

Ghostly Legends

From Local History

The Raven's Wing...
A tale of the
underground railroad
in the Ramapo
Mountains



**Iron Ghosts in Charcoal
Woods...**
Haunted iron mines
in Sterling Forest



**Grace... the
ghost during the
blizzard in West
Milford NJ**



**The backroad
haunting near
the old tavern**



West Milford, Warwick,
Greenwood Lake, Ringwood
Tuxedo Park, Monroe, Chester,
Goshen, Sugar Loaf



**The strange
disappearance
of the priest in
1700's Sterling
Forest**



**The ghostly
lanterns from
the 1903 flood
in Tuxedo**



**The haunted
Demerest
dance hall in
Warwick**



**The graveyard
waltz in
Ringwood NJ**



Also included:

- * The witches' tale in Sugar Loaf
- * From Salem to West Milford
- * The estate caretaker from 1912 still roams the grounds.
- * The black veil over the black dirt in Pine Island.
- * The Haunting began at Christmas in Ringwood NJ

**Published by
Tuxedo Park Magazine
All material copyrighted
All rights reserved
netuxedo123@gmail.com
www.tuxedoparkmagazine.com**

Excellent Gift Idea

Cold spring, Garrison, Ridgewood,
West Nyack, Piermont, Mahwah,
Nyack, Pine Island, Hewitt NJ

The Raven's Wing

A tale of the underground railroad in the Ramapo Mountains

Situated at the rear of a piece of property in Florida, NY, sits the remains of an old barn once used as a home. This is where William Seward was born in 1801. This home sat for many years in ruin in the small town of Florida, a short distance from Warwick's Victorian style structures, with massive windowed signature peaks.



Florida was more of a farming community with a small, compressed village nestled within blue-gray rolling hills. Dented, Dusty wooden floors of the original structure of the Seward home can still be glimpsed in their worn age tracing faded footsteps of a man who led the path to freedom with the anti-slavery Act in 1865.

William Seward became governor, state senator, and ran for presidency against Abraham Lincoln. His definition and strong belief of freedom for slaves began in this home in Florida when he witnessed neighbors abusing their own slaves. He enabled his course of action to overrule slavery.

When William was a young boy, his father farmed and was also the town's physician. They did have three slaves, but the slaves were treated more as hired help, who worked on the farm and in the kitchen, and William became friends with them. It was only when he witnessed brutal treatment of their neighbor's slaves, when he realized the cruelty and what the different levels of slave-ownership meant.



William's father did own the slaves judging by old records, however, records also indicate that he schooled them and sent the slave's children to school with his own children. They were housed in the loft above the kitchen, which was a separate building from the house. He trusted them, and they, he.

It was when the home was in ruins, that the legend of the Raven's wing came forth. William would often sit in front of the great hearth near the wood-pile in the kitchen and listen for hours to the stories told by the slaves. Many of their stories would influence William to later become, not only the man who ran for president against Abraham Lincoln, but the leader of anti slavery in 1865.

The slaves in the Seward home were treated with care, and William considered them his friends. At that time, there were severe penalties for anyone harboring a runaway slave, however, it was only the brave, who guided slaves to freedom in the north by having homes of safety, called the underground railroad.

Not a physical railroad, but a direction aiming runaway slaves to homes that would feed them, and then send them along the route guiding them to freedom. Quilts being hung with symbols sewn into them, indicated the direction to follow, to find these homes.

During this time, a group of slaves were being hunted close-by and facing extreme punishment. The group noticed a quilt with a raven's wing embroidered into it, they knew this symbol, and followed the trail to Goshen, four slaves had made it all the way from Georgia on the Appalachian trail to Goshen. By the light of a crescent moon, they glimpsed a house on a hill.



The clothes line could be seen with quilts draped over the lines. Upon a closer look, they noticed the welcoming pattern of a raven's wing. They proceeded to the back door. Suddenly, out from the shadows of the porch, they were staring down the barrel of a shot gun. It was the slaves' owner from Georgia, along with his henchmen.

The slaves cowered in the corner of the porch. The door was suddenly yanked open, and a very tall man immediately grabbed the gun from the slave-owner. His henchmen backed away when they saw the threatening size of the man in the doorway.

This was the home belonging to the kind reverend who's home was part of the underground railroad. Interfering with the law of housing or abating slaves was a serious crime (so the south threatened), however, this reverend stood his ground. He was famous for his skill in managing cases not laid down in law books and was able to issue forth the belief that privacy and property law should be respected, and that the Slave owner and his men were trespassing with intent to harm.



Legend has it that the reverend held up a heavy wooden cross high above his head, conjuring up an exaggerated silhouette of strength and force, confronting the southern slave owner who happened to be short and fat.

With conviction and infallible confidence, the reverend insisted that this was a house of god and exempt from southern dictation and trespasser intrusion. The slave owner was forced to leave without his slaves.

That evening, the reverend quickly sent the slaves, with a crude map, along a rural route that led from Goshen to the next town, Florida. The map took them into the small village of Florida, where they suddenly noticed the slave owner and his men had caught up with them. The four slaves found temporary refuge in an old cemetery. Within that region of evening clouded shadows, they noticed a house bordering the cemetery with a quilt cascaded over the front porch rail. A large Raven's wing was embroidered into the quilt's pattern.

This was the home of William Seward. The slaves quickly slipped behind the Seward house, where they found an outside kitchen with a lantern in the small window. When the door opened to their weak knock, William and the kitchen maid ushered in the four, frightened slaves who were on the run, and then sent for Mr. Seward, for he would know what to do.

Recorded journals were never found with entries from that night, although legend has it, the following evening, under the cover of darkness, the four slaves were aided across the mountain by Mr. Seward himself. He knew the path well, and his stately carriage would elude the slave & bounty hunters. Past the Wanaque River, and deep into the Ramapo Mountain pass they traveled.

They came upon the entrance to a cave within a steep ravine, here, they would be safe with others who had come before them. Runaway slaves from before the Revolutionary War had joined with Hessian's, who were mercenary soldiers fighting for the British, but were cruelly left behind when the British fled New York, when the war ended.

Continued next pg



William Seward's father took a huge risk harboring slaves who were owned by another. Perhaps in his kind and benevolent behavior to his own slaves, that the horrendous treatment he witnessed to other slaves, moved him to take dangerous, and, courageous actions. His son followed suit by running for president and leading the anti slavery act in 1865. In this capacity, he ended slavery for all.

Over 200 years later, legend has it that children were playing within the ruins of the Seward home in Florida NY, where they discovered beneath floor boards a very old wooden chest. Within the crusted cobwebs was a heap of material, and when unfolded, a quilt displayed a faded raven's wing embroidered into the disintegrating cloth. A stitched poem was beneath the wing:

*The quilt, it flaps against the wind,
with secret codes sewn in,
It shows a map for us to see,
the way to make us free.*

*The Raven's wing, the Raven's wing,
upon the quilt you'll see,
follow clear its code at night
so no one sees you flee.*



By Tuxedo Park Magazine

The Hudson Valley's Finest Inn and Event Space

StagecoachINN

GOSHEN, NY

RESTAURANT



ROOMS



EVENTS



268 Main Street Goshen
(845) 294-5526
stagecoachny.com



NEARBY WHEN YOU NEED US

- 24/7 VIP Priority Service.
- Wallet friendly Budget Plans.
- Price Caps for BioHeat® Heating Oil.
- Price Locks for Xtreme Clean Propane.
- Free Wireless Tank Monitoring* so you're never left in the cold.
- Money Saving Heating, Cooling & Generator Service Plans.

Since 1934

CALL TODAY! Learn more about all we have to offer!

(845) 351-0262

SOSXtremeComfort.com

Iron Ghosts In Charcoal Woods

Beneath a high bluff in Sterling Forest which sits in deep shadows, the remains of the town of Lakeville is sometimes visible. Situated near a large lake, this mining town saw the beginning of the iron mining boom in America. Although it made a marked accomplishment in history, this mining area possesses a strong, forced feeling of desolation.

Echoes of those days exist as you walk along the lake. As though someone is near, walking with you, or watching you. And no matter how far you walk, they never leave. A strong sense of gloom permeates the mountainside and the ravine that hugs the lake shore. Members of "The Culper Spy Ring", would meet here to discuss secret codes and plans for the Revolutionary War.

When flashes of lightning pierce the sky on a pitch-black night, something is seen moving over the surface of the lake, as if leaning against the wind. Some say they have witnessed a shadowy crew on a small boat, just before the weather storms. An ominous warning of impending doom. Legend has it, It is here, where several members of George Washington's secretive, "Culper Ring" vanished in clear sight.

