



Deerpark Diary

Town of Deerpark 1863 School House Museum
 Town of Deerpark Historian, P. O. Box 621, Huguenot, New York 12746
 (845-856-2702)
www.1863schoolhouse.org

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The History of Resorts and Boarding Houses

Our area in upstate NY has been a tourist destination since the early 19th century. It is the vast area of mountains, forests, meadows, lakes and rivers northwest of NYC that made it the first vacationland in the US.



Mineral Springs, Huguenot

This vacation area was discovered by wealthy people who built summer homes to escape the oppressive heat of the New York City metropolitan area. The lack of air conditioning made the apartments and homes extremely un-

comfortable. There was also little open space for children to play. In time ethnic groups came to the area and resorts catering to these groups were built. By the mid to end of the 19th century residents saw the economic value of the tourist trade and expanded their homes to become boarding houses. It became a hugely popular resort area which continued to the mid-20th century.



Caudebec Inn, Cuddebackville

The fresh air, open spaces, lakes and rivers were an ideal playground for families. Many families returned every year to the same place. Women and children spent the entire summer here to escape the heat and poor air quality of the cities. Because of easy rail travel the men could work in the cities during the week and return to spend the weekends here with their families.

The growth of the tourist industry was linked to railroads. On May 14, 1851, the first passenger train arrived in Port Jervis with President Millard Fillmore and Senator Daniel Webster

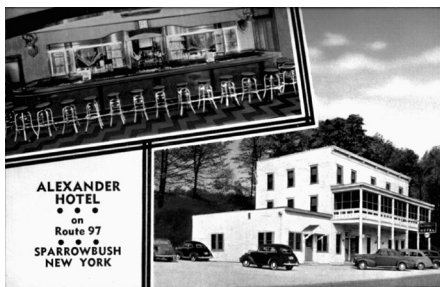
on board. The New York & Erie Railroad was the first railroad to run from Piedmont, NY through Port Jervis to the shores of Lake Erie. In 1868 a new railroad came to town, the Port Jervis and Monticello Railway. In 1895 it was leased by the New York Ontario and Western Railway (O & W). The O & W added a branch that ran from Valley Junction (Godeffroy) to Kingston. At Summitville it crossed the main line from Weehawken NJ. These railroad trips took only a few hours. Liveries met the trains to take visitors to their destinations.



*Valley Junction Railroad Station
 Godeffroy*

Resorts and boarding houses were available in different price ranges and could suit the personal interests for people in all walks of life. It was an economic boon to our area. The population in the tri-state area increased by thousands every summer. Resorts hired local young people.

Auxiliary businesses such as; entertainment venues (Port Jervis had two opera houses), bakeries, butcher shops, dairies, egg farms, golf courses, clothing shops, boat liveries etc., flourished during the summer months. Even famous people from New York City spent extended time here. It was an exciting time during the early 20th century when D. W. Griffith brought famous movie stars to the area to create silent films.



Alexanders, Sparrowbush

As the 20th century progressed with improved technology in transportation, the railroad fell into a steep decline. Automobile travel kept the tourist/resort industry alive until the 1960s. America was changing to the jet age making travel to distant resorts easier and cheaper and by the mid-1980s, most of the big resorts were closed, while smaller resort buildings were repurposed for other commercial enterprises. Boarding houses became single or multi-family homes. The second homes built by the early wealthy summer visitors have been remodeled into year-round homes.



The Dunwald Family

The Cottage in the Pines

In 2012 the Town of Deerpark Historian's Office received journals, personal records, books, and photos from the Joseph Dunwald estate. These primary source papers provide a personal link to the time of the boarding house era as well as the driving forces of economic development in rural Rio and Sparrowbush from the late 19th century through the 20th century.

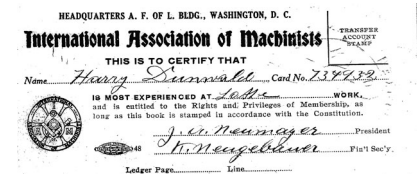


Cottage, Barn and Pond--Today

In addition to these records, much information was provided by Lynn Feasley, who now owns the property and has restored the buildings to provide a lovely venue for retreats, family gatherings and weddings. The property is on the National Register of Historic Places. All the buildings are included as they contribute to the historic significance of the boarding house era here in the Town of Deerpark

William Dunwald (1820-1887) and Johanah Dunwald (1825-1887) emigrated from Prussia around 1855. They had two sons, Peter and Henry. The young family lived in Corning, New York and in 1870 moved to New York City.

William was a machinist and trained both of his sons in the trade. Henry died in the late 1880s in a factory accident.



Peter married Mary Ellen Johnson (1866-1945) in 1883. After Henry's accident, the family moved to Rio. Peter and Mary had five children; Henrietta (1887-1956), Harry (1887-1964), Peter (1891-1964), Mary (1895-1973) and Charles (1900-1977).

