

# Lake Waramaug Association

May 2014



## Community Reunion and Annual Meeting Sunday, June 8, 2014 2:00 PM Lake Waramaug Country Club

Please plan to attend our Annual Meeting. Once again, the Board of Directors invites you to a “community reunion” at 2 PM to share a drink and join in conversation with your friends and neighbors after this frigidly long winter (and chilly spring). Our Association is the core of the community devoted to the protection and preservation of Lake Waramaug. We can be most effective if our members know each other better and have an opportunity to discuss mutual interests. Again, please make a special effort to attend and bring your friends and neighbors — especially newcomers to the lake area — to join in the conversation.

At the Annual Meeting (2:30 PM), Tom McGowan, Executive Director of the Lake Waramaug Task Force, will report on the State of the Lake. As special speaker, we will welcome Sean Hayden, Executive Director of the Northwest CT Conservation District, for his informative presentation concerning simple but effective environmentally friendly development techniques designed to protect lakes and their watershed areas. (For information on the important work of the Conservation District, see [www.conservect.org/northwest](http://www.conservect.org/northwest)). There will be an election of directors of the Association and reports concerning our continuing efforts.

### Our annual Independence Day Fireworks Display will be held on Friday, July 4th (rain date, Saturday, July 5th).



*Photo Credit: Richard Wanderman*

Join your neighbors by continuing the long tradition of lighting flares to outline our beautiful lake in fiery brilliance! Flares will be available for purchase at our June 8 meeting and following the meeting date (while supplies last) at Hopkins Inn, Nine Main and County Wine & Spirits. The celebration begins with the lighting of the flares at 9:00 PM, as a prelude to the magnificent fireworks

display at 9:30 PM. Thanks again to Dorothy Hamilton for making her property available for the firing site and handling the arrangements there. The fireworks display is sponsored by the Association as a reminder to the community of the efforts of the Association and the Task Force to protect and preserve Lake Waramaug.



[www.waramaugassoc.org](http://www.waramaugassoc.org)

P.O. Box 2272  
New Preston, CT 06777

### Dues Reminder

Your annual renewal of membership is important to us. Please return the enclosed envelope as soon as possible.



### Please mark your calendars

Hopkins Vineyard is sponsoring a Triathlon at the lake on Saturday, July 19th beginning at 8 AM. This involves a lake swim, followed by a bicycle segment on the lake roads, and ending with a road race on Warren roads. Please see [www.hopkinsvineyardtri.com](http://www.hopkinsvineyardtri.com) for more information.

Our end-of-summer gathering and meeting will take place on Sunday, September 7, 2014 at 2:00 PM at the Lake Waramaug Country Club.

### Polar Bear Run 2014

This February saw the largest running of the annual Polar Bear Run around the Lake. Founded in 1980, this year's 30th running welcomed 441 runners to our picturesque 7.6 mile loop. The winner was the third in a row for William Sanders (wearing bib number 112), who finished in an impressive 39 minutes and 39 seconds, and then trekked another loop to cool down.

A little background from the Race website, [www.lakewaramaugpolarbearrun.com](http://www.lakewaramaugpolarbearrun.com): Much like the Lake itself, the Race has an interesting history. The Race's origin can be traced back to the running boom that swept the country in the seventies. The Woodbury, CT based Tin Man Athletic Club staged the initial running around the frozen lake in 1980. Lead Pack Sports took over organizational efforts and they were followed by the Bethel Bananas Running Club in 1986. From 1987-1991 what had been the area's only winter running race went into hibernation and the race was not held for 5 years. In 1991, Wallie Jahn opened a retail store for runners, Road & Track Sports, and in response to strong interest from the local running community, he resurrected the Race in 1992 with the help of the Lake Waramaug Country Club. After Jahn fell ill, Dave Dunleavy stepped up to help manage the Race in 2012. A long time Kent resident and running enthusiast, Dunleavy plans to continue to build on the tradition that has made the Polar Bear Run a favorite of area runners.

Race organizers included a charitable component to this year's running of the Polar Bear and asked for donations to the Loaves and Fishes Hospitality House in New Milford, which assisted Wallie during the final months of his life.



