it has been this summer, we put 4 tents up. We were lucky in that it only rained hard once.

As is in the past, we were fortunate to have many people donate. There was a wide variety of items. Every year there seems to be a theme. This year it was definitely a marine theme as we had over 20 sailboat models, lots of buoys, and even an actual boat.

We opened the "gates" at 8 AM on Friday, July 7th. Business was brisk all day long. We were fortunate to make it to our profit point on Friday so we could offer the bag sale the next day.

Saturday morning at 9 AM we started the bag sale. Everything you can fit into a shopping bag for \$2.00. Furniture was half off and there were many other bargains to be had. People who were at the rummage sale on Friday came back on Saturday for the great bargains.

All proceeds go to maintaining the Fish House Community Center, originally a two room school house built in 1909.

Any items that were not sold were donated to various organizations such as Handy Ups and Downs, Goodwill, The Salvation Army, The Schenectady library, and local animal shelters.

Thank you for all your donations and for your patronage. If you didn't donate this year, start cleaning out your attic for next year!

Fish House T-Shirts & Sweatshirts for Sale!

The T-Shirts this year are a navy blue with white lettering. We also have pull over hoodies in pink camouflage. If you want to buy a shirt or sweatshirt, don't wait! Buy them now at this breakfast!



Bottle Drive 2017

Our bottle donation center opened up early this spring. So many people have been leaving off recyclable bottles and cans that our "bottle" guy has had to make frequent pick up trips! Thank you!

AUGUST 2017

Labor Day Breakfast
September 3rd

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The Telephone - 100 Years Ago

In this day and age, we seem to take for granted all of the wonderful technology to which we have access. In doing research for the great granddaughter of the proprietor of the Fish House Hotel, I came across a 1917 Glen Telephone directory for Broadalbin. It listed 150 names and numbers. Of that 150, there were only four for Northampton. Two of those four were called Pay Stations where people could pay to make a phone call. The pay stations were in the Noyes Store and in the Fish House Hotel. Upon further research, the earliest phone I could find in this area was in the town of Wells, in the year 1900.

Glen Telephone also had instructions for how to use a phone:

When giving a number to the operator, state (1) the name of the central office wanted, (2) each figure of the telephone number, and (3) the party line letter, if there is one. Examples:

Hudson 1253

"Hudson, one-two-five-three"

Newburgh 125-J

"Newburgh, one-two-five, party J"

(The Fish House Hotel number was:43-F3)

After calling the number, remain with the receiver at your ear until the called number answers or until you receive a definite report.

When the called number answers, announce first the name of the person to whom you wish to talk and then your own name or the name of your firm.

Answer telephone calls promptly in order to avoid a report of "don't answer" being given.

To call back the operator, move the receiver hook up and down slowly.

If your telephone is equipped with a bell crank, hold the receiver hook down and give one short ring.

Pictured above is a 1917 Western Electric crank phone.

Research Errors:

In the last Echoes (May 2016) Seneca Deuel was stated as being the proprietor of the Fish House Hotel. This was based on a paragraph from a book that I read. Needless to say it was a confusing paragraph. Seneca was a blacksmith. His son, Clarence, clerked at the Hotel Northville and did some work at the Fish House Hotel. Also, stated in the May Echoes was that Seneca had a stroke in 1823, it was around 1881.

Joanne Blauboer



Osborn Hotel

In 1887, a second hotel was built in Fish House called the Osborn Hotel. The hotel was run by Hiram Osborn. The proprietor of the Fish House Hotel, at that time, was Walter Brown. The two men had been feuding for years and the feud intensified when Osborn built his hotel just across the street from the Fish House Hotel.

In the winter of 1893, Osborn had finished plowing out the entrance to his hotel when Brown, plowing out his hotel, covered over the work of Osborn. An argument resulted and Brown went into the Fish House Hotel and came back out with a shotgun and shot Hiram Osborn twice in the stomach. Osborn died an hour later.

After a long trial, Brown was found guilty of manslaughter and was sentenced to 20 years at Dannemora prison.

