

NNHS NEWS LETTER

Northville Northampton Historical Society

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Editor
Gail M Cramer



MEMORIES OF HIGH ROCK LODGE

I know most all of you know about HIGH ROCK LODGE, but maybe there's some things about it you don't know or have forgotten. A few years ago Millie Dawes Duncan was invited to speak at the Historical Society about her memories of High Rock when her parents owned and ran it. It was very interesting. So, here is some memories, pictures and facts, along with some of the things she shared and the info that I have in my files, Millie's pictures and some stories from some of the folks who worked there.



The museum has been visited by many folks this summer from all over the US, and by several school groups.

Many thanks to Skip Thompson and Gloria Fuller for their faithfulness and dedication. Terry Warner and Gail Cramer were involved and available when needed.

The museum will officially close August 31, but will be opened by appointment. If you're in town other than July and August and want to visit the museum, or have a family get together and would like to bring your guests to the museum, call for an appointment (863 2628).

Last week I had an urgent call from Gloria who was at the museum. "Can you come over, there's at least a group of 50 people that want to visit the museum (actually there were over 70) I called Skip and we both got there as soon as we could.

The group was a walking tour group that visits different towns and does a walking tour of the towns/villages. They told me they walked just over 6 miles of the village including walking over to the park. Great group of people...go to this website to learn more about them.

www.ava.org



James Hull, born in England in 1851, came to the United States March 10th 1871, and located at Gloversville, N. Y., where he has resided to the present time. He became owner of the High Rock property in 1890, at which time it was known at the Houseman farm. It contained the celebrated White Pines which has made High Rock famous and afforded hundreds of thousands of people enjoyment and health. The hotel, cottages, walks, drives, etc., have all been built under the supervision of Mr. Hull, of which he takes great pride.

Copied from a brochure written in 1917

A BRIEF HISTORY OF HIGH ROCK

(Exerpts from Milly Dawes Duncan and other sources)

Mr. Hull reportedly purchased this tract of land in 1890 from the Houseman farm and proceeded to supervise the building of the lodge and cottages on the site. It's exact opening date has not yet been verified but a Mr. Reuben Buckingham was managing the business at the turn of the century.

It was originally operated as a farmhouse-inn and had its own poultry farm, gardens, and spring-fed water supply.

With improvements it grew to become a 90 room hotel with paved walks and drives overlooking the Sacandaga River Valley.. There were 9 cottages separate from the lodge, available for family vacation rentals.

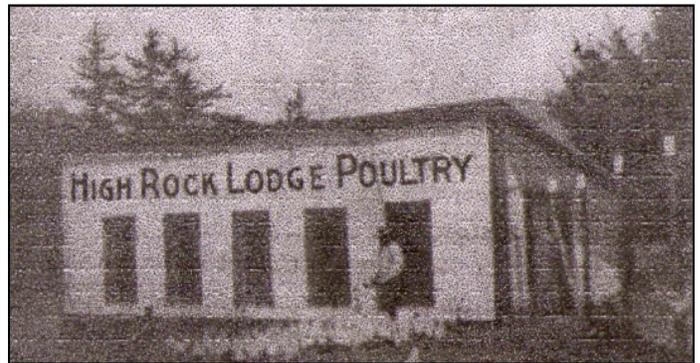
It's name came from the presence of a very large rock situated near the top of the hill.

W. Ashley and Mildred Dawes purchased High Rock from Rueben Buckingham. Dawes officially opened in 1942. They added a 10 room motel, among many other improvements. Until the mid 1940's he continued to operate the poultry farm,