*David Dunleavy, Race Organizer, and Polar Bear Runners take their mark at the Lake Waramaug Country Club, Sunday, February 23rd, 2014. Photo Credit: Will Graustein*

### Board of Directors

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### Seasonal Guests

An elegant couple has temporarily joined our diverse community of waterfowl on Lake Waramaug: a pair of mute swans (*Cygnus olor*). They are the second largest of all North American aquatic birds, the trumpeter swan being the largest, some with a wingspan of over six feet. Although they are regal looking, they are also fiercely loyal creatures who share equally between the sexes the responsibility of raising their young. These animals can therefore be aggressively territorial and should not be approached.



They typically lay their eggs during the late Spring on undisturbed lakes, and therefore it is entirely possible that our swans have done so, too, during a still as-of-yet quiet time on the Lake. Their nests consist of a large mounds of aquatic plants or grasses, and their eggs will incubate for a bit longer than a month. Be aware of their presence and their disposition.

Mute swans, native to Europe and Asia, were introduced to the Americas in the 19th century, and have been considered by many to be a non-native invasive species. Their numbers have grown exponentially over the years, but are, however, a protected species in Connecticut.



## Community

The Association offers an essay about the bygone nature of a Lake Waramaug summer.

### Back to One by Christine Adams Beckett

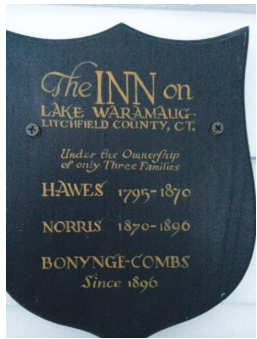
During the 1970s, anyone traveling Northbound on Route 25 — now Route 202 — in New Milford would be enticed to come vacation on Lake Waramaug; there stood a weather-worn wooden billboard, decades old, advertising twelve comfortable inns on our beautiful Lake. At that time there were several still in operation, welcoming guests mostly from New York City and the tri-state area.

With the recent sale of The Boulders Inn, which is to go the same way as all of the others by becoming a private residence, there remains one inn on the lake with its shingle still swaying in the summer breezes. The Hopkins Inn, interestingly, was also the first to accept vacationing guests. Thanks to Mary Harwood's "A History of Lake Waramaug", we know that a visitor from Brooklyn, Edward R. Squibb, was traveling along the shores of Waramaug in 1864 when he stopped to ask William Hopkins for the opportunity to lodge in his home. Presumably igniting an entrepreneurial spark, Hopkins constructed an addition to his home and hung that still-swaying shingle, making it official: Lake Waramaug, once a fishing spot for the Wyantenock, then farmlands and home to a colonial era village, was finally ensconced as a summer community of the Industrial Age.

During the Victorian era, train travel opened new opportunities to city dwellers looking to broaden their horizons, and Waramaug offered a respite to those yearning to breathe restorative fresh air in a beautiful locale. According to Mary Harwood, out-of-town visitors began to flock its shores in 1840, just after the Housatonic Rail Road opened their New Milford Station. Those numbers only increased when in 1873 New Preston Station opened on Bee Brook Road, now Route 47.

In 1886 the Norris family of Warren added to their Lakeview Farm house to accept seasonal guests and diners. This establishment changed hands only one more time before it became The Inn on Lake Waramaug, under the hospitable patronage of the Combs Family.

Jay Combs, who is one of the current proprietors at The Washington Supply Company, lived at the Inn on Lake Waramaug from his birth through adulthood. His father, the amiable and community-minded Richard, owned the Inn from 1951 to 1986 and operated his business with the idea in mind that all should have the opportunity to enjoy our lake. Events meant to draw in the community filled the Combs' schedule year-round with crowd-pleasers, including horse carriage rallies, clam bakes, and farmers' markets during the summer, witches' spelling bees, pumpkin carving, antique car rallies and turkey Olympics in the fall, a bell choir performance and New Year's Eve dancing to a three piece orchestra during the winter.



In the 1970s, The Inn on Lake Waramaug was a popular spot for local and out-of-town visitors. Their vessel, the Showboat, was outfitted with two twin outboard engines and decorative paddlewheels, and gave tours of the shoreline. During their late afternoon cruises there were sometimes bagpipers aboard, and on a few occasions a Dixieland jazz band, also entertaining those observing from shore. A ride on the Showboat was open to anyone, making stops at the other Inns on the lake, setting sight-seeing passengers back a steep \$2.50. There were hot dogs and hamburgers served at the Beachcomber (yes, the family looked for ways to cleverly insert their name), and Labor Day Huckleberry Finn raft races, the rules for which required that entrants make their own watercraft and forego flotation devices of any kind in their design.

