

NNHS NEWS LETTER

Northville Northampton Historical Society

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Editor
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NORTHVILLE RAILROAD STATION 1875 - 1930



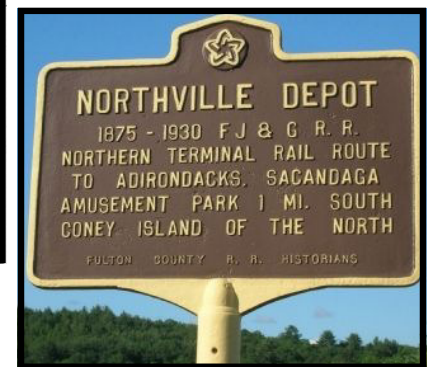
Located on the west side of the Sacandaga River about a mile from the center of the village. Mr. Peter Carey Pickard was the station master for many years and Walter Weaver Sr. was clerk, bookkeeper and express freight agent for 18 years.



The rails on the ground that lead up to the marker compliment the historic marker. The work of installing them at this location was done, by Ronald Reu Jr, in 2006, as part of an Eagle Scout project. These rails were recovered by Terry Warner and Larry Cramer from a site nearby and are presumed to be rails that were overlooked during the original salvage after the F.J. & G R.R. Northern Division line was closed due to the creation of the new Sacandaga Reservoir, a.k.a. "The Great Sacandaga Lake", which can be seen in the distance in this photo

MUSEUM

We continue to receive artifacts and donations to our little museum, even during our off season. We are always ready to receive any local artifacts to add to the history of our town. Cleaning out your attic? Don't forget us.



Bridge Swept Into Sacandaga in Storm of 1930

Nearly 36 years ago, a storm swept the newly filled Sacandaga Reservoir, battering a century-old covered bridge no longer useful with the coming of the reservoir.

For two nights and nearly three days, strong winds and six-foot high waves pounded the massive structure, until on April 23, 1930, the Fish House covered bridge was lifted from its piers to settle in the reservoir.

Today, hand hewn wooden pegs used to hold the timbers together exist in the homes of many area residents. The pins were salvaged and sold as souvenirs by the Ladies Society of Northampton Methodist Church to raise money for the church.

And advertisements on the wooden beams, which also were salvaged after the storm, helped identify the timbers in their new home—a cafeteria in Old Sturbridge Village, Mass.

Opened in 1818, the bridge was built by a young Saratoga engineer and his experienced crew, friendly Indians and the efforts of Jacob Shew, son of the first Fish House settler, Godfrey Shew.

Daniel Stewart was called from Saratoga to estimate the cost of a bridge across the Sacandaga River at Fish House. He chose a site and set \$5,500 to complete the 400-foot long, two-lane span.

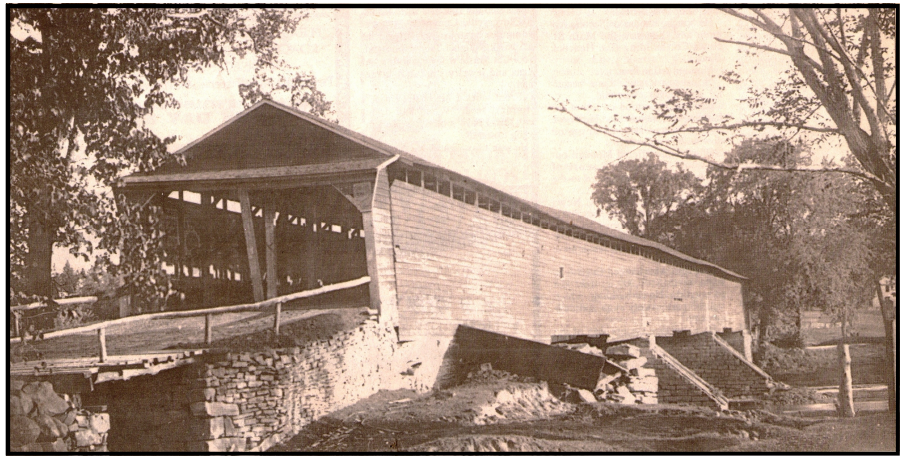
Shew, a member of the State legislature, won a state grant of \$5,000 and the Town of Northampton raised the \$500.

Stewart contracted Indian scouts to find a certain type of stone for the piers. Found near Maxon Ridge, the stone was cut from ledges and drawn by oxen to the bridge site.

The river was used to float logs from the Adirondacks to

This article was written by Kathryn Sleezer in 1966. She lived in Fish House and had a great love for the history there. Kathryn wrote a booklet, "Fish House Through The Years" in 1975. I'm sure it's out of print but maybe it should be copied and made available to others interested in the history of Fish House.

To quote from her booklet: "From a reconstructed map of the Aboriginal Trail, one can find the name *ONOYLE*, at Fish House, whether this was an Indian village or a fort is a guess but from Indian pottery, stone implements and arrowheads found around the shores and Island of the Reservoir, evidence point there definitely was an Indian village or camping ground at Fish House."



the Hudson River and the piers on the west side were squared to prevent log jams. On the east side, the piers were slanted.