Upon visiting Sterling Forest iron mines and its owner, Peter Townsend, just after the Declaration of Independence was signed, George Washington chose the iron from these mines to be used in creating a great chain. He appointed Thomas Machin superintendent for the designing and implementing the manufacturing of the chain. This was to be used as a barrier to be stretched across the Hudson River, to the neighboring Fort Constitution Island in the efforts of preventing the British ships from invading our northern territories.

A secret committee, "The Culper Ring" was appointed to carry out the plans for this great chain. The contract for the chain was signed in Chester NY by the members of The Culper Ring. This secret society was very crucial, as it was very difficult to differentiate between the patriots and the enemies, and spies had to be placed everywhere as there were plots to over-take West Point, and also plots to ruin the American economy by flooding the country with counterfeit money.

The men worked in the mines day and night for the six weeks it took to complete the 186-ton chain. It was hauled to New Windsor, and then floated down the Hudson to West Point, where they stretched it between Fortress West Point and Constitution Island.

One evening in late July, the trip hammers pounded non-stop, the iron furnaces billowed a hellish-red, and three of the Culper Ring leaders were to meet in one of the mines for a secret meeting. This mine ran from the side of the village of Lakeville, beneath the large lake called Sterling. It had been a humid day and many miners were fainting from the heat of the furnaces which burned non-stop.

cont next pg



At that time, many active iron forges and furnaces were scattered throughout the Sterling Forest area. It was an industry which demanded strenuous work to mine the iron ore, smelt hard iron from it, and produce the charcoal to feed the furnaces. Sterling Forest area wore a different face during the iron mining days. The neighboring mountains had become bare of timber, as it was needed to make the charcoal. Skies clouded gray with thick soot, and ashes covered the high hills blocking out the sweeping views. When winter approached, its whiteness became veiled with smoke that carried its way through valley and river. The furnaces roared to the beat of the Revolutionary War's progression.



Giant trip hammers pounded with resounding authority in Sterling Forest, and the furnaces glowed a hellish-red continuously throughout the day and night. The miners were just beginning to feel the emotional spike that played such a vital role in its extraordinary success during the Revolutionary War.

Within the roots of the structured framework, was the pulse of the furnace. Hot molting iron was poured into molds, while men, whose skin was scarred from this constant work, balanced the scorching barrels with prodding tools. These were the mechanics of the operation that forced it to breathe and bellow, along with the monotonous pulsations of the trip hammers. Columns of billowing smoke with a constant ark of the color crimson, haloed the crest of the furnaces.



It was within the core of one of the mines in Sterling that extended beneath the lake, where this secret meeting took place.

When the three members were all assembled, they entered the mine. The darkness to the entrance of the cave became illuminated with tallow candles.

As they moved beyond the entrance, down the long corridor of pitch black nothingness, several lanterns appeared along the damp walls of the mine. Far in the distance, they heard the sound of trip hammers. They sat and began discussing the final plans for the great chain and how to prevent the British from flooding the country with counterfeit money.

There were heavy doors between shafts in the iron mines used to control the direction of air-flow through the mine. When the door suddenly opened to the shaft during the meeting, the Culper Ring members thought nothing of it as a large cart, loaded with pieces of iron ore was slowly being pushed along the cart tracks, toward the mine's exit.

Four British soldiers dressed like miners were the only ones to exit the mine that day. That particular mine was never used again, as a sudden explosion caused a cave-in just after the four men exited, they escaped without notice, leaving the three Americans inside to perish.

Legend has it, when the snow along the shore of the lake is deepest and the ice on Sterling lake is frozen solid, a black hole appears.

The hole is the mouth of the mine. When the sun goes down with startling rapidity, leaving the woods frozen barren, a bit of twilight creeps toward the black hole, and just in that instance, three men are seen on the lake, on top of the mine, where they were last seen alive within it.

Tuxedo Park Publications



The Witches' Tale in Sugar Loaf

On a less traveled road in Sugar Loaf NY, an unpaved, expanded trail blends into a thickly wooded glen. A large chimney stands alone indicating a once massive fireplace for a stately home now in ruins. Chipped, faded bricks nudge into a decaying foundation exposing part of a wall, facing northwest. This is the wall that tells the witches' tale from 150 years ago.



When Sugar Loaf was first settled in 1749, a family by the name of Winston, newly arrived from England, settled a few hundred acres of farmland and built a stately home, which in those times, did not match the village homes, as they were small and close to each other for safety reasons. Close neighbors could help each other ward off dangers of marauding gangs of thieves that were common in the area.

Blizzards also played a large part of the close proximity of the homes. The 1700's held some of the worst blizzards in history, and the neighbors could support one another with supplies.

The Winston family were supporting neighbors until strange things began happening on their property. One evening their farmhand ran into town during a hurricane screaming for help. When they calmed him, he could hardly speak. He kept repeating.."They took them, they took them!" The hurricane prevented anyone to go and help the Winston's until the following day.



When several men accompanied the farmhand to the Winston home the following day, they found only the husband with his young son, who was an infant at the time. The mother and daughter were gone. The father was in shock and muttered something about witches taking them. The mother and daughter never returned, and were never found.

Shortly after the disappearance, some say that in the vicinity of the cornfields on the property, beneath the tall pines, strange shapes developed out of the darkness, stalking the property, then moving slowly toward the house.

Coyotes howled, piercing the night air, and when the wind gripped the tall pines, whipping them as if purposely trying to snap them, the motion of something or someone has been seen crawling slowly across the fields. Strange apparitions in deep shadows, loomed for many years following the disappearance.

About 100 years later, in the 1800's, Sugar Loaf became home to many saloons that were famous for hard cider and moonshine. A man well known in all of the saloons was Peter Winston, the great grandson of the original family with the stately home. He was a dry looking old gentleman, with close-knit eyebrows who maintained a terse and rather severe face. He would often tell the story of his ancestors who came over from England.

He would tell how several of them were just "spirited" away by witches shortly after they first arrived in Sugar Loaf. He told of a curse placed upon his family back in England, and that was the reason they moved to America and later, to sugar Loaf.

Between 1830 and 1870 Peter had seven children who were always kept at home. They were schooled at home, and if they needed a doctor, one was sent for to come to them. It was later learned that Peter was convinced the same fate would come upon his children as it did his ancestors.

Peter and his family abruptly left the area, the home and property sat empty for many years in ruin. It was about 100 years later, a developer acquired the property at a county auction along with the ruins of the home. During renovations the contractors discovered something very mysterious, eight shoes, hidden in a northwest-facing wall. Upon investigation it was learned that they were used as actual "witch traps"

Cont next pg

Prior to more modern methods, old homes often concealed various extraneous materials as forms of insulation to keep the weather elements at bay. However, when eight old shoes were discovered in this wall, the witches' tale began unraveling. Each shoe was different in size, ranging from children to adults, curled with age and torn from use. Their leather was rock-hard with dirt still clinging to the worn soles.

Experts from the boot and shoe museum collection in Northampton England confirmed them to be over 150 years old; the museum's curator was the founder of the concealed shoe index. Hiding shoes in walls began as a ritual in 1300's England as a "Spirit trap". Its origins can be traced back to one of England's unofficial saints, John Schorn of Buckinghamshire, who served as a rector from 1290-1314. According to legend, he was able to cast evil spirits into a shoe, thus trapping them, for witches, it was believed, could not move backwards, once caught in a shoe.

Shoes, being extremely expensive in earlier times were worn, and repaired, for as long as possible before being discarded. By the time a shoe was no longer fit to wear, it provided a unique impression of the owner's individual foot.

If placed in a wall facing northwest, the direction from where the prevailing winds blow, it would trap any witch spirit by trapping it into the shoe containing the essence of the person the witch was after, therefore preventing the witch from entering the actual dwelling. It was warned never to remove the shoes from the wall or the spirit will be released.

The shoes were individually dated, and it was learned they had been placed in the wall over a period of time, between 1830 and 1870. The dates coincided with Peter's children's age. The eighth shoe would have belonged to Peter Winston.

Beginning over 150 years ago, the footsteps of a family began to echo in the Winston home. Today, according to legend, they still echo there, Supernaturally and through a ritualistic legacy left behind.

It has been said, that when you walk the property on a cloudy day when the weather is moody, and the wind pushes viciously from the northwest, you can actually hear footsteps walking behind you quickly, very quickly. Some say it is the sound of the wind, or, the eight witches who were released from the wall, when the shoes were removed.

**It was later learned of several quicksand pits in the area of the Winston property. The mother and daughter may have been lost in one of them as opposed to being "spirited" away by witches; however, the shoes discovered in the wall were very real, as was the ritual surrounding the practice of hiding them.