Richard Combs organized an association of "Eight Friendly Inns" along the lake and near-by, including The Sachem, The Hopkins, Pinnacle Valley, The Boulders, The LaGrotta Inn, The Loomarwick and The Tinker Hill Inn (most recently the Birches). They shared advertising costs and maintained that Route 25 billboard, organized the July 4 flare display we still enjoy today and hired a seasonal resident and artist, Edd Ash, to design a logo of those friendly Inns. The design offered a nod to Waramaug's original residents by featuring a Native American within a triangle.

According to Jay Combs, The Loomarwick was the largest of the inns on the lake, and offered a variety of activities to their guests. Its name is not a Native American one as is widely believed, but an amalgamation of its three founders' names, financial tycoons out of Bridgeport: Loomis, Marsh and Bostwick. The property was subdivided and sold in the late 1960s, about one hundred years after its founding, and although many of the original buildings were torn down, two became private residences. One of the residences, belonging to the Franks, can boast the suggestion of room numbers, albeit now just faded outlines, on a few of their bedroom doors.

Jack Adams, a West Shore Road seasonal resident, describes his summer as a bus boy at The Loomarwick as an almost camp-like experience for people of all ages. Being a resident of New Milford, it was necessary that he take a cot at what the proprietors called the manery (defined by the Oxford English Dictionary as a mansion or a manor deriving from a 16th century term for a men's parsonage of a holy church). The Loomarwick Manery was one of two barns consisting of several rooms of two beds each reserved for the young men employed by the Inn. Mr. Adams bunked with a boy from Waterbury who was the son of the Largay Brewing Company proprietor, famous for their Red Fox Ale, samples of which were available to Mr. Adams and his bunkmate during that summer, circa 1940.

The Loomarwick served three meals to their guests daily and entertained them with dances in the evening in their lakeside Pavillion, which burned down in the 1970s, was replaced by the next owner with a box-like structure, and is now a beautifully vernacular private cottage.

There, the bus boys and wait staff were required to ask the guests' daughters to dance, if the young ladies lacked any names on their card.

Christine Wilkinson recalls the women's accommodations at the Loomarwick, housed in a glorified barn-like structure on the hillside that resembled a chicken coop. During the summer of 1961, she was employed by the Inn as a waitress. As one of the more recent hires, Ms. Wilkinson was assigned to cater to the more difficult guests in the dining room; menial tasks were assigned to those with little tenure. Many of the summer employees hailed from the New York City area, and made great efforts to spruce up their no-frills living arrangements with flowers and brightly colored bedspreads. They stayed for the summer and had living expenses deducted from their salary.



Ms. Wilkinson recalls her employment as a rustic experience, one which reflected the transitional nature of the American summer. By then, the Victorian Ages's month-long stays in the country were long gone but certainly remembered by many. The Loomarwick by that time was old, dated, a "rattle trap of a dilapidated Victorian structure." There were simply more choices available to the average New Yorker: air travel was more widely utilized, automobiles were becoming more comfortable, those who loved the Lake were beginning to buy their own homes along its shores. Economic changes seemed to coincide with the shift in the nature of the summer holiday.

During the 1980s, the inns were entertaining a dining crowd as much as appealing to overnight guests. Restaurant staff consisted of a cohesive mix of summer residents and locals. Saturday nights drew in hundreds of diners to the Boulders Inn. The kitchen crew worked late hours to wrap up a shift in stained, sweaty white cotton aprons to free the once-gleaming stainless steel countertops of flying parsley leaves and stacks of dirty dinner plates. Sometimes Jim Woolen, proprietor, would chip in by scrubbing pots and pans with his dress shirt rolled up to his elbows, his tie flung over his shoulder with his hands plunged into the greasy water of a deep stainless steel sink. Mr. Woolen was a former Midwestern banker who grew tired of administering foreclosures on farms, and chose to run a lakeside country inn instead with his wife, a former ballerina, and three children.

The Boulders was closed to diners on Mondays, but open, of course, to houseguests, who were required to stay a minimum of two nights. Sophisticated picnic fare was served, and always featured clever and artistic watermelon carvings by sous chef Dan Cornish, in which fresh fruit salad was served. Particularly memorable were a delectable Volkswagen beetle, a curlicue-tailed pig, a dinghy with oars. One of the more notable houseguests one summer was Robert DeNiro, seeking solace while shooting the film *Stanley and Iris* in nearby Waterbury with Jane Fonda.