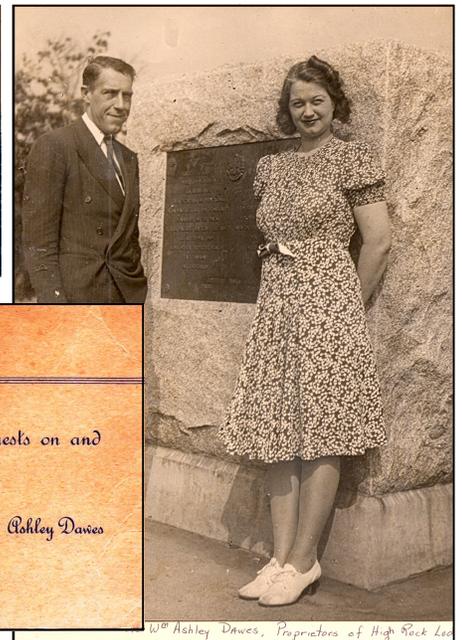
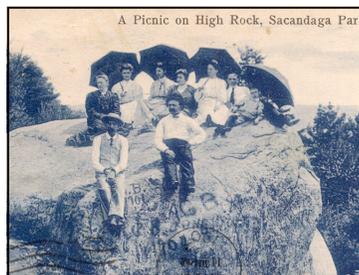
Ashley died in 1950. Mrs. Dawes continued the business. In August of 1951 the lodge, the largest of the buildings burned to the ground. She remodeled Buckingham Cottage into a restaurant and bar . During these years mostly stars and supporting performers from the summer stock theater that was operatering at the Rustic Theater were housed there.

In December of 1956 Mrs. Dawes sold the property to Anthony B Farrell. He continued to use the buildings as a training area for actors and actresses.

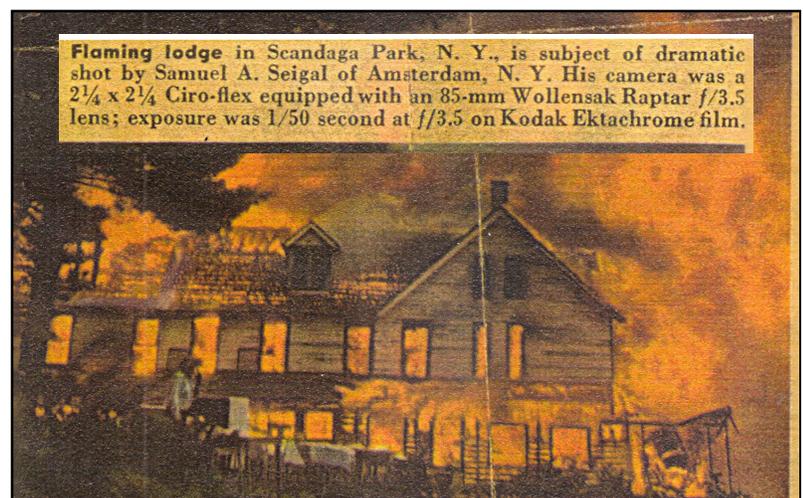
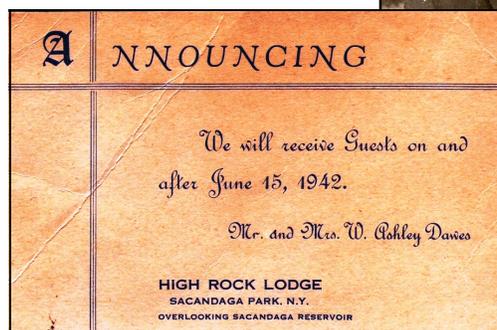
The buildings were destroyed and the property was sold to David and Jacqueline Bramer who built a home near the site of the original Lodge.



Cottages, High Rock Lodge, Sacandaga, N. Y.—32



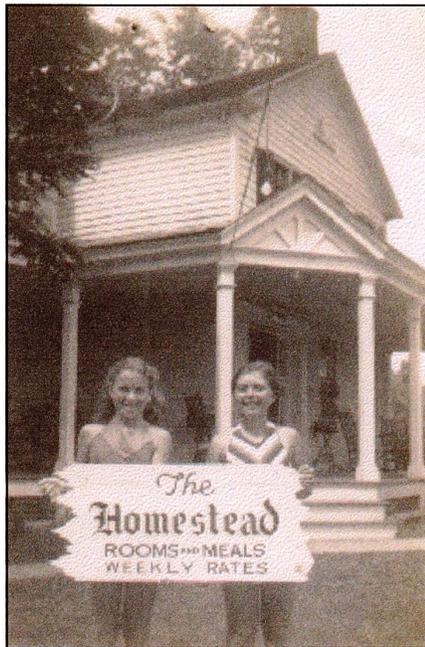
W^o Ashley Dawes, Proprietors of High Rock Led



Flaming lodge in Scandaga Park, N. Y., is subject of dramatic shot by Samuel A. Seigal of Amsterdam, N. Y. His camera was a 2¼ x 2¼ Giro-flex equipped with an 85-mm Wollensak Raptar f/3.5 lens; exposure was 1/50 second at f/3.5 on Kodak Ektachrome film.