Peter, Mary and family began the construction of their boarding house, "Cottage in the Pines" around 1895. The "Cottage" is a typical large, airy boarding house. The home is inviting with generous rooms having windows that open to the breeze. When building the huge porch overlooking the forest, the Dunwalds used trunks and branches for the columns and rails providing the unique design used in the Adirondacks.



*Dunwalds Building
The Cottage*

Mary was instrumental in building the "Cottage", which could accommodate twenty guests. The management of the boarding

house was left to the women of the family. From 1901-1905, the Dunwalds ran ads in New York City newspapers offering fishing, boating, bathing in a man-made lake, picnicking and hiking, as well as an excellent table. Guests were picked up from railroad stations. Music was an important amenity for the guests as shown by records noting a constant replacement of pianos. In the 1920s the Dunwalds installed a generator to provide electric lights and outlets. These constant improvements provided additional comfort for their guests. The boarding house business flourished until the early 1960s.



Dunwald Family ca 1910

The men and women developed different economic spheres. The Dunwald brothers used the natural resources of the property to provide additional income for the family. Charles focused on building the farm, caring for the family's China White hogs and chickens, butchering them and selling the meat in Port Jervis. Peter and Harry worked as carpenters and built a large carpentry workshop. Their grist mill became a sawmill. In the winter months the

FOR RENT
INQUIRE
DUNWALD BROTHERS
BUILDERS
Rio, N. Y. Phone 5-F-5

brothers produced cement blocks for use in their building business. They also harvested ice from the pond.



*Winnie Dunwald
Graduation Picture*

Peter married Winifred Wagner (1901-1997), a Kindergarten teacher in the Sparrowbush School, on June 15, 1935. In 1936, the brothers built a new house (bungalow style) on the property for Peter and Winifred. They adopted a son, Joseph, in 1939.



Peter and Joe--1940

Both Peter and Winifred, or Winnie, as she was known, were active in the community throughout their lives. Peter was active in veteran's organizations, church life, business and philanthropic organizations. Winnie continued to teach until her retirement from the Port Jervis School District in 1974.

From the early 1930s until the 1960s, the Dunwald brothers, Peter, Charles and Joe, were

building homes throughout the area. Peter and Harry Dunwald died in 1964. Joseph went to Viet Nam and came back on permanent disability. Charles died in the mid-1970s. Winnie and Joseph lived the rest of their lives in the bungalow built in the 1930s.



*Dunwald Bungalow
Typical Design
by Dunwald Brothers Builders*

After Winnie's death in 1997, Joseph inherited the entire property and lived there until his death in 2012. He was buried with military honors in St Mary's R. C. Cemetery. He was the last remaining member of the Dunwald family to live on the land which had been in the family for 116 years.



Dunwald Family--Early Years

As a continuing memorial to Winnie's teaching career, Joseph created The Winifred Dunwald Memorial Scholarship Fund through the Community Foundation of Orange and Sullivan, for graduating students in the Port Jervis School District. Even today, Winnie Dunwald is remembered as a teacher who loved children.

The photo below was in the box of records given to the Historian's Office by the Dunwald estate. It was entitled "Sparrowbush Teachers", however there were no names.

If anyone recognizes any of these teachers, please contact Norma Schadt, Historian at 845-856-2702 or nschadt@townof-deerpark.org.

Joseph was a student at the Sparrowbush School.



Joseph Dunwald



Grange Project

This summer, through funding from the Friends of the Grange and the Town of Deerpark, the exterior of the Neversink Valley Grange building was painted. The building was given to the Town by the Grange organization for historical and community use in 2009. Every year a major restoration project has been undertaken, which has included a new roof, electrical improvements and a handicap accessible ramp.

Plans for next year's improvement include the rehabilitation of the windows. To raise funds for this project, the Friends of the Grange are having a yard sale on October 17th (rain date — October 24th from 9:00am to 1:00pm

at the Grange building 35 Grange Road, Huguenot NY. There will be many bargain items for sale.

Everyone is invited to attend and help support this great cause.

Fantastic Yard Sale

Benefit Friends of the Grange

Window Restoration

Project

Saturday, October 17th

9:00-1:00

Rain Date

October 24th

35 Grange Road

Huguenot NY



Flag Disposal Collection Box

Do you have a faded, torn, stained, or worn-out flag that can no longer be displayed and you do not know how to dispose of it properly? The Town of Deerpark Museum has the solution.

A US mailbox was donated to the Museum. Members decided the ideal use for the box is to set it up in a convenient place for residents to use as a disposal collection box for used American flags.

Museum members, periodically, will deliver the flags to the VFW for a proper flag disposal ceremony. Susan Miiller, a local artist, decorated the mail box with an American flag design. This completed the project which had been started by Joan Kehlenbeck.

The flag disposal collection box will be located in the Town Hall complex. A dedication ceremony is planned for Flag Day, June 14, 2021.

If you wish to dispose of your old flag(s) before that time, please call the Deerpark Museum to arrange for a time to drop it off. 845-856-2702.

The flags will be stored until next June when the box has been installed and dedicated.