Our summer community has most certainly changed as have our accommodations. It is decidedly more private, quieter, calmer. In many ways these changes have brought us closer to the lake's origins, when the first holiday seekers arrived: there were no cars to choke the lake road, the train was still a four mile buggy ride away keeping it exclusively open to those who could afford the trip and to the locals. The Combs family is no longer receiving complaints, some deserved and others misdirected, about the noise of their lively parties and receptions. Our sense of community comes from other sources, clubs, associations, restaurants, chance meetings on the road or water.

Please visit the Community pages at [www.warماغassoc.org](http://www.warماغassoc.org) for more of *Back to One*.

The Association would love to hear from you regarding your reminiscences of times gone by on the Lake, and would welcome your inclusions, whether by essay or willingness to be interviewed, in conjunction with a larger project. Please contact Board member Christine Adams Beckett at [cadamsbeckett@me.com](mailto:cadamsbeckett@me.com) if interested.

### Memorial Day Celebrations

Our lakeside towns will be celebrating Memorial Day, and we encourage you and your family to commemorate those who have fallen in service to our country. The town of Warren will hold a parade on Sunday May 25th at Noon from the Community Center on Sackett Hill Road. Immediately following the parade, the Warren Volunteer Fire Company will hold a hot dog lunch for all at the Fire House. Prior to, during and after the parade, the Warren Historical Society will have a presentation on the Battle of Cold Harbor in the Community Center.

The town of Washington will celebrate on Monday, May 26th, starting with a Roll Call of Honor at noon at the Washington Green Cemetery. At 1:30, the commemoration will continue at the Harry O. Erikson Pavilion Hall in New Preston, where a parade will proceed to New Preston Cemetery on Baldwin Hill for a 21 gun salute. At 2:30, the parade will re-commence at Washington Primary School with a pause at the bridge where flowers will be tossed into the Shepaug River in memory of Naval veterans, and end at at Bryan Memorial Town Hall for the traditional ceremony, including a reading of *In Flanders Fields*, by John McCrae.

The town of Kent will also celebrate on Monday, May 26th with a parade beginning at 9:30 AM, at the Kent Center School and culminating at the Community House on North Main Street, where they will have an ice cream social co-sponsored by the Kent Lion's Club and the American Legion. At noon, the Kent Land Trust will host a picnic on their field south of town. Admission is free.

# Important Information for Lake Waramaug Area Residents

## Keep This Sheet and Post For Reference

**Emergency on Lake requiring immediate police, fire, or ambulance assistance:**  
call 911

**Unsafe condition or activity on Lake or Lake Roads, Noise Disturbance:**  
call Washington Police at 860-868-9671.  
If no response, call Troop L (Litchfield Barracks) 800-953-9949

**Invasive Weeds:** If you find a water plant which you believe to be an invasive weed, put it in a plastic bag with a wet paper towel and call Tom McGowan at 860-567-0555 for instructions. See pictures of invasive weeds at [www.lwtf.org/invasives](http://www.lwtf.org/invasives).

**Washington Boat Launch/Beach:** call Washington Parks & Recreation Commission at 860-868-1519

**Objects/Debris floating in Lake:** call Washington Police at above number. Report "lost" and "found" dock sections, watercraft, etc. to [lakewaramauglostandfound@washingtonct.org](mailto:lakewaramauglostandfound@washingtonct.org) (Be sure to mark your name and address or telephone number on your property.)

### — Safety Concerns on the Water — Reminders from the Lake Waramaug Authority:

**Swimming Across the Lake or at a Considerable Distance from Shore:** Be sure you are accompanied by a boat to alert other boaters of your presence. Swimmers cannot be seen by operators of motor boats or other craft.

**Waterskiing:** Connecticut law requires the operator of a boat towing any person behind to have a responsible person over 12 years of age facing the skier at all times to monitor their safety.

**Motor Boat Speed:** Connecticut law requires that no person shall operate a motor boat at a speed in excess of Slow-No-Wake (generally 6 mph) within 100 feet of shore, a dock, pier, float or anchored or moored vessel, unless taking off or landing a water skier. For jet-ski personal watercraft, the distance is 200 feet. In other areas a boat must be operated so that it will not endanger others and must be able to stop safely within the clear distance ahead.