By Tuxedo Park Publications



• Skiing, snowboarding and snow tubing
• Mid-week tubing and ski groups welcome
• Convenient drive booking at mtpeter.com
• Free beginner lessons weekends & holidays

NEW YORK'S FAMILY MOUNTAIN

mtpeter.com *space is limited

mount peter
Ski | Ride | Tube

The Blizzard Haunting In West Milford NJ

Years ago, winters stretched the endurance and skills of the inhabitants of the region within the foothills of Wildcat Mountain in West Milford NJ. Blizzards often battered the countryside, making roads impassable and cutting off contact with the outside world.

Homes that were not well supplied were left virtually helpless for months, often with fatal results. A diary was found that refers to an old house, on a back road that meanders through the area of Clinton Woods near Wildcat Mountain. It tells the remarkable, haunting story about a ghost that appeared during one such blizzard many years ago.

In the mid 1800's, a couple lived with their two children in this house, which had been in the husband's family since the 1700's. One year, winter barged in unexpectedly early, catching the family off guard without sufficient food or medical provisions. Snow drifts wrapped around anything standing in the path of the brutal storm. The roads into West Milford or Warwick had been barricaded by nature, and the tall chimneys were all that could be seen of the secluded house and its inhabitants who had become prisoners in their own home.

With food being rationed and wood for the fire becoming scarce, the children became weak and sick. The mother, beginning to weaken herself, was concerned about the lack of medicine and knew little about nursing pneumonia. A second storm followed on the heels of the first, and the father was becoming desperate. He knew he could not budge past the front door, so prayer was his only recourse.

After feeding the last of the soup to his wife and children, he headed downstairs to sit by the fire. As he stepped into the downstairs hallway, something caught his eye at the window beside the front door. Peering through the dimly lit hall, he saw a figure crouched outside the door. As he edged closer to get a better look, the shape stood up, leered momentarily with a hideous expression, and then quickly moved away from the house.

The deformed body hobbled through the drifted snow, and, as it turned, its cape fluttered over its face making it appear even more sinister. Shuttering from uneasiness more than from the cold, the husband bolted the door, secured the rest of the house, and tried to get some sleep in front of the fire.

During the night, he was awakened by a banging sound outside the window. As he bolted to his feet, he immediately noticed the outline of a hand stretched across the pane of glass. Just beyond the hand, a face floated within the pine boughs that were brushing against the house in the wind. It was the same disfigured person he had seen earlier. This time he could see it was a woman, but as soon as he glimpsed her, she disappeared from view. He ran to the window, but all he could see was her silhouette hobbling quickly away from the house.

The following morning, he made his family as comfortable as possible considering how grave their situation was. There was little food left and trapping was impossible in the deep snow.

Continued next pg



Taking his axe to gather whatever wood he could find close to the house, he slowly pushed open the door. To his surprise just outside the house he found a pile of food, blankets, and medicine. With it, was a note that was barely decipherable. A name...GRACE...was the only word on the paper.

The family did survive that winter, due only to the gifts that were left for them that one morning. Many years later, it was learned that the husband once had a sister who was much older than he. She had died in the house before he was born... from a crippling disease that had pained her throughout her life, leaving her severely deformed. Her name had been...Grace.

Trip Advisor Top Rated & Travelers' Choice 2012-2023




LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION!



The Warwick Valley Bed & Breakfast in the Historic Village of Warwick NY is a SHORT WALK to EVERYTHING!

We feature **SPACIOUS ROOMS** each with **PRIVATE BATHROOMS.**

845-987-7255
24 Maple Ave Warwick, NY
www.wvbedandbreakfast.com



ACCESS CONTROL SYSTEMS

Protect and Beautify Your Home or Business

We can design, supply, install, and maintain all of your Access Control needs.

Electric Access Gates, Cameras, Card Readers, Pin Pads, Biometric Scanners, Radio Controls, Barrier Arms, Custom Gate Designs

Call Now For Your Free Estimate

(845) 386-1161

Family Owned & Operated for Over 50 Years

STOP UNWANTED VISITORS

I.D.E.A. Certified Installers
Master Electricians



845.386.1161

KetchamFence.com

The strange disappearance of the priest in 1700's Sterling Forest

Among the first Catholics in the Greenwood Lake area were 500 German families, brought over by Peter Hasenclever to work in the Sterling Forest iron mines and furnaces prior to the Revolutionary War. Father Theadore Schnider journeyed on horseback disguised as a doctor, because priests were outlawed at that time, and subject to arrest.



He carried a hand written copy of the Roman Missal, which people thought was a medical book since all medical literature was in Latin, as were most bibles at that time. The Church had no foothold in New York until the Duke of York claimed it for an English colony. Twenty years later, the Catholic governor enacted the first law passed in New York establishing religious liberty.

It took many years, for Catholicism to spread, root, and become ministered throughout the Hudson Valley, and bounty hunters actively pursued anyone they thought to be a priest. In the early 1700's in Greenwood Lake, many villagers traveled from Greenwood Lake, along East Shore Road through rough, dense woods, over the mountain to the town of Lakeville in Sterling Forest, where the priest held what at the time were considered, illegal sermons.

The road was primitive and hardly suited for horses or carriages. The way was hot and dusty in summer, cold in the winter and dangerous at any time.

It was on a mid summer's day when the sermon concluded, and the Lakeville towns' people were returning to their homes in Sterling Forest.

The large group from Greenwood Lake, which at that time was called Long Pond, who had joined them, were preparing for their arduous journey back home over the mountain on foot.

Over the years, they had become great friends with the priest and eagerly looked forward to seeing him, both as a clergyman, and, as a friend.

This one Sunday, they had invited the priest home to their village to rest and take comfort within their homes for a few days. He was grateful because his next sermon was in Goshen, which was more than a day's travel, and he had to keep to the hidden paths as not to be recognized as a priest.

As the group straddled the mountain's crest on the way home to Greenwood Lake village, the weather turned moody, and the dark clouds rolled in volume, echoing through the woven treetops above them. The boulders jutted out onto their path posing as threatening forms. There was a large cave within reach and they pushed toward it for safety.



They could still distinguish objects a short distance away, but the daylight became night vision, and the torrential rain crashed down upon them. Suddenly, out of nowhere, two mysterious riders were in front of them. They were dressed in black cloaks and appeared like phantoms out from behind the boulders. They reined their horses to a stop in front of the villagers and the priest.

continued next pg



Just then, a violent burst of wind came sweeping down the mountain gully bending the forest before them. The cloaked strangers jumped off their horses and pushed the priest up onto one of the horses, tying him to the saddle. They got on the other horse and pulled the priest's horse behind them. Before the villagers could do anything, the horsemen were gone with the priest.

All that remained was his illegal bible found on the ground disguised as a medical journal. It was well-worn with pages yellowed and frayed. A faded gold cloth marked his last reference and reading. The leather cover was indented with his initials, T.S.

Several weeks later, they received word that the priest had died in prison shortly after the two strangers turned him in for the bounty money offered on priests. Out of respect for his memory and his friendship, they buried the bible and said a prayer over it.

100 years later, a lovely chapel was erected near Greenwood Lake for the miners and their families. The opening ceremony was well attended by villagers all around. When all were seated in the pews, the priest began the mass. He stood at the pulpit and smiled at the parishioners. He was experienced at giving sermons and continued throughout that first morning in the chapel, holding his bible to his chest. His bible, was a well-worn journal with pages yellowed and frayed. A faded gold cloth marked the last reference and reading. The leather cover was indented with the initials, T.S....

Father Theadore Schnider had come home once again.



Our new cafe space is now open at 58 Windermere Ave. Greenwood Lake NY

Greenwood Lake Roasters
uncommonly fine products

TEA TIME

GREENWOOD LAKE ROASTERS
EST. 2017

Locally Roasted Small Batch Craft Coffee

Featured at:
 • Best of Hudson Valley Magazine 2018
 • Cup of the Valley - CIA Coffee Cup - Brooklyn NY NY Renaissance Faire
 • Over 20 Different Coffees!
 • We also have a wide selection of Organic Tea

180 Windermere Ave. Greenwood Lake, NY 10925
www.miloco.com | 845-234-0839 | Greenwood@miloco.com

P.N. Fire & Burglar Alarm Co., Inc.
Established 1960
 Security, fire and camera systems.