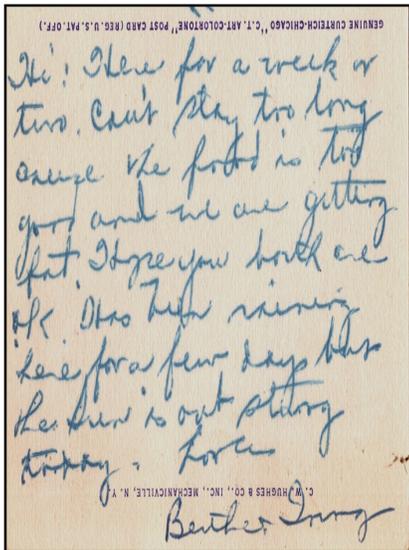
A number of these stone pillars were part of the atmosphere and beauty of High Rock. There were also some on the pathway/steps that led down to Sacandaga Park. Remnants of them still exist today.



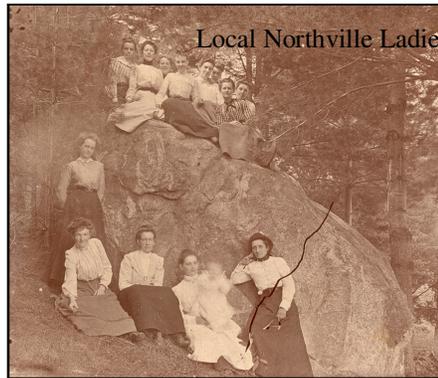
ASHLEY AND MILDRED DAWES

In 1929 the vista changed with the construction of the dam at Conklingville and the creation of the new Sacandaga Reservoir. People continued to come to the lodge to enjoy the environment and changing activities the lake afforded. A young man by the name of William Ashley Dawes, better known as Ashley, came to work for Mr. Buckingham in the late 1920's, while he was learning the hotel management trade. While working at High Rock he also purchased the Brunswick Hotel in Fonda, New York, and here he met and married Mildred Clute in 1936. After selling the Brunswick, and from 1937 to 1939, he and his wife operated a rooming house on south Main Street in Northville, known as "The Homestead". He sold the rooming house and bought High Rock. "The Homestead" was originally the Tracy Howard's family home and also Dr. Gritsavage lived there for a while.

Excerpts from
"High Rock Lodge, It's owners"



A message on the back of a High Rock picture post card postmarked 1950



Carrie Ellsworth, Allie Van Arnam, Esther Cole Palmer, Maggie Beltzer, Ida Harvey and baby and Allie Benton



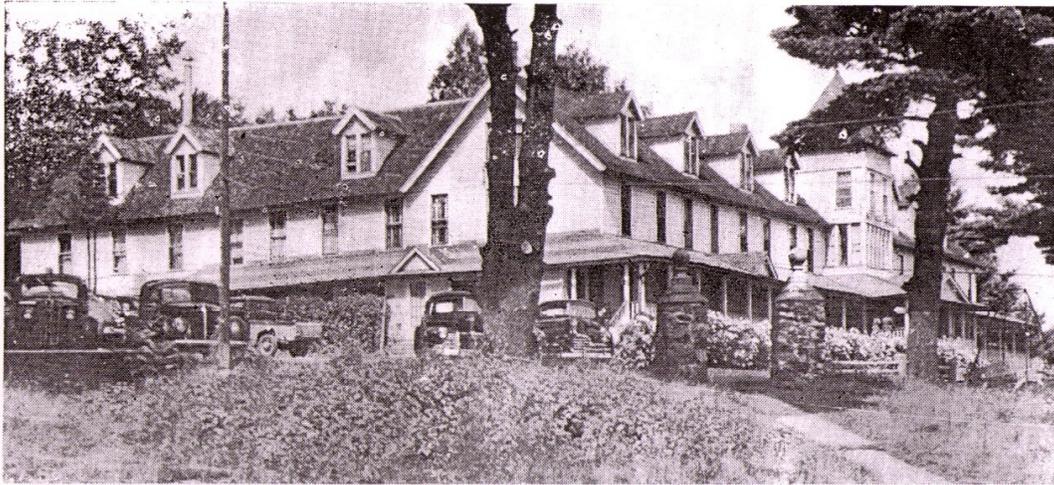
The Lodge afforded a place for school functions, meeting place for businesses, reunions etc