Any concerns about water safety should be directed to the Lake Waramaug Authority Police Boat on patrol or Resident State Trooper Stephen Sordi at 860-868-9671.



**Lake Waramaug Boat Inspection Program:** This effort continues to be crucial to the protection of Lake Waramaug from invasive weeds, which can be transported into the lake on a boat, trailer or motor. As members of the lake community, you have a special interest in, and a special responsibility for, the continued protection and preservation of the lake. Motor boats may be launched only through the Washington Boat Launch after inspection there for environmental fitness. (A Town of Washington annual permit fee and an inspection fee apply.) The inspection requirements are also applicable to car-top motorboats which, under the terms of the Lake Waramaug Agreement between the lakeshore towns and the State, may also be launched from the State Park, but only after inspection at the Washington Boat Launch or, when that inspection facility is closed, at Dowler's Garage on Route 202. Motor boats and jet ski watercraft which have not been inspected are subject to fine and removal from the lake.

**Inland Wetlands and Zoning Regulations:** Regulations designed to protect Lake Waramaug affect construction, alteration and other activities at or near the lakeside and beyond. Zoning regulations have detailed requirements for buildings, other structures, docks, floats, fences and other visual barriers. Most work (including deposit and removal of soil and other materials) involving the lake and land within 100 feet of the shoreline is regulated by the Inland Wetlands Commissions of the three towns. Particular attention is paid to storm water runoff which can adversely affect water quality. Having more than 10% impermeable surfaces in the lake's 14 square mile watershed can also harm the lake. Accordingly, close attention is paid to enforcement of lot coverage restrictions affecting lakeside properties.

**Check with the land use officials in your town BEFORE commencing any work:**

<b>Washington</b>	<b>Michael Ajello</b>	<b>860-868-0423</b>
<b>Warren</b>	<b>Stacey Sefcik</b>	<b>860-868-7881, Ext. 117</b>
<b>Kent</b>	<b>Donna Hayes</b>	<b>860-927-4625</b>

**Maintain Your Septic System to Protect the Lake:** Discharges from septic systems near the lake and watercourses within the lake's watershed can have a dangerous impact on the lake's water quality. Septic systems require periodic maintenance including pumping to remove accumulated solids at least every three years. Recent purchasers of properties should make sure that their systems have been inspected and serviced during this period. For a primer on this important subject, see "A Homeowner's Guide to Septic Systems" (US Environmental Protection Agency) at the Association's website: [www.waramaugassoc.org/Septic](http://www.waramaugassoc.org/Septic)

**Landscaping Near Lakes and Streams; Demonstration Buffer Planting:** The Task Force advises that **lawns do not protect the lake**. Lawns within 200 feet of lakes and streams should **not** be fertilized. Fertilizer application, whether chemical or organic, can act as a pollutant and cause physical impact to adjacent wetlands or watercourses. The best practice is to add native plants to your lawn area. Visit the Angell property at 47 West Shore Road to see the model buffer planting sponsored by the Task Force. After several years, it has become a natural looking country landscape, doing its job filtering runoff, preventing erosion, and serving as a native habitat for many insect and bird species. Plant identification cards are available at the site. For more information, visit the Task Force website at [www.lwtf.org](http://www.lwtf.org)

**Lake Waramaug Websites:** The websites of the Association and the Task Force contain information about Lake Waramaug and its environs, including news and links to town regulations and other important sources of information relating to the protection and preservation of the lake. View them at:

- Lake Waramaug Association: [www.waramaugassoc.org](http://www.waramaugassoc.org)
- Lake Waramaug Task Force: [www.lwtf.org](http://www.lwtf.org)

**"A History of Lake Waramaug":** Mary Harwood's 1996 book of historical background and pictures which had been out-of-print for several years, has been reprinted by the Association. It is available for purchase at our membership meetings, the Hickory Stick Bookshop in Washington Depot, and the Gunn Historical Museum and Institute for American Indian Studies in Washington. The Association has subsidized the reprinting expense to permit a sale price of \$25.00 per copy. Many thanks to the Hickory Stick and others for handling these sales for the Association as a community service. You should show your appreciation by supporting our local bookstore and cultural institutions.