Monticello Office 31 North Street Monticello, NY-12701 Phone (845) 794-6133	Middletown Office 122 Wickham Avenue Middletown, NY 10940 Phone (845) 343-7600
---	--

Website: www.pnalarm.com

PROTECTED BY P.N. SECURITY SYSTEMS
 845-794-6133
 845-343-7600

Warwick's Demerest Hotel..the most famous dance hall in the county

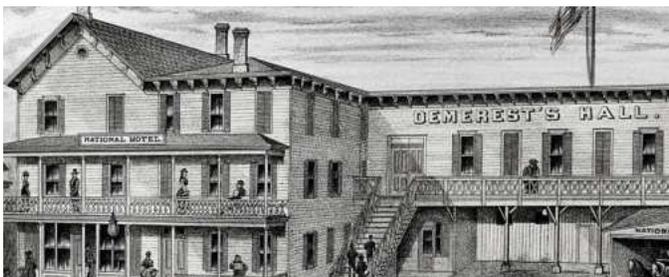
Once known for its delicious Apple Jack served at a huge wooden bar in the 1800's, the Demerest Hall was an iconic destination for all social activities in the county. The Demerest had already caught the attention of wealthy New Yorkers when the Warwick Valley Railroad came through in 1862. An addition to the hotel in the 1870's, the Hall held Dances, lectures, brawls, and Vaudeville acts, Demerest Hall had it all.

One can still see the original vaulted long area, with its 18 ft ceilings from the original complexion of its style.

The livery stables were on the ground level, operated by Newn Dunham, "A typical old time horseman", as he was referenced in an 1870's newspaper article. The Demerest attracted a "lively" group, and at times, mysterious.

A stranger showed up in town searching for a relative that had been staying at the Demerest Hotel. After inquiring about him for several days, finally someone spoke up and mentioned there had been a huge brawl and the man was thrown down an old well outside of town. They never did find the man.

From the time George Washington frequented Baird's Tavern down the street from the Demerest, Warwick has been a welcoming destination point for travelers weary and thirsty. By 1792 there were already 19 taverns in Warwick.



The milk and freight platform outside the Demerest Hotel was the location in the 1880's, where thousands of gallons of milk were dumped on the ground by irate farmers who were fighting the manipulation of the milk exchange. It was called the "Milk War". Warwick Railroad had become the first in the area to use refrigerated rail cars to transport milk, making Warwick thrive.

Just after the hall opened, as an introduction of it to the town, the occasion was proudly celebrated with "A grand oyster supper and social soiree" where the owner spared no pains or expense to make the grandest and most enjoyable entertainment of the season. "It was fitted up as a dancing salon and accommodated 100's", as the local newspaper reported.

This grand hall once held teas, balls, lectures, vaudeville acts, graduations, and the only place in town to vote (with or without Apple Jack) still reaches us with echoes of its past. Well after the iconic dance hall was closed and boarded up, and prior to its restoration, it has been said the shadow of a man blends slowly into the frame of the building, mostly on still, quiet evenings when the silence of late night, stretches down Railroad Avenue and creeps across the old railroad tracks.



A lonely piano tune used to drift from behind the massive boarded windows of this impressive structure whose frame leaned, tired with age. The tune had been recognized by some as a very old tune, not of this century, nor last. A tune perhaps speaking of the building's gilded age of glory, trying to tell its long, lively tale of youth.

The Ghostly Lanterns From The 1903 Flood In Tuxedo

On rainy, threatening nights throughout the past 100 years, lanterns have been seen glowing from the platform of the Tuxedo train station. Eerily swaying by themselves, lighted lanterns move along the train tracks. No one holds them, no one is visible, but they sway off the platform on the darkest nights acting as midnight companions to blinding rainstorms. Eventually they wander to the other side of the tracks as if searching for someone they left behind when they perished in the horrendous flood of 1903.

Several years prior to the great flood, situated beside Tuxedo Lake, in Tuxedo Park NY, was a great mansion, or hall, as it was referred to. Intimidating to most, as its grandeur was surpassed by none within the class of palatial branding of its neighboring estates. Built in the late 1800's as a symbol of wealth, and reward of a healthy inheritance, this fine display of privilege included 60 servants, to keep, maintain, and show off, the walls of regal atmosphere.

Tyler Stenson thought he was the owner and the protecting power over the estate. He took pride and satisfaction of being a great man in his small world. His wife was from a socially prominent family and theirs was an arranged, emotionally empty marriage. She held most of the wealth, and repeatedly reminded Tyler of the fact that she, indeed, owned the estate. Legend has it that while the wife had been away in a sanitarium in nearby Central Valley for a nervous condition, a new maid arrived on the estate in Tuxedo. A local girl from the small area across the railroad tracks in town, and especially attractive, she supposedly caught Tyler Stenson's eye, and his heart.

He housed her in a cottage near the formal gardens, away from the other servants, and gossip.

It was not long before a groundskeeper saw them together and the entire town, and neighboring towns, heard about it. The wife in the sanitarium, in the neighboring town, also received word of the strong affair. She immediately checked herself out of the sanitarium and moved into Manhattan with her maid, and her money.

The wife made certain her husband's reputation was ruined and leaked a story to the tabloids, placing herself as harmfully mistreated. The tabloids covered anything the wealthy did. The story made the headline in the Sunday edition.. "Millionaire loses his wife and money because of a maid".

The social set at his clubs shunned him, knowing he had lost all of his money and was subject to scandal. In those days, it was not that the wealthy did not have affairs; it was just unwise to be caught at it. Being that so many marriages had been arranged, there was too much to lose if caught.

In the social set of what was then known as "Mrs. Astor's 400", the select few families who were selected into that group were not only very wealthy, but had to have their wealth "aged", possessing it for several generations, and not be of the "working class". Tyler Stenson's wife was at the top of this list, and therefore, having been shamed by the scandal, sought a speedy divorce and removed Tyler from any social levels he may have achieved by marrying her.

The estate with 60 servants went to his wife and he made a new start with Audrey, the maid, for they actually were very much in love. The great man, once king of his world, folded into the rest of the world.

He and Audrey moved into a house on a private estate named "Green Briar Hill" two miles from Tuxedo. They were very happy and content in their private world, surprisingly, considering the position Tyler Stenson had once held in the financial world.

Prior to the scandal, in 1895, Tyler Stenson had joined J.P. Morgan and Company, which had become one of the most powerful banking houses in the world. He had obtained his position there, mainly because his wife was related to the John Pierpont Morgan family. Upon his divorce, Mr. Stenson was asked to resign.

One of the only people who kept in touch with Tyler Stenson following the scandal, was his good friend, Mr. Calvey. Charles Calvey had very recently become J.P. Morgan's main partner. He was a reorganization expert of railroads and soon asked Tyler to return to work for him. Since Mr. Calvey had the strong ear of the board of directors and the main investors, J.P. Morgan agreed to hire Tyler back to the House of Morgan.

He worked exceedingly hard and was soon rewarded with generous shares in profits. His reorganizations of the railroads held their own buoyancy and he was on his way up in the Morgan hierarchy.

It still bothered Tyler that his good friends, led by his own stepfather, were still shunning him, even though he had come up the financial ladder once again and regained social position.



On a damp, rainy morning in October, Tyler kissed Audrey goodbye and left Green Briar Hill for Manhattan. He had the strangest feeling to stay home that day, but had documents to sign. As his train pulled out of Tuxedo, he couldn't shake the feeling that something was wrong. At lunch time he realized he would have to stay in the city several days because the trains were not running to points upstate due to a storm.

The storm was only rain in Manhattan, so he was not too concerned about Audrey being alone at home, but when he read the front page of the New York Times several days later, he was shocked as he read this:

....."When a few drops of rain began to fall in the Ramapo Valley Thursday morning, October 8, 1903, it appeared to be just the beginning of an autumn rain shower. As the rain continued to fall, increasing in velocity to a torrential downpour continuing for thirty hours. It left in its wake a devastation of horror. Rampaging waters rising from 15 to 20 feet swept the entire valley for 10 to 12 miles in the Ramapo Valley. The deluge was a combination of two storms, one from the Great Lakes region and the other from the south with an aerial collision producing a downpour that continued for two days.



A record of over 10 inches of rain fell, but rain alone was not the problem in the Ramapo Valley. From Tuxedo to Suffern, overflowing lakes and the rising Ramapo River, along which most of the towns and businesses had been established, caused thousands of dollars of damage to homes, industries, livestock and rail service. Though the great storm raged on Thursday, there was little danger until Friday, when the lakes in the area began to swell and the Ramapo River began to rise....

Continued next pg

...Pressure had never been so great on the old dams. The first to give way was a lake near Arden. Two workmen from a private estate near Arden, were traveling through the valley as the storm began. When the dam burst, they were swept away and were eventually found dead, several miles down stream.



