# NNHS NEWS LETTER

Northville Northampton Historical Society

Issue 61
September 2015
Editor
Gail M Cramer

## NNHS SCHOOL HOUSE MUSEUM
## SUMMER OF 2015

Over 450 visitors during July and August. We are officially closed but will open by appointment or special events

***When was the last time you visited our local historical museum? Have you ever? This summer we added some new artifacts and rearranged some displays. Just in case you've never visited the museum or it's been awhile, here is a 2015 pictorial tour for you. (See page 3 for details)***

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9
BALL GAME TO DAY
NORTHVILLE A.A.
- VS -
SKATING
JAN. 1st
NORTHVILLE, N.Y.

10

OUR
OLDEST ARTIFACT
POSSIBLY
400 YEARS OLD
OR OLDER
INDIAN
MORTAR
AND PESTLE
Found when uprooting
trees etc from the valley
for the Building of the
Conklinville Dam
11

BILL THE BUTCHER
12

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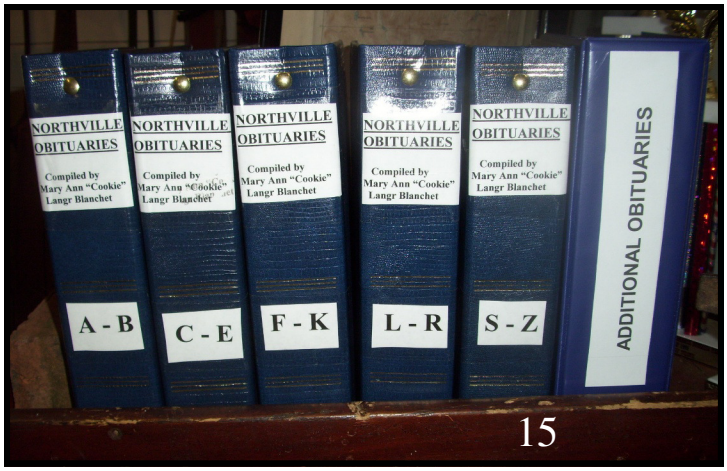

NORTHVILLE OBITUARIES
Compiled by Mary Ann "Cookie" Langr Blanchet
A - B
C - E
F - K
L - R
S - Z
ADDITIONAL OBITUARIES
15

16

19

17

18

Our School house museum has many displays on the history of Northville/Northampton. The pictures only show a few. The museum is open during the months of July and August Wednesday and Saturday from 10 to 2. June, September and October by appointment.

1. One of many display cases. This one displays fireman pictures, and fireman apparatus, plus military pictures, swords, list of veterans, medals, flags etc
2. Fireman's display
3. Corn husk dolls display
4. Remnants of the Swift's chimney
5. NCS yearbook collection
6. Glove industry
7. Permanent Wave machine from Mildred Bradt's Hair salon
8. School desks
9. Winter Sports
10. Old fashion washing machine and other antique house hold tools.
11. Our oldest artifact, an Indian mortar and pestle dating at least 400 years old and possibly older.
12. Barber pole from Bill Gagne's barber shop. (see 10/11 newsletter for more info on this.
13. Milk bottles from local dairies.
14. Policemen display.
15. Collection of local obituaries
16. Bed from the jail
17. Display posters with local history
18. History and pictures of our bridges
19. Jail door from our old jail which was on Water Street, then moved to the firehouse .

Other displays include : Gas stations, Churches, Groceries stores, Sacandaga Park, Farm equipment, Post office history, Maps, F. J. and G Railroad, Wooden water pipes, Logging, Drugstores, Dentists, Doctors, School slates and other memories from school days. Come in browse, we have informed guides that will answer your questions. Guides: Skip and Linda Thompson, Gloria Fulmer, Gail Cramer, subs Terry Warner and Larry Cramer