Osborn's two sons, Charles and John, continued to run the Osborn Hotel until it burned a year later, in 1895. I had often wondered about the timing of that disaster, thinking it was a continuation of the feud. I came across an article that verified that it was arson, but the article included more information that surprised me. See the article below from the Utica Weekly Herald, May 27, 1895

FIRE BUGS TRY TO BURN A TOWN.

A Popular Hotel In Fulton County Burned to the Ground.

AMSTERDAM, May 27.—(Special.)— The Osborn house, the noted hotelry at Northampton, Fulton county, better known as Fish House, was burned to the ground this morning. The work was without doubt that of an incendiary. Attempts were also made to destroy the general merchandise stores of J. L. Moore and J. I. Smith, located on the opposite side of the street. Fires were afterward discovered in the post-office and another store. The fire in the Osborn house was started in the bay mow of the barn, and from there spread rapidly to the hotel.

The hotel, a well constructed building, was erected something like eight or ten years ago, and was conducted by Hiram Osborn, up until the time of his being murdered in January, 1894, by Walter Brown, then the proprietor of the Fish House hotel. Brown is now imprisoned at Dannemora. Since Mr. Osborn's death the hotel has been run by his sons, Charles and John Osborn, together with their mother.

The loss will reach \$5,000 or \$6,000; insurance is \$3,200. It is not probable that the hotel will be rebuilt.

RESEARCHER'S NOTE:

A couple of weeks ago, I received a phone call from a woman who was trying to find information on her great grandfather, Martin Kelly. She knew that he ran the Fish House Hotel until it burned down around 1920, but other than that, she had little information and no photos of him.

So I started doing some research, having two goals:

- a) Find a photograph of Martin Kelly
- b) Find out why the hotel burned down and the exact date.

I was unsuccessful in both endeavors. Photos from 100 years ago are hard to find. The Hamilton County Historian is helping me look for Martin Kelly, so there is hope yet. Newspapers from 100 years ago are quite different from our newspapers now. For instance: back then you could read: Mrs. Stark is going to visit her relatives in Broadalbin or Mrs. Fay is having tea with Mrs. Wescott. The 1920 reference came from Larry Hart's book The Sacandaga Story, but with no other details about why the hotel burned down.

Researching can be frustrating but also very rewarding. It takes you in many directions, hence the article on telephones, as well as these articles on the two hotels of Fish House. Perhaps someone reading this has a photograph of Martin Kelly in their attic? If so, contact me! zuma95@gmail.com



Fish House Hotel circa 1906

Is that Martin Kelly standing at the entrance? We might never know.



Fish House Hotel

John Fay (born in Massachusetts in 1773) moved to Fish House in 1803. He built the first brick structure of Fish House in 1805 in the center of the village. Articles indicate that not only was it a store, but it also had living quarters. (Please note: there are conflicting reports as to the location and the date this structure was built.)

Fay was listed as a farmer in the census but he was also a member of the NY State Assembly in 1808, 1809 and 1812. His first wife, Sally Wescott, bore ten children and then died at the age of 45. In order to accommodate all of his children, John Fay built a large wooden house (sometime before 1817) across from the brick structure. Supposedly, after the last of his children became an adult, possibly around 1840, it was remodeled into a hotel. The earliest record (that I could find) of it being an hotel was in a newspaper dated 1869.

The hotel had many proprietors over the years. In 1883, Hiram Osborn was in charge, (an article states that the large barn that belonged to the hotel fell down that year.) After the Osborn Hotel was built (1887) across the street, the next proprietor listed for the Fish House Hotel was Hiram's son, Charles Osborn. It is unclear when Walter Brown became the proprietor, but it wasn't very long because in 1893 he murdered Hiram Osborn and went to prison. (see article at left) In 1894, George Fulton took over the hotel and had it painted and "repapered" around 1898. Fulton later left to run the Kennyetto Hotel in Broadalbin. Allen Kinnicutt bought the hotel from George Fulton in 1899. Business at the hotel started to falter, possibly due to the opening of Harvey Benedict's new hotel, Summer House Point, a couple of miles south of Fish House. The Fish House Hotel was closed temporarily as Kinnicutt improved it. In 1906, Martin Kelly, a hotel proprietor from Wells, purchased the hotel and the hotel seemed to thrive until it burned down in 1920. Above is a photo of the Fish House Hotel, circa 1906.