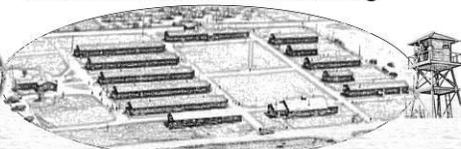


FRIENDS OF HAMLIN BEACH STATE PARK

www.friendsofhamlinbeach.org

1 Camp Road Hamlin, NY 14464



www.nysparks.com

(585) 964-2462

May 8, 2013

Attendees: Dave Walch, Linda Rabjohn, Patti Sullivan (note taker), Eileen Preston, Nick Kramer, Maryanne Hurlbut, Don Rabjohn, Ralph Preston, Paul Mance and wife new member, Gert Hauck, Park Manager Jay Bailey

Treasurer Report

Current Funds

Restricted fund - grant	\$ 1,000.00
Unrestricted fund	<u>\$ 2,142.54</u>
Balance	\$ 3,142.54

I Love My Park Day

- The day was a huge success. During the meeting many people commented on what a great day it was. A few of the comments: Don: Next year we all need to advertise I Love My Park Day to personal friends since many people said they hadn't heard about it.. MaryAnn: Thanks to all organizers and helpers for all the work that was done. Linda: We had 106 volunteers, Linda very pleased how everything went and how much was completed. Nick: Thanks to Linda for her leadership and all she did. Nick was in awe of the work completed by the Young Democrats and how great they were. He may even switch political parties. ☺ (Just kidding)

Other News

- Gert – The Purple Martin house was installed today. Now we just need the residents!
- Linda – June 23rd is Free Fishing Day and is organized by the park. This is sponsored by the Friends so people can make tax deductible donations. See Jay's notes.
- From Sherry Dobson (via Dave) June 1 is the Hamlin WheelFest from 10-6. We are sharing a booth with the park. Sherry will be at the WheelFest and welcomes others to help her out. We will be selling our pins and offering memberships. Sherry is also putting together a basket for the auction.
- Dave – Earth Day went well. The park may move to a different day next year due to cold weather.

Ed's Updates.

- On Drake Rd there's an outhouse associated with POW camp that worker's used while working at the farm. They also had a vegetable stand they used for shade. This is more information we can use and stories for our museum. Ed took pictures.
- On May 19th the Albion students helped at CCC POW camp
- Andreas visit (Gottfried's grandson) – see note at end of newsletter. He felt very welcome.
- Site update – The grass is growing like crazy; Ed needs help with mowing, weed wacking, etc.
- Pond needs mowing, garbage needs picking up, blue can needs dumping. There need to be signs about appropriate behavior, what to do with the garbage, and that fishermen should catch and release fish. Ed would like flower boxes at the house and garages. Need 4x4 posts (total 22) with temporary signs. Bunny is trying to find tables for the house, need more people to work on projects if anyone can help out.
- May 17th – Greece Town Hall is next big talk for AARP.

From Jay – Fishing Day June 23rd 9:00 – 1:00

Jay is requesting the DEC to hold a fishing clinic; Flower City Sportsmen will also be on hand. Shelter 1 will be the starting area. People can also catch and release fish in the pond which is a great place for kids to fish. A park employee will be stationed to measure the fish. Jay is requesting six or more Friends to help out with whatever is needed and also to help fund raise for the event.

Jay was also very happy about the results from I Love My Park Day. There were easily over 115 people attending including the park staff; we may have had the most attended event in New York State. Lieutenant Duffy – You should have been at OUR park! A big thanks from Jay to Linda also! Over 600 trees were planted, park benches and planter boxes were constructed, flower beds look beautiful, and the stage area now has a firm foundation. We even received kudos from the Parks and Trails group.

SUNY Brockport has teams of Freshman, that would be willing to volunteer for their College of Brockport Saturday of Service (August 24th?) He will be requesting one team to work on the Yanty Marsh Trail and two teams to help at the CCC/POW camp. Each team consists of 15 students and they will work about two hours.

Meeting adjourned 8:10

Upcoming Events

- Wheel Fest – June 1st 10:00-6:00
- Free Fishing Day – June 23rd 9:00-1:00

Next meeting: Wednesday, June 12th @ 7:00 (Executive Board and Trustees meet at 6:30)

There was a great article in the Westside News about our visitor from Germany. Ed submitted the article below for us.