# NORTHVILLE PLACID TRAIL

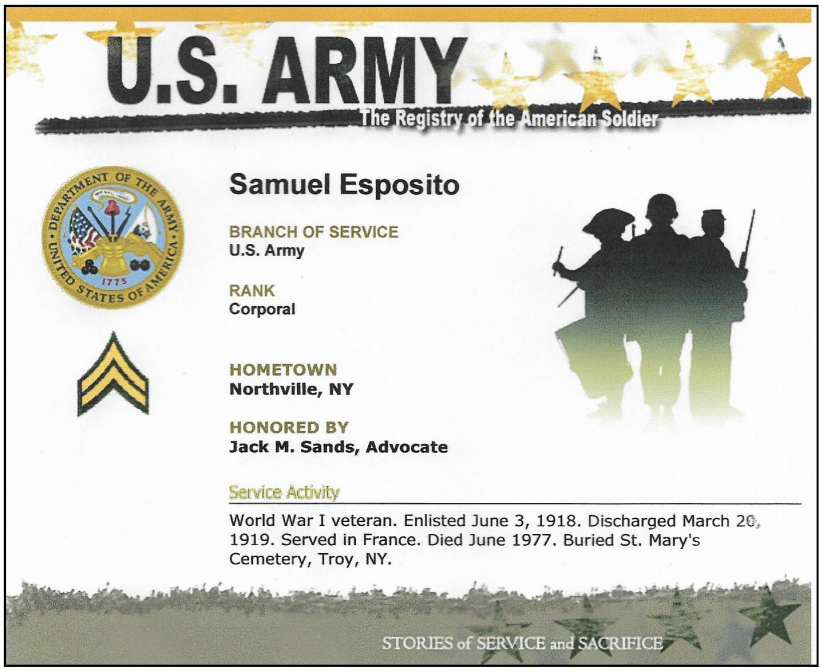
Remember this sign?

It was directly across the road/bridge leading out of the village. It was there for many years. It was removed a few weeks ago and new signs have been posted on route 152 to direct the hikers to the new trailhead just off the mountain road. The sign is now in the NNHS museum.

This week, September 24, there was a ceremony conducted at the new trailhead. This new section of the trail is from just off Gifford -Collins Road and continues on to Benson , around Woods Lake to the trailhead off Washburn Road in Benson. *Go to the North-ville*

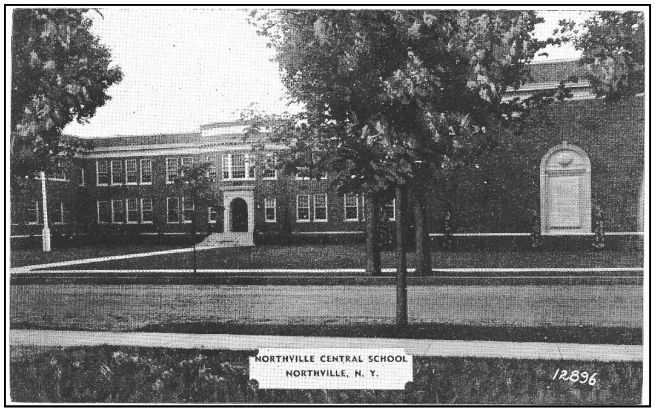
Matt Ginter and Gail Cramer had the opportunity to attend the opening ceremony of the new trailhead.

House # 13 in last months NNHS newsletter was the home of Leona and Elwyn Tennant




## PLANNING AHEAD
## For July 1, 2016

**Reunion for all those who attended NCS grades from 1950 to 1959. If you attended NCS during those years whether you graduated from NCS or not you are invited. We are now trying to locate classmates of that era. Someone from your class is working on finding addresses. We may need your help in finding someone. More information will be coming your way**




# OCTOBER FEST
# October 10

**Sponsored by the Civic Association**

**Time: 1pm-7pm**

**Where: Waterfront Park, Northville (Behind The Timeless Tavern)**

**Please join us for a day full of fun!**

**There will be: 1st Annual Car Show, Hayrides, Interactive Bounce Houses, Craft Vendors, Zombie Painting, Music, Magic Show "Jak Creatlach: Visual Deception Artist" from 1pm-3pm, Physic Autumn, Pumpkins will be for sale, and also from 2-5 Action Photo Booths (action booth is weather Permitting)!**

**All Proceeds from this event will go towards the 4th of July Doins & Fireworks display in Northville!**

***Pumpkins will be available for pick up at the Timeless beginning Oct. 6th for the Pumpkin carving contest, pumpkins to return on the morning of October 10th for Judging.***

***Also the Presbyterian Church will have chili, soup, and baskets of goodies to auction at the Red Barn The CCC and NNHS will have a table on Main Street sponsoring the Historic Business Walking.***

# EARLY DAYS IN THE ADIRONDACKS

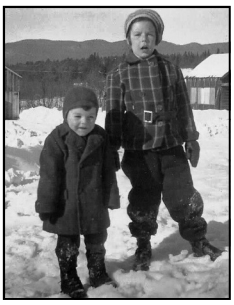
## Benson, NY

By Art Storer

Jobs were scarce on Staten Island, New York following the depression of the early 1930's. Norman and Ruth Storer had the opportunity, in February 1939, to move to the Adirondacks so that Norm could build some cabins for Mr. George Robinson in Benson, NY. The cabins were to be built on a large parcel of land that included parts of beautiful Woods Lake in Hamilton County. Norm and Ruth made the trip to Benson with their 3 year old daughter Nancy and 9 month old son Artie. They moved into the old mouse infested cabin called "Trails End", and prepared to build the new cabins by sawing boards at the sawmill that was on the property. The sawmill was powered by a 1923 Fordson steel-wheeled tractor. In the spring, Norm proceeded to start the building of four cabins on the property.