Racing from Arden towards Tuxedo, the water tore away bridges and houses. It flooded the Tuxedo powerhouse, and swept away the fish hatchery. The settlements below Tuxedo were washed out. As the rain continued, the Tuxedo Dam showed signs of collapse.

When water began to spill over its top. This dam held the safety of the entire Ramapo Valley behind it. If that dam had burst, it is recorded, "... all of the homes and people would have been swept away.

A ghastly sight was the large number of dead animals, which strew the valley for miles. Nearly every farmer and householder lost cows, horses and other livestock. Near the H. O. Havemeyer farm in Mahwah, N. J. a horse was found hanging in a tree. Quantities of large fish were found inside many homes in Ramapo. Some feared if the dead animals were not readily disposed of, there would be an epidemic, endangering the general health of the community.



The great wall of water slammed into Sloatsburg. Several houses in the torrent's path were just picked up and smashed. Joining the Ramapo River, the floodwaters swept the hamlet of Sterlington bare. The Erie railroad tracks were torn from their beds and some of the roadbed totally submerged"The New York Times 1903

When the trains were running once again from Manhattan, Tyler caught the first one home. He was shocked at what he found. People in the streets with no homes left, buildings on their sides, and dead animals being carted off the streets and lawns.

He sadly learned of Audrey's disappearance in the flood. Shortly after he left her to go to Manhattan just before the rain began, she decided to take the next train and join him there as a surprise. While waiting for the train, the Ramapo River began ripping through, savagely tearing the train station apart with such force, remains of the building were found a mile away.

Tyler Stenson was devastatingly heartbroken. His friends finally reached out to help him, along with his stepfather. It was later divulged to him in private, that many years earlier, the stepfather had an affair with a maid who lived on the other side of the train tracks. Not wanting to give up his social position, he left the maid. He later learned she had a daughter named Audrey.

When he learned his stepson married Audrey, the stepfather strongly wanted to avoid anyone finding out his own secret, so he turned against his stepson using the stepson's scandal as an excuse and provoked others to do the same. Being a man of mounted power, they all obeyed.

Continued next pg



Over 115 years later, on the stretch of road from Arden to Sloatsburg, the Ramapo River still aggressively hugs the hills and terrain. Meandering around forgotten graveyards and the foundation of a 200-year-old church, peeking out from time to time to be viewed with its anchored gloom about it.

In the dead hush of night, apparitions have been seen appearing suddenly along the river. First vague and faint, then, more determined. They drift from sight with a long-drawn cry of hollow sadness. As the river nears the silent woodlands of Southfields, a figure has been seen lingering with a look of desolation, appearing crest-fallen and heavy-hearted.

The flood of 1903 took land, homes and people. The sightings of ghosts appear and flee along the Ramapo River, which flows along in silent secrecy. As the daylight falls over the river, the evening haze begins to rise. The silence seemingly opens a gate of extended life for those who perished.

The sad note of a violin has been heard drifting across the flat which used to be a polo field. There were never well-authenticated stories of ghostly sightings in this general area, but there is a vague sense of doom, with its dark veil of shadows and ghostly silhouettes that seem to lodge close by.

The lone lantern, which burns the brightest, is not that of the ones near the Tuxedo train station or along the Ramapo River, but the one that moves through the woods toward the house on Green Briar Hill.



They walk, they walk
with lanterns high,
along the roads so
still.

Void of time, and void of
space, on the path to
Green Briar Hill

By Tuxedo Park Magazine

*All names used in this story
are fiction*



THE VREELAND STORE INN

History at its best!

The Vreeland Store is a historic general store in the beautiful rural town of West Milford, New Jersey. It is a full-service restaurant, bar, bakery, & inn, located in a historic general store, currently open Wednesday - Sunday. It's a place where you can get everything from a great cup of Stumptown coffee to a craft beer. All of our food is freshly made and our bakery is always stocked with baked goods.



Lodging at The Vreeland Store Inn

1383 Macopin Road, West Milford, NJ 07480

Who doesn't love waking up to the smell of fresh scones? Our inn is just minutes from some of the best hiking in the area, including sections of the Appalachian trail. We're also close to Ringwood and Wayawanda State Parks and Greenwood Lake, not to mention the dozens of other lakeside beaches. Antique shopping, farmer's markets, hunting, fishing, horseback riding, you name it, it's all here. Come for apple & pumpkin picking in the fall and finish the day with a nightcap at our bar before retiring to one of our antique-decorated suites. Come spend a few relaxing days in beautiful northern New Jersey

Text for direct bookings: 973-440-5972

1383 Macopin Road
West Milford, NJ 07480
(973) 874-0860
thevreelandstore@gmail.com
vreelandevents@gmail.com

Was Hattie Gin A Witch?-West Milford 1690's

At the crest of the crippled tree ravine, which descends down upon Warwick Turnpike, the foundation still remains of the shack of Hattie Gin. Between West Milford and Warwick was the original footpath used by the Minsi Tribe, a branch of Lenni Lenape Indians in the 1600's. It meanders through a staunch mountainside and precariously weaves its way through the darkest and thickest woods in New Jersey.



A narrow cut into a stand of hickory trees indents its way as a path, which leads for miles to the top of the ravine. It is here, within a small knoll, the remains of a fireplace, pieces of broken pottery and once massive tree trunks; humbly erode beside a small stream.

This was the property that Hattie Gin and her husband came to after being turned away from Salem in the early 1690's. The fear of witches, witchcraft, and bewitchment originated in Europe in the medieval period, when the Roman Catholic Church taught the dangers of being associated with anyone thought to be a witch. In the late 1600's, in Salem Massachusetts, the fear escalated to the point of the accused being hung, burned or removed bodily from their homes.



Their property was then turned over to the heads of the town, and the accused had to flee with nothing. When Hattie Gin was accused of being a witch, it was because she recently refused to sell her farm to an important man in Salem. Hattie and her husband were turned out of their home in the middle of the night with only the clothing on their backs and Hattie's apothecary, herbal bible.



They would face the gallows if they ever returned. Hattie Gin had a relative on the outskirts of Massachusetts they were hoping would take them in. The relatives, fearing association with Hattie would in turn have them accused of witch craft, turned Hattie and her husband away with a few provisions supplied to them to aid in their survival.

They endured brutal weather, bordered starvation, and felt months of horrendous fear before arriving in West Milford NJ. The land was rich with game and fresh water, and the Minsi Indians they did encounter, moved silently past them peacefully. The area of Warwick and West Milford were now being sparsely settled, and the colonists were just beginning to build farms and homes following land grants disbursed in the 1680's for land acquisitions.

Hattie would meander through the small roads in the area, known as Quaker roads, to go house to house in West Milford. She would offer her services to anyone who needed her, and hoped to eventually set up an apothecary shop. Gossiping with the locals and listening to long-twilight stories, she learned of a new shop set up in the village.

This shop purported to "cure all" with their products. It sold everything from confectionary to perfumes, spices, spiced wines, herbs, and drugs that were compounded and dispensed on the premises. This shop belonged to the wealthiest settler, who had received over 1000 acres in a land grant.

Continued next pg

It was a small dusky room with the heady scent of herbs and soaps, lighted by candles and latticed windows. Ropes of various local tree bark draped every corner and crevice. But Hattie noticed something that really stood out in a shadowy corner behind the chimney. Instead of an apotropaic, which was a symbol commonly used to ward off witches; Hattie noticed an authentic witch's crooked cane in the corner.



She alone knew the astrological symbols carved onto the cane indicating the practice of witchcraft, and the strong belief in it.

Several weeks later, a vicious rumor spread throughout the region that Hattie was a witch. The wealthy shop owners knew that Hattie had noticed the "witch cane" belonging to them, accompanied by the threat of Hattie competing as a well-qualified apothecary, caused the wealthy family to threaten the life of innocent Hattie Gin. Being a wealthy family of note, the town believed the rumor.

To this day on the crest of the crippled tree ravine near the old foundation, the remains of a char burned tree still towers like an ashen giant above all the others. Its cindered, gnarled limbs twist down to the ground. This is where the tragic hanging is said to have occurred, owing to the strange sights and noises that sweep sharply through the dry branches.



About a hundred yards from the tree, a small brook crosses the road and runs into a marshy and thickly wooded glen, it is here, where the image of a woman stands looking up at the tree. She has been seen clutching her throat, then slowly fades into the marsh.



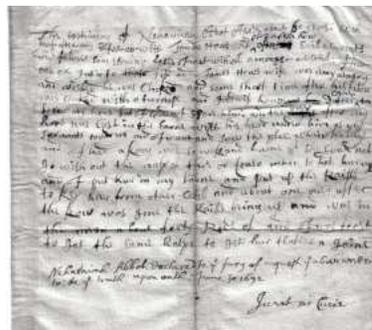
Shortly after Hattie's death, her husband left the area. The wealthy family took over the property and had a mansion built near the huge, gnarled tree.

