

# NNHS NEWS LETTER

Northville Northampton Historical Society

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Editor  
Gail M Cramer



## FISH HOUSE

TOWN OF NORTHAMPTON

**Historical House & Garden Tour**

July 21, 2012  
Fish House, NY

**Fish House Celebrates 250 Years!**

Ticket discount if you order before July 1st.

\$20 per person  
\$15 per person - presale  
\$10 per person - group rate (10 or more)

Contact Susan Walter for tickets at 518-883-1016  
<http://www.northamptonnyhistory.com>

The Historical Society made it possible for Historic Fish House to purchase banners. The banners help those visiting the area to recognize this little historical hamlet.

Go to the Fish House website at [www.northamptonnyhistory.com](http://www.northamptonnyhistory.com)

The history of Fish House, which is the beginning of our Town of Northampton, starts just prior to the Revolutionary War. Sir Wm Johnson asked Jacob Shew if he'd be willing to take his family and move to the area to develop the land. That was 250 years ago.

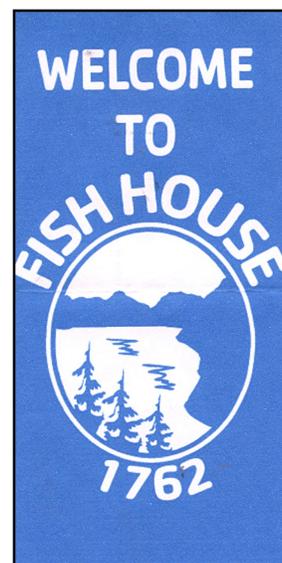
Fish House celebrated 250 years, this summer with a Historical House and Garden Tour. I hope that some of you were able to attend.

The Town of Northampton Deputy Historian, Joanne Blaauboer will be speaking and showing her power point about the history of Fish House in our November 7th Historical Society Meeting. You won't want to miss this. She has also done a great job researching the houses that have been moved from the lake area when the reservoir was built.

To the HISTORICAL Society of Northampton,  
The Fish House HISTORIC House +  
GARDEN TOUR on July 21<sup>st</sup> WAS A wonderful  
success. Several people commented on  
our new town banners. We would not  
have been able to have these banners  
without your generous donation.  
Thank you so very much! Enclosed  
is a copy of what the banners look  
like on each side.

Sincerely,  
Joanne Blaauboer  
FHCC Secretary  
Deputy Historian

THANK YOU



## The Esso Station, by Jack Sands

*Bill Crannell writes; I only knew Jack Sands for a few years in the late 1940's and early 1950's. We kept company when he came to*



*Northville after living in Mayfield and Gloversville . We attended church together in Northville. His uncle was Arthur Sands who ran a radio shop and early TV shop in Northville. His grandmother worked for and knew my grandmother Kested very well. Jack graduated from Northville*

*High School in 1950 and myself in 1951.*

*After working at the Esso Gas Station on Main Street, he joined the US Marine Corp for many years before becoming a police officer in Washington D. C. area He retired as a high ranking officer. He married a local girl, Shirley Rhodes. Jack and I keep in contact via the computer. A great guy !*

After graduating from Northville High School in 1950, and before joining the marine Corps, I worked for two years in Van Arnam's Esso Gas Station that was located next to the Village Green, where the Pink Chicken (BCON) is now located. I worked 60 hours a week for \$39. My supervisor was Charles Van Every. As I recall, gas was 29 cents a gallon, a quart of oil was 35 cents and a grease job was \$1.25, and the auto companies recommended that vehicles be lubricated and the oil changed every 1,000 miles. We saved and used oil in a barrel and it was put on dirt roads to keep the dust down. We had some customers whose cars used so much oil, that we would give them this old oil if they asked for it. There were two types of antifreeze for cars. The permanent type, similar to that used by cars today came in cans and was intended to last all winter. The second type was referred to as "alcohol", and it was stored in a barrel. We had a hand pump and would fill a quart container and add it to the car radiators of those customers who needed it. It was less expensive than the other type and was used in many of the older cars.

The problem with it was that if you got stuck and had to race the engine, this type of antifreeze would boil out of the radiator.

There were still some old cars on the road that had mechanical brakes, and they would freeze up after driving through snow and ice. We would put these cars up on the lift and take a hammer to break the ice loose from the brake rods under the chassis. Many people used tire chains in the winter. If they broke, they could do a lot of damage to fenders. There was something called a "monkey link", that could be used to reconnect the broken links, and we sold boxes of them.

We had only one customer who had a credit card. It was issued by the oil company. As far as I know, there were no bank credit cards at that time. We gave customers S&H Green Stamps with their purchases. These could be redeemed for merchandise in the S&H Catalog

The gas station, because of its central location was a place where people would just stop by to visit. One of the frequent visitors was Walter Letts, who owned a local saw mill. He often talked about a machine that he had developed to turn saw dust into finger size briquettes, that could be burned like charcoal. A photo story about this appeared in the Sept. 1949 issue of *Popular Science Magazine*. Clarence Davison, the village police officer usually parked his car nearby and if the telephone operator received an emergency call, one of the first places she'd call to locate Clarence was in Esso Station. On summer evenings "Sam The Popcorn Man" would park his truck near the Village Green and a large number of people would stop by to enjoy the tasty treat.



# UPDATE ON THE LOGGING SLEDS

By Terry Warner

An update on the status of the logging sleds which we have had stored in hopes of someday being able to have an indoor display. We had come to the distinct conclusion that this was becoming less and less possible.

Desiring to share the historical value and rustic beauty of these sleds with the public, we decided to contact the Adirondack Museum at Blue Mountain Lake to see if they would like to display them and have room for them. In talking to the Assistant Curator Angela Suye, we were told they might be able to use the smallest of the three sleds but were definitely not interested in taking any more.

Because of the condition and local history of these sleds, I, in particular, felt they should not be separated. I asked Curator Suye to recommend another Adirondack area museum and historical society that might have a fitting display. She suggested the Black River Canal Museum in Boonville, N.Y. I contacted Director Ed Fynmore and he was excited to hear of our offer. He brought it to his other board members and then contacted me again to arrange a pickup. This past Thursday August 17 he and another gentleman arrived with truck and trailer. We loaded everything aboard for the trip to Boonville.



Photo by Larry Cramer

Terry had stored the sleds in his barn on White Birch Road. He had them standing up-right along the sides of the barn.



Photo by Larry Cramer



Sunday August 19, just happened to be the location of the Adirondack Woodsman's Show in Boonville, which has taken place for the last 65 years. I attended that show today and then visited their Canal Museum. I was astounded at the truly great museum they have created and feel assured our sleds went to the perfect location!

Terry Warner

## Directions

- . From Utica, take 12 North to Boonville about 35 miles.
- . From Watertown, take 12 South to Boonville about 50 miles.
- . From Rome, take 46 North to Boonville about ~~50~~<sup>25</sup> miles

Located just off Route 12 at the point of Main Street and Route 12 along the banks of the canal across from Nice N Easy.

Editors note:

Pack a picnic lunch and visit the museum, this would be a nice day trip. They are open on weekends from Memorial Day through the end of June and Labor Day through Columbus Day from 10 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.