Mildred Dawes serving at the cocktail bar

Location of the High Rock Lodge and cabins was at the top of High Rock Road. There used to be a winding road that led you to the Lodge before the present road existed

Excellent Golf - Tennis - Boating - Bathing - Fishing
Hiking - Shuffleboard - Movies - Television



HIGH ROCK LODGE & COTTAGES

OVERLOOKING SACANDAGA RESERVOIR

ADIRONDACK MOUNTAINS

Mr. and Mrs. W. ASHLEY DAWES, Owners-Managers

JUNE 24 - JULY 10, 1948

Plan to Vacation a Week, Ten Days or Two Weeks

SPECIAL 4th of JULY RATES

American Plan

Rooms with Private Bath \$9.00 per day each Person

CHILDREN UNDER 12 YEARS - \$4.00 per Day

(If Child is 3rd Person in a Room)

Rooms with Running Water \$7.00 per day each Person

TWO IN A ROOM (Single \$8.00)

ALL RESERVATIONS MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY A DEPOSIT

Above Rates Effective June 24 - July 10, 1948 only

The information in this newsletter is so limited to the total history of High Rock, but it will spark your memories and for some it may be all new information. If you worked at High Rock or have other information you'd like to share, hit "forward to all" on your computer and share with us. I'd like to continue to add to the history/story of High Rock. I do have a few more pictures and some details if you ever want to research it a bit further, just let me know and I'll share it with you.

Town and Village Historian, Gail Cramer

SUMMER EMPLOYMENT FOR LOCAL YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS



Helen Serfis Russell



Sid Junquera, Jack, Mrs. Dawes, Nancy Russell, Don J.



Kitchen Staff

Hazel Darling

Louis Abrams

Delbert Fraiser

Sid Junquera

I'm sure there were many more Northville young folks that worked at the Lodge, then are in these pictures.. There were housekeeping, dish washers, grounds keepers, child care/babysitting, cooks, waitresses, maintenance and probably many more jobs available. I had a chat with Helen Serfis Russell this week about working there. She told me that she was a waitress in the children's dining hall. Seems the children were very undisciplined especially when their parents were present, but Helen said that they were fine when they were just with her.



