

Massawepie Staff Alumni Association Newsletter

Providing Spirit, Service and Support

December 2001

Kathy Elliott, President; Mark Pulvino, Vice President; Mike Arlauckas, Secretary; David Lippitt, Treasurer

Staff Advisor: Don DeClerck

Other Executive Committee Member: Pete Collinge

Happy Holidays!



*Two Alumni members reunite 40 years later
at last year's Happy Hour event!*

Alumni Happy Hour Event!

Wednesday, January 23rd marks the date for the Massawepie Staff Alumni Happy Hour event! This year's event will be held at the Scotch and Sirloin, located in Winton Place Mall at the intersection of Winton Road and Brighton-Henrietta Town Line Rd. The fun begins at 5:30 PM.

Definitely an adult event, reminiscent of our "evenings" at OPD! We will also take the opportunity to discuss the 50th anniversary during the course of the evening. You take care of your drinks, the Alumni Association will take care of the munchies. To RSVP please call 374-5770 or e-mail us as MassAlumni@aol.com

World Famous Staff Alumni T-shirts

A must have for every Massawepie Staff Alumni member! This T-shirt is famous!! (Check out our Beaver Weekend group photo on the Massawepie Staff Alumni Web Site).

This T-shirt can be yours for only \$12.00 per shirt. If you need the T-shirt mailed to you, please add an additional \$3.20. To order one, please write us with your name, address, t-shirt size (XXL, XL, L or M) and check made out to Otetiana Council. Available to dues-paid members only, so add \$10 membership dues if you haven't paid them already.

Massawepie 50th Anniversary August 3rd, 2002

We are moving forward with planning for Massawepie's 50th Anniversary celebration. This event will be held at Massawepie on Saturday, August 3, 2002 (between the 5th and 6th week camping sessions). The celebration will start at about noon on Saturday, August 3 and finish with a campfire that night. An afternoon retreat will include a rededication ceremony for the camp.

Other tentative events for this celebration include: guided tours of the camp, special activities in each of the camp's program areas, a 50th anniversary hike, a Massawepie history scavenger hunt, patch trading, a Massawepie memorabilia show, a rededication of the Loren Hakes Memorial campfire circle, dinner, and of course, the closing campfire. There will be special prizes and recognition for many of these activities.

The \$15 per person fee for this event will include dinner Saturday night and a special commemorative 50th anniversary patch. The patch will only be given to those who attend the anniversary celebration on August 3, 2002. For an additional \$5, participants can have a dining hall brunch on Sunday August 4. Reservation information for this event will be sent out by the end of January to every alumni member.

We hope you will join us for this fabulous event, either as a volunteer or visitor. For more information, please attend our January meeting/Happy Hour event (see above) or contact us by e-mail or phone.

How to Contact us

E-Mail: MassAlumni@AOL.com

Web site: MassStaffAlumni.org

Address:

Massawepie Staff Alumni Association

C/O Don DeClerck, Camp Cutler

7131 Gulick Rd.

Naples, NY 14512

Or call Don DeClerck @ 585-374-5770

2001 Annual Fall Picnic is a Success!

Clams, chicken, corn on the cob, and potatoes were enjoyed by the Staff Alumni and their families at the 2nd Annual Fall picnic! The weather was great and was much drier than last year. There were new faces at this year's event; we experienced a 25% increase in attendance this year over last year thanks in large part to the Turner family who practically had a family reunion with us! We hope that this event will continue to grow.

The best part of the day was sharing old memories with friends and creating new memories. As with any Alumni event a group photo was taken for the Alumni photo gallery!

Many thanks to Mark Pulvino and his crew for their great cooking!! And many thanks to Don DeClerck for his continued support of the Massawepie Staff Alumni Association.

Membership Update!

We currently have 88 dues-paid members. Membership has grown over 40% since our September newsletter!! Our goal is to reach 100 members by the 50th Anniversary this summer and we need your help recruiting new members! If you know someone who hasn't joined, please encourage them to do so. Our membership dues are still \$10, the application can be downloaded from our web site. Reminder: The membership fees are waived for anyone donating \$50 or more to the Loren R. Hakes Campfire Circle!