Over 200 years later, in the 1950's, in an antique shop in West Milford, a woman came into the shop to sell some items her ancestor's had retrieved from a fire many years earlier in West Milford. The shop owner marveled at the items, as she had never seen anything like them.

One of the items was an old apothecary's book that included astronomy, and dated back to the 1600's printed in Salem Massachusetts, and the other, a twisted old cane with mysterious markings engraved throughout it. Curious about the outcome of the mansion where the items came from, it was learned, it had mysteriously burned to the ground many years ago, when a gnarled, huge tree caught fire by lightning, and fell onto the mansion.

The demise of the entire family within, occurred because of that fire. And as the neighbors from miles around came to help extinguish the fire, all who were present, had glimpsed the silhouette of a woman clutching her throat, as she folded into the blackness of the woods beyond the crushing ashes of the night.

By Tuxedo Park Publishers

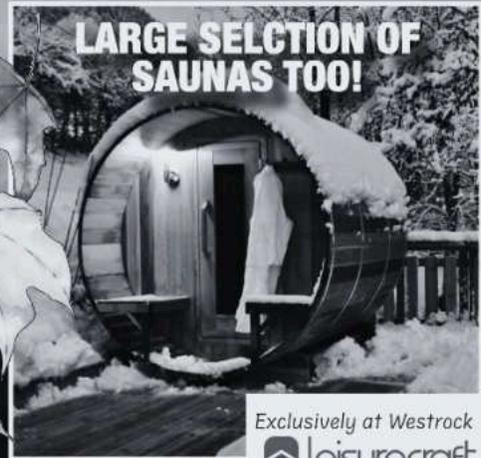


Original diary and apothecary's journal from the 1690's

Westrock Pool & Spa HOT FALL SALE

Save \$500 On Any Cold Plunge*

Now through Oct 15th



**bullfrog
spas**



**LARGEST SELECTION
OF SPAS IN THE REGION**

**MORE THAN
50 SPAS
TO CHOOSE FROM!**

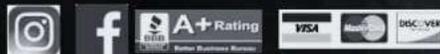
Financing Available



www.westrockpools.com

21 N.Middletown Rd • Nanuet
Just off Rt. 59 (Behind Marshalls Dept. Store)
845-623-3844

www.westrockpools.com
Rock. # H-00251-25 • New Jersey 13VH03130500
Westchester 14560-H03 • Putnam PC785-A



HOURS: Mon- Sat - 10am-6pm • Sun 10am-4pm • Evening Appointments Available

*WHILE QUANTITIES LAST

Estate caretaker from 1912, still roams the grounds

On the old back road Turnpike, once used in the 1700's as a stagecoach route in Chester NY, a sharp corner yields to a stone mile marker on the edge of a field. A mansion is housed on the old estate built in 1912. It was situated at the top of a hill, overlooking sunsets that glazed the evening skies. Magisterially laid out, the estate boasted a classic mansion made from red Harvard bricks, an icehouse, corncrib, dog kennels and several modest homes for guests.

The formal gardens leaned against an ornate balustrade, and rolled gently past a gardening shed nestled between whysteria vines and grape vines that were used to make jelly and Concord red wine.

An herb garden greeted a fountain, where a statue of an angel played a water flute, amongst Venetian tiles. Beyond this idyllic setting, a path takes you into a completely different mood of landscape. Foreboding ash trees crowd above your head and the sound of someone whistling begins to drift sadly throughout the darkness ahead. Small mounds of stone indicate an old pet cemetery, a tribute to once loved friends gone now for many years.

Heavy, thick briars scramble and crowd the ground of the path that pushes forward into the dense woods. There is a tree that stands alone, surrounded by exposed roots and climbing briars. Moss grows thickly, the mood is dark, and the breeze from the woods drifts with a heavy scent of patchouli and rotten wood. It is near a certain Ash tree, the whistling has been heard the loudest.

A sad whistle lingers into the evening but fades with the first morning breeze. The barking of a dog accompanies the whistling each time it is heard.

It was here they found Higgins, the caretaker, hanging from this tree many years ago. It was said, that his loyal companion, his dog, was found near the tree not wanting to leave his side. Higgins had been a colorful character at one time. He arrived from a small, poor town about 5 miles away to work on one of the several estates in the area, known as "West Gate".

With the influx of wealthy people having grand estates built, many of them chose this area known as "The Heights" for its rolling hills bordered by pristine forests and pure lakes. Higgins took care of West Gate, when the owner, Mr. Murray, was in Manhattan. When Higgins had time off from work, he would often be seen walking with his dog, a walking stick, and a flask of whiskey.

He whistled wherever he went, and when he was short of cash to buy his whiskey; he would go to the neighboring homes offering to tell stories in return for small change.

Higgins had a gift of story telling, with a smooth voice and an imagination that could conjure up an interesting story in a moment, neighbors would ask him to tell them a story or their children a story.



This was well before the age of television and was a welcoming treat. Sadly, Higgins would suffer from hallucinations. At times, he saw snakes on the ground when he walked, that were not really there, a problem linked with his heavy drinking. His drinking began when he lost his wife and two children to diphtheria in 1910.



The hallucinations were the reason he took his dog everywhere, to know if the snakes were real or not. His employer, Mr. Murray, took Higgins under his wing upon hearing of Higgins's terrible loss.

Mr. Murray thought the busier Higgins was, the less he would drink, and it was working, for Higgins had the utmost respect, admiration, and appreciation for him. Mr. Murray was a philanthropist, aiding blind foundations, and did much work for the American Foundation for the Blind. Utilizing both his time and his money, he forged the way with Helen Keller as his aid.

He would find extra work for Higgins by having him read to his guests, who he housed in the farmhouse on the property. His guests were from a home for the blind in Manhattan, and they were often his guests at his estate in Chester, where Higgins would spend hours reading to them, in addition to his care taking duties.

Mr. Murray and several of his friends strongly gave of their own time and money to the blind, developing a uniform type for Braille. One was finally adopted in 1917, a huge breakthrough, enabling the blind to learn how to read. He headed the Red Cross's efforts for a number of services that were designed to aid soldiers wounded, and blinded, during WWI. He also helped many poor families in the Chester area.

One of Higgins favorite and most appreciative listeners to his stories, was Helen Keller. She often stayed on the estate helping Mr. Murray with the blind foundation efforts. Mr. Murray could not have chosen a better torch-bearer than Helen Keller for their cause to raise awareness and help for the blind. She was a radiant woman embodied with both tragedy and triumph. Inflicted as she put it, in a dungeon of darkness and silence until Mr. Murray came along.

By setting more books into Braille with the help of Mr. Murray, Helen felt that many of the blind could be set free by entering this world of Braille-sight. Once Helen learned Braille, she went on to earn a college degree from Radcliff. Mr. Murray appropriated five most popular books at the time, to be cast into Braille print so the blind can have what the rest of the world had, a chance to read.

One thing Mr. Murray enjoyed most was Christmas on the estate. One year, he had invited many guests from the blind school in Manhattan, as well as Helen Keller. It was a brilliant moonlit night, extremely cold, and snow was soon expected. Higgins was preparing the fires in the main fireplaces. He suddenly heard a scream from outside. He ran out into the beginning of a blizzard. Without his coat, he ran down the path toward the screaming, his dog close behind him. Pitch-blackness, along with the steadily falling snow, crushed his speed, but he tenaciously pushed ahead.



Continued next pg



Up ahead he saw one of the blind children beneath the huge ash tree, lost and scared. The child had wandered away from the group that was being led from the farmhouse where they were staying, to the mansion for Christmas Eve festivities.

No one noticed him wandering out into the storm. Higgins rushed to the child's side and found that the child was caught in the briars that heavily strangled the entire tree. Having to climb the tree to release the hardest briars at the top, Higgins suddenly slipped on an icy limb while at the top of the tree.

Shortly after, a search party showed up when they discovered them both missing. They found poor Higgins hanging from the tree. The briars had caught around his neck when he fell from the tree on the icy limb.

They cut Higgins down, but it was too late. His dog did not want to leave his side, and had to be carried to the mansion. The dog would not eat after that night, and eventually died. They buried the dog in the old pet cemetery by the ash tree.

Almost 100 years later, the estate became a golf course. The 2nd green was situated close to the ash tree, which still remains. The small graves from the pet cemetery had been plowed under, and the mansion sits abandoned.