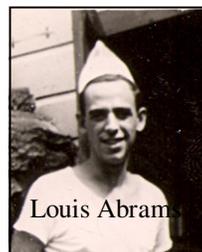
Housekeeping Crew

Helen Foy

Mary Sauve

Esther Weaver

Iona Darling



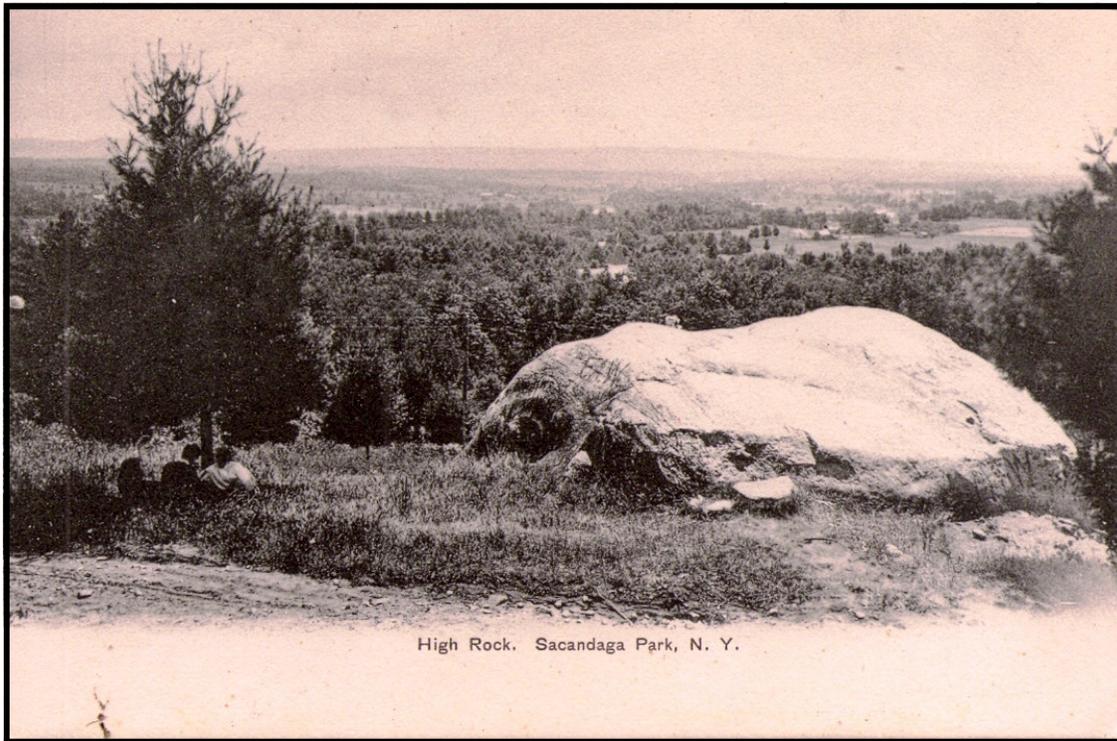
Louis Abrams



Bob Russell

Helen Russell told me that when Ashley passed away, Bob Russell became manager of the business for awhile.

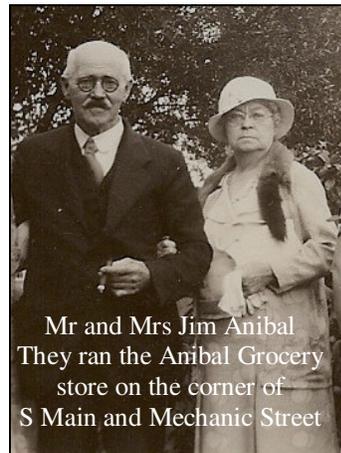
An interesting view from High Rock before the lake was in



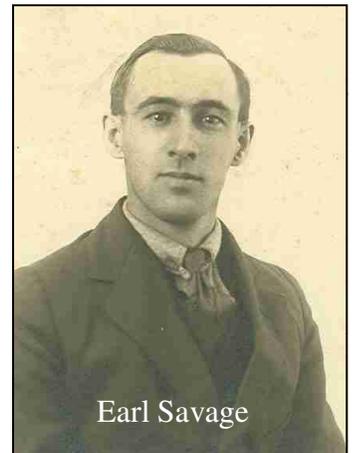
MORE NORTHVILLE FOLKS WE DON'T WANT TO FORGET



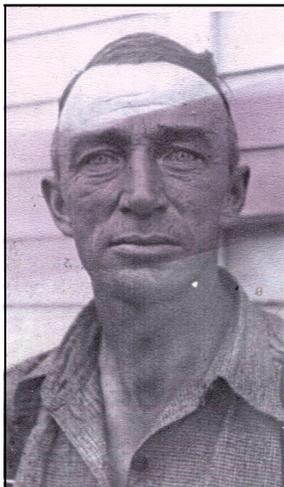
Carl Gifford, Bill Favior and Theron Serfis



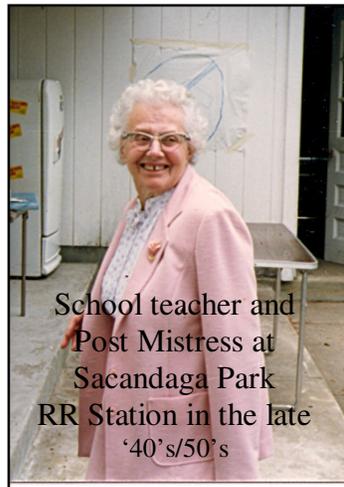
Mr and Mrs Jim Anibal
They ran the Anibal Grocery
store on the corner of
S Main and Mechanic Street



Earl Savage



Clarence Van Vrankin



School teacher and
Post Mistress at
Sacandaga Park
RR Station in the late
'40's/'50's

Leona Gifford



The Cruickshank Family