Almost There.....

Speaking of the Campfire Circle, we only have \$1,400 to go to reach our goal of \$22,000!! If you know of anyone who has expressed interest in donating, but hasn't contributed yet, please encourage them to do so!! If you have thought about donating, but haven't, now is the time to get that donation in! Your help is greatly appreciated!



A tired Beaver Weekend work crew at the end of a successful and long day

2002 BEAVER WEEKEND

Hold the date!! Beaver Weekend this year is Friday, May 31st through Sunday, June 2nd. The Massawepie Staff Alumni Association will hold its annual meeting at the Loren R. Hakes Campfire Circle again this year on Saturday evening after a day of hard work on several new projects. With the turnout we had last year, and some new recruits, the Alumni Association will be able to make even greater strides for camp. As the 50th Anniversary approaches this summer, we want to help camp get into tip-top shape for the scouts and for the big event!

This year's projects include renovating some of the cabins in cabin row. The cabins are in great need of the 3 R's: Repairing, Remodeling and Re-roofing! As we get closer to the date we will be able to provide further details as to the extent of the projects and if any tools will be needed. There will also be the opportunity to re-mulch the campfire circle, so if your "skills" are limited in carpentry, we still have plenty for you to do!

We are looking forward to seeing you all there. Bring along a new recruit, your scouting spirit and memories to share! We can keep growing and forming new and lasting traditions in the spirit of Massawepie.

If you have any questions, please feel free to e-mail Mark Pulvino at MYVINO@Frontiernet.net or give Mark a call at 716-671-3961

How Pontiac Point Got Its Name **(Maybe!)**

by Peter Collinge

The name "Pontiac Point" for Massawepie Lake's prominent point near Camp Mountaineer seems to have originated with the Boy Scouts, as there is no record of that name prior to 1950. It seems likely that the Scouts named the point after a story in the book:

Mohawk Peter - Legends of the Adirondacks and Civil War Memories
by Henry G. (Gustavus) Dorr; The Cornhill Publishing Company, Boston, 1921

This book, now primarily found in non-circulating collections of Adirondack libraries, includes tales its author claims to have heard from a Mohawk man named Peter, whose ancestors came north each summer to use the land around Massawepie as their hunting grounds.

To introduce the author, here are passages from the book's Foreword by Nathan Haskell Dole. "Henry G. Dorr's life of more than four score years has covered many interesting and unusual events. As a young man ... he sailed ... for Hong Kong." In a storm the ship put in at Port Elizabeth. In July, 1859, he discovered an odd-looking pebble that a jeweler later identified as a diamond in the rough. "He had discovered the diamond-fields of South Africa, and if it had not been for the sudden death of one of his friends ... might have returned to the Cape Colonies... with ample funds to make explorations and exploit the mines which have since provided the world with a half billion dollars' worth of precious stones." Back in Boston, in 1862 Dorr "enlisted in the Union Army and served gallantly until the end of the war." In January, 1864, "he was commissioned major. He was under fire twenty-six times and was captured by Rebels...."

"Sometime later than the close of the Civil War Major Dorr came into possession of an extensive property in the Adirondacks including Lake Massawepie, around whose shores many Indian tales and memories cluster. While developing Childwolde (sic) Park as a summer hunting and fishing resort he found it interesting to jot down some of the aboriginal stories..." Actually, Childwold Park was developed by Addison Child, opening in 1890. But Major Dorr was eventually the summer manager, and apparently became at least part owner after Child's 1898 death. He was a frequent visitor to the property even after the hotel closed in 1909.