A special golf tournament was held on an autumn weekend for the grand opening of the golf course. While playing through the 2nd green, everyone paused at once. In the dead silence of the play, a lone, sad whistling came from the dense forest ahead, accompanied by a dog barking...There was no one there, and no dog to be seen.

549 NY-17 Ste B,
Tuxedo, NY 10987
Next to Dottie
Audrey's

Hudson Valley Wine
Cellar is a Wine and
Spirits Boutique in
Tuxedo, NY.

**HUDSON VALLEY
WINE CELLAR**
A LIFE FULL OF WINE

"We are conveniently
located in Duck
Cedar Plaza 549 Rt.
17 Tuxedo NY. We
Specialize in craft
wine and spirits from
NYS including a great
selection from
around the world."

*From our cellar to yours
A superb selection of wines
"Wine... Time in a bottle well spent"*

Tuxedo Park Design Studios

Locally Owned Family Business for Over 25 Years

- ✓ Interior & Exterior Painting
- ✓ Power Washing
- ✓ Epoxy Floor Coatings
- ✓ Roof Coating
- ✓ Light Carpentry
- ✓ Wallpaper Removal & Installation
- ✓ Deck Maintenance
- ✓ Commercial & Industrial Buildings

Call Today to Schedule a FREE Estimate 845-369-3001
Visit Our Website at handhapaint.com

end

Haunted Mansions - Haunted Hills...the haunting began at Christmas in Ringwood

In the late 1800's in Ringwood NJ, there was a wide stretch of woods and hills dotting the landscape before coming upon a dark red mansion that stood at the very edge of a steep decent. At the foot of this descent nestled a village made up of small log homes built for the miners who worked in the nearby Ringwood-Sterling Forest Ironworks.



The mansion was a rambling home full of narrow passages and large, long vaulted rooms. Unexpected staircases appeared around corners, leading to foreboding looking attics and dark, clouded cellars. The large entrance hall boasted dark oak paneling accompanied by an exaggerated marble floor with two heavy arched doors leading to the dining room and library. A third room whose heavy, velvet drapes appeared as though they had been closed for many years, housed an assortment of items. Disabled furniture, old doors, misfit china and tarnished silver, were remnants from the husband's previous estate. There was a vague, frightening feeling about the mansion in general, although one room held an eerie sense of unforgiving restlessness with an uneasy lingering presence.



Dusk, interrupting the short winter afternoons, enabled the sun to glimpse in briefly through a small, undraped oval stained glass window shedding a sense of warmth. It sparkled its cheerful rays upon the large fur rug that was spread in front of the wide old-fashioned hearth. It was here, sitting in front of the crackling log fire with its easy comfort, that this story was relayed to me.



A young couple with a child had purchased the mansion in the 1800's. The family was looking forward to Christmas in their new home and the young wife spent days decorating the halls and cavernous rooms with holly and pine boughs from the nearby woods. As the days passed and Christmas Eve neared, the husband, who was over-seeing his family's iron mines, was called away urgently on business and was to return on Christmas eve.

The wife, being very content and happy in her new home remained at the estate with her child and the household help. The days passed quickly and Christmas brought with it a blizzard that blocked the woods-trail for the horse carriage the husband was to arrive home on. The young wife, not realizing it was to be a blizzard, set out early for church services unaccompanied. The church was in nearby Lakeville, housed within the great woods of Sterling Forest.

The household staff was preparing the mansion for the Christmas festivities as well as their employer's arrival home. The church was not a great distance from the house so she decided to walk as opposed to having a carriage sent for. She enjoyed the scenery, for it was snowing lightly, draping the estate trees with winter whiteness.

She passed the quiet groves and shadowy lawns silvered over by the easy blanket of snow. After the church services, the small congregation assembled briefly, and then dispersed to their holiday attired homes. As the young wife wandered by the white sides of the hills, the now blinding snow veered her in a wrong direction. Glimpsing candlelight in a far off window, she walked back and forth trying to follow the candle's direction.

Continued next pg



Without warning, the ground gave away beneath her, immersing her into a lake where thin ice being covered with snow, gave the appearance of a field. It was not long before blazing torches moved in the open air searching for the lady of the mansion.



Discovered barely alive, she was moved to her favorite room in the mansion, the one with the large fur rug and oval stained glass window, where she passed away before her husband's return. After that evening, whenever that room was used, the firelight would throw strange glares and ghostly shadows across the floors and walls, mimicking unnatural movements. For years, the panels of the room were still hung with tapestries, and the figures upon the tapestry appeared as unsubstantial shapes or meanings.

Within the room, a strong scent of pine was noted when there wasn't pine present, and by many who did not know the story. On the eve of Christmas for many years, a light appeared from beneath the closed door to the room. the light moved back and forth, and a chill crept through the room and down the hall, lingering long into the dawning hours.



It was on a Christmas eve several years later when a few guests were seated in the grand parlor, when suddenly, behind their host's empty chair next to the Christmas tree, a woman in a long fur gown, holding a candle, circled the tree as though looking for something, or someone. Pale white, with dreamy eyes, she then simply, disappeared.

Awe-struck, the guests called for their host who was in the kitchen seeing to the holiday menu with the cooks. The explanation of what had just been witnessed by the guests left the husband numb.

Needing to excuse himself from the gathering, he returned to the kitchen changing the holiday preparations, canceling the holiday festivities. Emotionally weakened, he retired to his room to write in his journal.

He lit the bedside lamp and opened the journal to the last entry which was entered that morning. As he began to write, he noticed something written across the entire page, the words..."I am still with you".

Dawn was gathering a gloomy December day with a cruel wind tearing in from the northeast. There was a quick knock on the door by one of the servants, and as he opened the door, Betsy, the head cook, apologized for the interruption but thought he should see something downstairs. Beneath the Christmas tree, discovered by the servants, was a card.

Dazed by the night before and what he found, this shook him further. In large letters across the face of the card were the words..."I am still with you."

As the years passed, the home was renovated, added on to, and changed owners several times. It was almost Christmas with yet a new owner, and the mansion was being decorated for the holidays. In the room with the oval window, where the wife died so many years ago, the new owner was preparing the fireplace for a fire when a strong scent of pine drifted into the room.

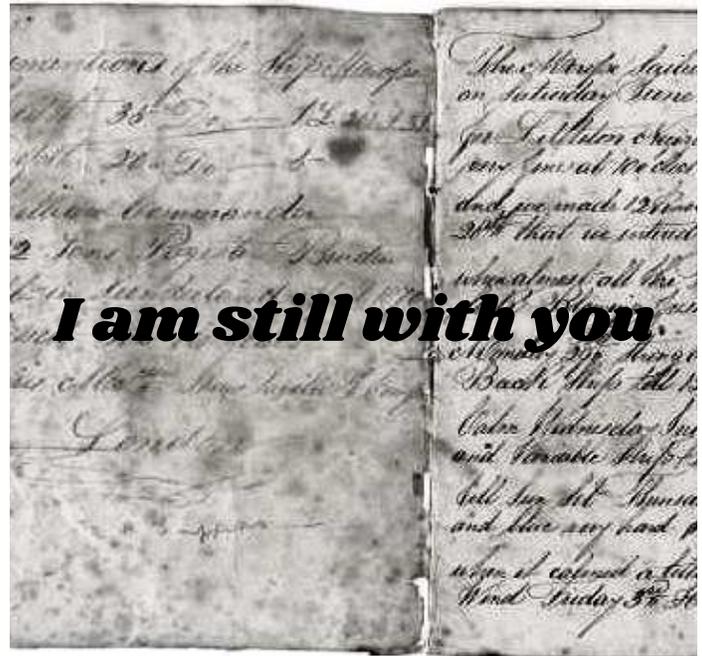
He stood, warming his hands when the fire was lit and gazed out of the oval stained glass window now over 120 years old. Suddenly, he felt a hand gently on his shoulder and a woman's voice saying..."I am still with you." There was no one there when he turned around.

Continued

The man, the new owner, happened to be the great, great grandson who had purchased his ancestral home in a recent foreclosure.

To this day, when afternoon shadows blend into early dusk, the fading pink sunlight glances through the stained glass oval window, and the room exudes a sense of permanence & solidity. A woman's undying love with a persistent devotion for life, love and family, remains in the old mansion in Ringwood New Jersey.

By Tuxedo Park Magazine



I am still with you.

The Black Veil of the Black Dirt

The curse of the drowned lands of Pine Island in 1808

Blurred by anxious determination of success, the black dirt area of Pine Island became populated by farmers, merchants, and educators attempting to reach the common goal of improvement. No one knew the plague they were about to encounter, the deadly plague known as festering Miasma.