Thursday, May 2nd, Hamlin had a visitor from Pforzheim, Germany. At 10:00 in the morning Walt Fisher, Nick Kramer and Ed Evans, three of the volunteers working on CCC/POW camp site, met thirty-two year old Andreas Anshutz at the Rainbow Bridge in Niagara Falls and drove him to Hamlin Beach State Park. Andreas is the grandson of Gottfried Schulze, a former German prisoner of war who lived in Hamlin's POW camp from August of 1944 until January of 1946.

Last summer, eighty-nine year old Gottfried accidentally “found us” on his computer. Since then, he has sent several personal artifacts to Hamlin to be displayed in the future museum planned for the site. The email exchange between Gottfried and Ed Evans also prompted him to write and dedicate to the Friends of Hamlin Beach State Park an eight page booklet about his experiences here.

In April, when Gottfried learned that his grandson had signed up for a bus tour of the United States' northeast coast and Canada, Gottfried emailed and asked if it would be possible to develop a plan to somehow whisk him from the tour for part of a day and get him to Hamlin. With the help of the CCC/POW volunteers, the State Park Staff, the Friends of the Hamlin Beach State Park, Tom Brezlawski, the Town of Hamlin Supervisor, and real spring weather, a plan did indeed come together!

Andreas arrived at the shelter in Area #1 of the State Park at noon for a lunch provided by the Friends. After lunch, Supervisor Brezlawski presented Andreas with a Resolution of Appreciation from the Town Board to be hand delivered by Andreas to his grandfather in Germany, expressing our heartfelt thanks for all Gottfried has done to help unravel some of the mysteries of our POW camp. The Supervisor had also purchased one of Mary Smith's 'History of Hamlin' books for the occasion and Mary autographed it to Andreas, adding a special “Welcome to Hamlin.” Mary presented the book to Andreas.

I had already been presented with the gifts Gottfried had sent with his grandson to deliver to me. Andreas could hardly wait and handed them to me immediately after we arrived at the State Park for lunch. Once the Historian and the Supervisor had made their presentations to Andreas, I showed everyone one of the items Gottfried had sent from Germany. It was a very fancy calf skin wallet he had purchased in the POW camp store, a treasure he cherished for 68 years. It still looked brand new. Inside was some "camp money" - coupons - and a \$100 bill! I couldn't believe Gottfried had parted with the wallet and I couldn't believe the \$100 bill either!

Obviously, this day was destined to turn out to be the closest we could ever come to having a former resident of our prisoner of war camp visit our camp, and I think we made the most of the visit. After the presentations, Andreas was given a drive-by tour of the entire State Park, something none of the prisoners ever got (most of the POWs didn't even know the lake was there) and from there he was taken to the kiosk at the POW camp site.

Before the tour of the campsite began, Andreas got to examine a collection of artifacts found at the site. Everything he touched was previously touched by German POWs who had lived in the camp during WWII. We couldn't say for sure that the bottles and jars in the collection were his grandfather's but his grandfather must have used the dishes unearthed from the mess hall site. The same mess hall dishes were used every day and Gottfried ate at least two meals a day in the mess hall, every day, for a year and a half. It is quite likely that he touched every cup and bowl in the mess hall at least once!

Then Andreas walked through the entire eight acre site, stopping at places his grandfather was known to have spent some time - the infirmary, the mess hall, the latrine and shower room, Barracks #3 - standing at times exactly where his grandfather might have stood 68 years ago.

The shower room's cement floor and drains are still in place. The buildings have disappeared but the dents in the ground where they once sat are very obvious. Barbed wire sticks up through the ground here and there along the fence line that circled the camp. Even the foundations holding up the main gate supports are exactly where they were when Gottfried walked through that gate, twice a day, in the 1940s.

And Andreas will most likely include that information in his report to his grandfather when he gets back to Germany!

For eighteen months, when Gottfried was not behind barbed wire, he worked at the Duffy Mott canning factory in downtown Hamlin. The factory is gone but several of the warehouses that were part of the business remain. Thanks to the generosity of Peter Kruger, the present owner of the warehouses, Andreas was able to complete his Hamlin tour with a visit to the warehouse his grandfather worked in for 80 cents a day. The door Gottfried went in and out of hundreds of times on his trips to and from the railroad platform was still there. Andreas had his picture taken standing in front of that door while the sunlight coming through the cracks in the old door accented his pose.

The day ended with dinner at the Hamlin Station Restaurant. Andreas, the perfect gentleman, had brought some gifts from Germany for my wife and me and he commented on them as we waited for the salads to come. After dinner, we took Andreas back to the Rainbow Bridge. This time, Dan Wilson, another CCC/POW camp volunteer, accompanied us on the hour and a half ride. It was over all too soon. We were back home by 10:00 but we had helped Andreas and Hamlin history make history!