The book starts with Dorr's stories of Mohawk Peter. In Chapter 1, Major Dorr returns to his cabin, Camp Sorghum (an outbuilding of the former hotel, and later the Camp Pioneer Office from 1952-1970) and finds Peter, a 60-year-old (+/-) Mohawk Indian from the Ottawa River area in Canada (where the Mohawks were driven after siding with the British during the American Revolution). Peter says that his grandfather had his wigwam nearby each summer for years, and had frequented a local camping grounds and spring on the Raquette River, at Flat Rock. "The Flat Rock Camp and spring were used simply for the convenience that they afforded for camping purposes. The real monument that gave its name to the rendezvous was the Rocking Stone lying about a half mile distant. This is a huge boulder, weighing upward of five hundred tons, which is perched upon the very verge of a precipice of a hundred or more feet in depth, and is so perfectly balanced that a slight pressure from one's hand will set the immense stone rocking." This area was "a time-honored rendezvous of the Mohawk Indians, where councils were held for civil and military purposes, forays were planned, and reprisals were enacted upon prisoners." However, no reprisals were enacted on the French prisoner, Lt. Davout, whose story concludes this chapter.

In Chapter 2, Peter tells of two prisoners, a French officer (Captain Bonaparte) and his daughter, captured in battle. Both the British and the French offered ransom for them, but negotiations were complicated by the chief's desire to keep the daughter as his wife. Eventually, a British party arrived to retrieve them, but the chief still resisted until the British threatened to dislodge the Rocking Stone. Finally the Mohawks release the pair to the British.

Chapter 3 tells the story of Chief Pontiac. One autumn morning Peter and the author canoe to the "outlet of Massawepie Lake into Grasse river" (sic). A storm comes up suddenly while they return, so they stop at "Rocky Point" (now Pontiac Point), a rocky promontory with an old, dilapidated log camp. Peter points out that the site commands the lake and is easily defended, and made a good camp for Indians who didn't feel safe from attack. He tells that Pontiac, chief of the Ottawas (enemy of the British, friend of the French) once camped there for that reason. Flat Rock on the Raquette was sometimes used for Indian councils when they wanted to be away from the British and French. Pontiac arrived (via the Grasse River from Canada) to invite the Mohawks to help him attack the British fort at Detroit. He made great promises of "scalps, plunder, and money from the French." Pontiac was daring to come so far through the land of his enemies, the Mohawks and Oneidas, but he apparently arranged some kind of "safe conduct".

Pontiac spoke of his plan to drive the British into the sea, and to save America for the Indians. He had already convinced the Senecas, and hoped that if the Mohawks joined then all of the Iroquois would follow. For this reason he came to the Mohawks personally, rather than sending an emissary. Pontiac convinced many, but the British Sir William Johnson had already met with the Mohawk chiefs. Johnson had great influence, as he was known as a trusted friend, so the Mohawks were divided. While Pontiac waited for an answer, a French prisoner of the Mohawks escaped and came to Pontiac's camp. The prisoner had been "adopted into

tribe as Mohawk", was married to a Mohawk and had a baby. But he told Pontiac that he also had a French wife and child, and that Pontiac as a friend of the French must help him to return. Pontiac refused, and said that the man must remain with his adopted tribe. Then the Frenchman used his red and blue devil tattoo as a sign of his power to convince an Ottawa brave to sneak him along with them.

Eventually, most of the Mohawks agreed to join Pontiac's attack on Detroit. Pontiac hurried back to Canada. But halfway back, a Mohawk runner caught up and, though exhausted, threw down a war token (a bundle of arrows tied with snakeskin) at Pontiac's feet. When asked why, the runner said that it is because Pontiac had taken the French prisoner with him. Pontiac denied this, and the runner started to leave. Pontiac then made inquiries and found the man, with stained skin, hidden among his braves. The Frenchman tried to convince Pontiac that his tattoo will bring the Ottawa luck, but Pontiac smashed the man's skull with a tomahawk and handed the scalp to the Mohawk runner. Peter says, "That was reason Mohawks were not in fight at Fort Detroit."

Chapters 4 and 5 tell further stories of Peter's family, especially of his wife and granddaughter. The book also contains "From Other's Standpoint", which is "a protest against unsportsmanlike slaughter of game, which is too often practiced in the Adirondack forests as is elsewhere the case upon this continent." While the location is unspecified, the setting could easily be Massawepie. The book concludes with tales of South Africa and the Civil War. But it is Mohawk Peter's recollections that are specific to Massawepie, and that hint at the origin of "Pontiac Point".