Norm, his son Artie and Norm's brother, Vernon Storer About 1939

Norm and Ruth made a good life in Benson during the ensuing years. The family moved into a larger house which was on the property, a short distance from the old cabin. They purchased a cow, pigs, chickens, and some sheep. A large field of potatoes was planted with the Fordson tractor. The potatoes helped feed the pigs and left some for the family as well. Norm also had a 1930 Model AA Ford truck to haul supplies used for building the cabins. There was also an old icehouse and large concrete swimming pool near the original cabin. During the winter, ice in the swimming pool was cut into large blocks and buried in the sawdust in the icehouse. Sawdust from the sawmill acted as insulation over the blocks of ice, and kept them frozen all summer. The blocks of ice were used in the family icebox to keep food cool during the summer months. Life was tough, but bearable during a difficult period in New York State.



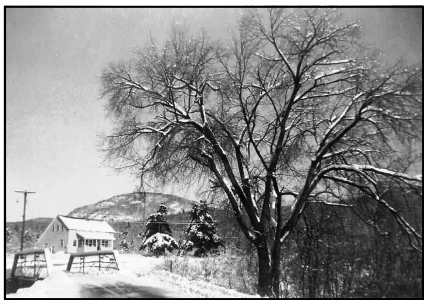
Nancy and Artie at home in Benson

Benson had a one-room schoolhouse where Nancy started school in 1940. Leona Gifford was the school teacher. In 1943, Nancy, Artie, and the other students began attending Northville Central School. The school bus from Northville made the 10 mile trip (one way) every day and Nancy and Artie usually had perfect attendance.

During the summer vacations, Nancy and Artie would swim in the creek in front of the house, or hike with their mom back to Woods Lake to boat and swim. Picking blackberries and huckleberries was also a favorite pastime, especially when grandma and grandpa Finlay came to stay for a few weeks from Staten Island, NY.

Maintaining a small farm and doing carpenter work in Gloversville, Northville, and Benson, kept Norm busy. Cows had to be milked two times a day, pigs and chickens fed, and driving back and forth to job locations made for a long day.

Norm and Ruth acted as caretakers for the cabins, which meant shoveling snow off roofs in winter, and keeping things going during the summer when the cabins were occupied.



**This picture taken in 1960 two years after electricity was installed in Benson.**

Living in the rural setting of Benson, NY meant being continually observant for forest fires in the Adirondack Park. Norm was appointed Fire Warden for Upper Benson, and was provided fire equipment . During one especially dry summer, Nancy and Artie saw and smelled smoke in the forest about 2 miles from home. Filling the water tanks, and grabbing the fire brooms, they rushed toward the smoky area as quickly as possible. The tanks were heavy on their backs and after an exhausting trip they arrived at the fire area. The fire was spreading slowly in the leaves. After using the brooms and spraying the tanks of water, the fire appeared to be extinguished. Obviously someone had dropped a cigarette or match. No one was seen, but Nancy and Artie stayed in the area until they were sure the fire would not rekindle. When they returned home, Ruth drove to Northville to call the "Cathead Mountain" fire spotter to report the fire. The fire spotter had seen the smoke earlier and had alerted appropriate authorities who were en route. He then observed that the smoke had dissipated and that the fire appeared to be out.

During hunting season, Ruth rented out several rooms to hunters, which

## Early Days in the Adirondacks (continued)

gave her some spending money for the season. She prepared breakfast and dinner for the hunters, and usually there was venison on the table for at least a few meals.

The weather in Benson was on the cool side, and nearly every month of the year had at least one night of frost. The field of potatoes froze several years in a row, and Norm finally quit planting a garden.

Life in the Adirondacks was not easy, especially since Benson did not have electricity or telephone. The Storer home had a battery—powered radio, oil lamps, outside privy, and a hand well pump in the kitchen. In the 1950s, Benson was wired for electricity by the U. S. Rural Electrification Program. Norm installed a new electric well pump and an inside bathroom in their home. A few years later, telephone lines were strung to electric poles. Life became a little easier.