Timber came from virgin forest in the Fish House area and was hewn at the bridge site. Trees used for the lower chords of the bridge were reported to have reached 96 feet in length. Local blacksmiths supplied the handforged strap irons that held the main chords together but no nails were used. The wooden pegs, later varnished, lettered and dated in gold and sold by the church-

women, were used exclusively.

Several explanations exist for the heavy arched timbers but most logical is that extremely thick trees were hewn into curved lengths and then mortised to form the arch for each span of the bridge.

The opening of the bridge eliminated the nuisance of having to wade across the river when the level was low and the actual danger of canoe or heavy wagon crossing at high water levels.

In the fall of 1929, the bridge was anchored by heavy cables to large tree stumps in the hope

it could be saved for a museum.

But the bridge could not withstand the storm the next spring when it settled in the reservoir, taking power and telephone lines to the Edinburg area with it.

The late Arthur Vandenburg was the last man on the bridge and got off it shortly before it was lifted from the piers.

When it became apparent that the bridge could not be saved, men from Fish House salvaged whatever parts they could.

NORTHVILLE TO HAVE DIAL TELEPHONE SERVICE

Ground was broken on May 17th at Northville for the new dial central office building of the General Telephone Company of Upstate New York, Inc. Mr. R. Parker Sullivan, President of the telephone company, Mr. Burdette Brownell, Mayor of Northville and Mr. Daniel Weaver, Village Trustee, took part in the ground breaking ceremonies.

The new building, located on the east side of Second Street, will contain the automatic step-by-step dial switchboard which is manufactured by the Automatic Electric Company of Chicago, Illinois. This company pioneered the development of dial telephone equipment and is now the largest producer of this type equipment for the independent telephone companies.

The new exchange will have an initial capacity of 385 lines, an increase of 60 lines over the present system. There are presently 1067 telephones in the Northville and Wells area and the demand for telephone service is constantly increasing. Additional lines can be added to the new dial exchange to provide additional service whenever necessary.

The conversion of the Northville exchange to dial operation on November 16, 1956, will bring to this community the most modern kind of telephone service. This is one more advance in providing our subscribers with the most efficient service available.

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Mary Peck

Claude Parker, retired installer-repairman in the Northville exchange, caught a 22", 3 lb. rainbow trout in one of Claude's secret fishing haunts early this summer. Claude just has the knack and tells no one his methods.

Sheila D. Berry, seasonal operator in the Northville exchange, returned to work on June 16. This is Sheila's third summer with us. She just completed her first year at Oneonta State Teachers College. During the past year at school we were pleased to hear that she kept in practice for her summer with us being part-time operator at the College switchboard.

We are glad to welcome back Mary T. Dunham, Senior Operator, after a month's illness.

WE ADD A NEW EXCHANGE

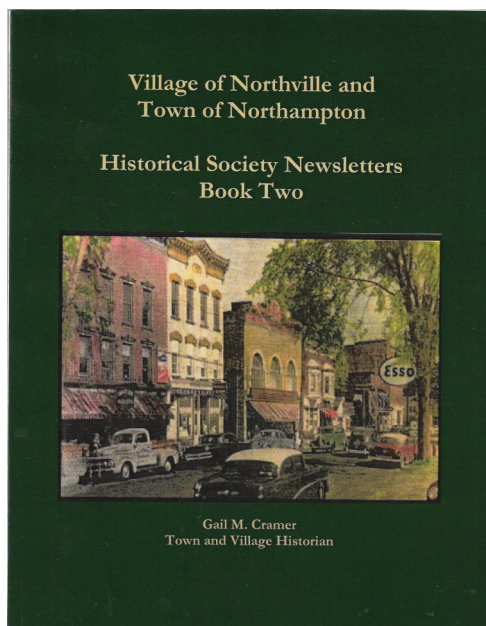
On September 27th a new exchange was cut over at Wells, New York, 15 miles north of Northville. Prior to the establishment of this unattended dial office the 110 subscribers were served from 9 lines from the Northville exchange with 10 to 17 subscribers to a line. Fourteen applicants were awaiting service. Sixty-three of the 110 subscribers have been regraded and the waiting applicants now have service.

To accomplish this the company spent approximately \$36,000 for land, building, equipment and labor. Just another step in our efforts to serve the public more efficiently.



Zina and Nellie Rosa Wilson and Family.

The Zina Wilson family lived on the Mountain Road just outside the village of Northville. They had 7 children: By age: Lucina, Hamilton, Hannah, Lutrica Caroline, and baby Zina Jr. In 1936 twins were born; Richard and Nellie. Richard survived for only a few days. The above picture was taken in 1935 by John W. Trevett, great grandfather of Renee Barney Carr. Thank you Renee for allowing me to use this picture.



Book 2 has been published and is available at the Adk Country Store, Town of Northampton Clerks office, Northville Dime Store and from the Historians Office on Wednesdays.

Jacob Henry Wilson (b 1611) arrived in Boston, Mass in 1653 from Halifax Parish, Yorkshire, England. His gg grandson Ezra Wilson (b.1750) moved to Northern NY state in 1789. Ezra and his family moved to Broadalbin, NY in 1792 and to the Mountain Road in the town of Northampton in 1810. Zina (b.1880) was Ezra's gg grandson.

A number of Wilson families still live on the Mountain Road and I believe they are all from this Wilson line