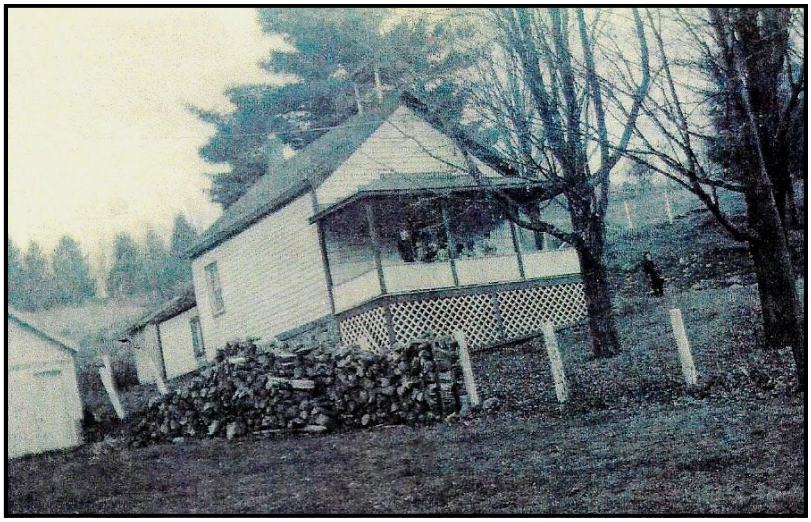
Norm continued to build houses and do carpentry work in the area, and Ruth bottled milk, made butter, and helped maintain the homestead. Nancy and Artie both graduated from Northville Central School (1953 and 1956) Both went off to college.

In later years, Norm became the Hamilton County Welfare Commissioner, and attended meetings when necessary in Lake Pleasant, NY. He also served on the Northville School Board for many years.

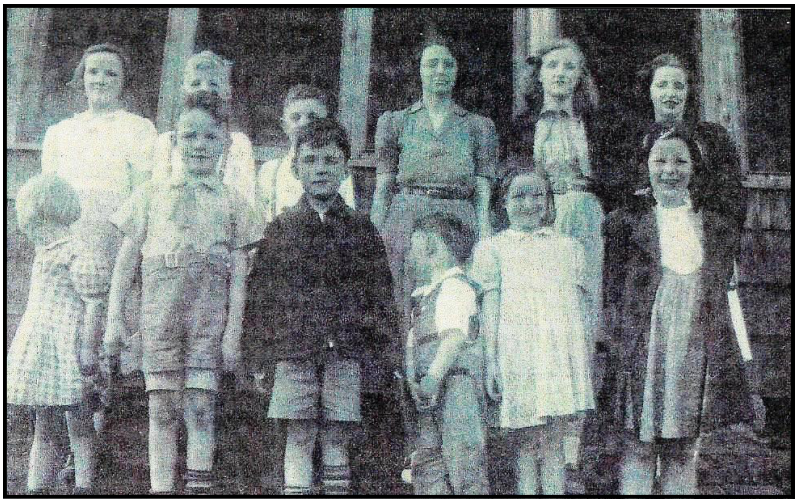
Today, the property where Norm and Ruth Storer built cabins is called Lapland Lake. It is a popular cross country ski and vacation center. The road to Lapland Lake is called "Norm Storer Road". The old ice –house by the swimming pool was made into a cabin in the 1950s, and today is the "Tuulen Tupa" restaurant.

The Adirondacks were indeed a land of opportunity for the Storer family. Both Nancy Storer Jensen and Art feel privileged to have been raised in this rural setting.

*Thank you Artie for sharing this interesting story of your life in Benson, NY*



Lower Benson School where Nancy and Artie attended.. Nancy is in the yard. Lillian Blowers, Loren and Robert Blowers, Danny and Edward Wadsworth and Clara Walker on the porch. November 25, 1940



May 9, 1941

Nancy's 6th birthday party at her home in Benson. Local Benson kids in attendance were: Unknown girl, Edward and Danny Wadsworth, Artie Storer, Shirley Snell, Nancy Storer (Jensen), Back row: Students : Clara Walker, Robert and Loren Blowers, teacher was Leona Gifford, Lillian Walker and Lorraine Blowers.

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**NORTHVILLE PLACID TRAIL SOUVENIOR**
**Have you hiked the NPT or part of it?**
**Nice pins will be going on sale "again" soon.**

**Check the Northville Placid Trail FB**
**for the date they will be available**