Pine Island is a small hamlet near the towns of Warwick and Florida NY. This entire area which also includes Bellvale, was first settled well before the Revolutionary War.

European trappers and hunters were here in the 1650s, when hunting and gathering practices remained predominant. They liked this area because of plentiful springs of fresh water and the proximity of the Wawayanda Creek which teemed with fish and fowl. At that time, the area was remarkably free of infectious diseases, and though the quantity of food was small, its variety was seemingly endless.

Shortly after 1703, when a land patent known as Wawayanda was signed with the local Minsi Indians, this area opened for settlement. In 1719 Benjamin Aske purchased a small portion of the patent and established a farm, called Warwick, from which the present village soon took its name. In the 1730s, the ancient Wawayanda Path was transformed into a colonial King's Highway, and Warwick village was emerging. It would boast several famous inns and eateries, notably Baird's Tavern which was built in 1776.

This unique valley was formed from the decay of plants which resulted in a great shallow swamp known as, the "Drowned Lands".

When Nathaniel Jones came into the Warwick area with his friend in 1808 to teach school, he never realized the danger he was facing.

He was only 20, and was given a position in the small school in the village of Amity on the outskirts of Warwick and Florida. As soon as he began teaching school, Nathaniel was becoming sicker and sicker with each passing day. He then realized many of the local families were becoming equally sick. Nathaniel was seen by Dr. Seward, (William Seward's father-see our article "The Raven's Wing").

The majority of the black dirt region was originally putrefied by swamp land, black bogs and the mosquitoes bred by those conditions. The local farmers thought if they drained the swamps they would gain more arable fields, however, in doing so, they had only created a worse mosquito infestation of the stagnant pools.

The sickness known as Miasma prevailed in the black dirt region in 1808, taking many lives and creating severe sickness for most others. Nathaniel Jones almost died, however, with the constant care by a good friend, Phinias Thompkins, he survived, but did not regain full health back for 2 years. Putrid pale, he left the area.

Continued next pg



As early as 1804, the Drowned land's farmers believed that by altering the course of the Wallkill River that flooded the Pine Island area, and removing certain obstructions in its bed, the lands would be drained to a great extent and large portions of them would be made tillable and usable.



Little did they know about the curse. A member of the Minsi Indian Tribe known as "The wizard" had a great passion for Pine Island. When there was a problem settling boundary lines with the English settlers in the 1700's, the question of ownership tilted toward the settlers. The wizard stood up stoutly for his territory, placing a curse on every stream, rugged hill, and low-lying pastureland.

The plague of the Miasma disease was strongly believed to have been a token of his powers. Especially when to their amazement, enormous amounts of eels came down the streams and down through the ditches. There was hardly a night one year, that the ditches did not overflow with eels, some of which weighed eight pounds each. This area of the Drowned Lands abounded in eels until 1826.

When the area residents began draining the many acres to create farmland, the land was changed from a rapid stretch of stream, three miles in length, to a series of stagnant pools and beds of decaying vegetable matter. Situated in the very midst of Orange County's fragrant meadows and mountain air, became seats of malaria. The mills and factories were closed.

Deadly epidemics began, the festering Miasma had swept the entire Black Dirt region crippling its economy and taking people to their graves, leaving echoes of horror in its wake.

Legend has it that to this day, as the fractions of evening brush by you while you stand near the foot prints of the original settlement, dimensional forms take place along the ditches that bred the infectious disease.

On long summer evenings when the sky over the black dirt region blinds the night, the areas where homes were burned, because the plague was thought to be contagious, eerie, fearsome sounds emanate from the fields that used to be swamps. A vibrating chant echoes within their boundaries. No one knows where the graveyard is of the many victims who died from the festering sickness known as Miasma.

Eventually, the tide of time had swept away the swamps, drained ditches yielded to farmland, and the vast valley within a valley governed the region. The blanket that covered the Drowned Lands with stagnation was removed to unearth its fertile complexion.

Legends often unfold, people say the sickly veil still exists at times from the ghostly past of the Miasma epidemic.

As dusk folds into the fading horizon, the wide open acres of land stretch their story.

In the general area where once old mills and factories stood, a feeling grabs you as you peer out over the region. The sound of a plough pitching dirt comes closely to your ear, but no one is there.

A gray, thin veil of mist seems to cover the land, it moves, crawling toward you. And just when you feel it encroaching, it circles around you and disappears into the valley.

The land is alive and seems boundless. Whatever stories, legends, or graves lie beneath, it speaks to you in a voice disguised as the deadly drowned lands of Pine Island through a wizard's curse.

**Nathaniel Jones eventually returned to Warwick and became a teacher in the Warwick Village School district. Nathaniel married Mary Burt in 1811 and they had a wool mill in Bellvale.

The Graveyard Waltz In Ringwood NJ

Just past the wooden bridge that crosses the dark stream shadowed by chestnut trees, there is a very old graveyard dating back to the early 1700's in Ringwood NJ.

Standing as a challenge to the curious, their wonder is often stirred by its air of desolation and decayed splendor. It is here, where a ghostly voice is said to join in with the melancholy wailing of the wind through the trees. Night travelers have hastened their steps as they approach the mounds of stone gleaming coldly in winter moonlight.

On very quiet autumn afternoons when nature is particularly still, the dusty golden chestnut leaves release easily from the trees and cascade across the graves of various sizes and ages. Poor mining families mingle with ranked royal officers in this graveyard with eroding headstones, marked by long gone clergymen and the aging elements of time itself.

The gentle slope of the graveyard blends into a pond, settled upon by lime-green lily pads with yellow flowers. When Indian summer invites autumn into its splendid warmth, one may glimpse a restless spirit in the haze from the nearby forest woods.

Handsomely clad, a man dressed in an ivory shirt laced with black velvet trim, is often seen strolling in the haze with his hands behind his back, as though in contemplation. Back and forth he walks in the graveyard until he nears a certain grave, then he kneels down and places something upon it.

No matter how many times this has been witnessed, shortly after he disappears, there is nothing ever found on the grave. A love tale which dates back to 1771, he always goes to the grave of Rebecca, the woman he fell in love with shortly after he came to Ringwood with his best friend Robert Erskine, from Scotland, to run the Ringwood Ironworks.

In 1771 at the age of 36, they had both been elected Fellows of the Royal Society, a prestigious appointment in the scientific community. That year, the owners of the ironworks near Ringwood, New Jersey, hired Erskine to replace Peter Hasenclever as ironmaster.

They both came to America on June 5, 1771 to oversee the management of the extensive holdings and more than 500 workers of the American Iron Company based at Ringwood.

Erskine, immediately hired his friend named Barclay, as lead assistant, and they both set about trying to make the operation profitable, but the American Revolutionary War cut their efforts short. Erskine & Barclay were sympathetic to the American cause, but worried they may lose their 500 workers to the army. Instead, they organized them into a citizen militia in August 1775.

George Washington was impressed with Erskine and Barclay from the moment he met them at Ringwood Manor, and appointed them to the post of Geographers and Surveyors General of the Continental Army. Their maps of the region showed roads, buildings, and other details, and were of much use to General Washington. They also kept the Ringwood ironworks in operation, supplying critical munitions and materials to Washington's army.

Continued next pg



One evening on the way home to Ringwood from Washington's headquarters in Newburgh, Barclay was met with a glare of torches when he crested the hill that overlooked the manor house. It was the arrival of Robert Erskin's cousin from Scotland.



Her name was Rebecca, and she arrived to help the soldiers as an army "Camp Follower & Aid". During the Revolutionary War, this was very common, as the men needed to be fed, nursed, and uniforms laundered. In many cases, women who followed the army were widows, runaway servants, or those who faced poverty because of the war. The wives of high-ranking officers, including Martha Washington, also accompanied their husbands to encampments.



Martha Washington Stayed at Baird's Tavern in Warwick several times on her way to Washington's Headquarters in Newburgh to aid her husband at his encampment.

Upon Rebecca's arrival, it was a fine summer evening and the rustic beauty of the manor house stood regal against the backdrop of the thick woods beyond.

Barclay was immediately taken with Rebecca's beauty and the two formed a romantic relationship and spent weeks enjoying dinners, rides in the countryside, and courtship. Rebecca was extremely fond of the new style of dance called, the Waltz, newly composed in England.

They were married at the manor house, and Barclay gave Rebecca a pocket watch with a music box built into it which played a soft waltz. They were often seen waltzing on the broad lawns of the manor house beneath the chestnut trees, within the glow of a full moon.

Several weeks later, word was sent by George Washington for all troops to embark on the journey to Stony Point where the British were camped. The Battle of Stony Point took place on July 16, 1779. In a well-planned and executed nighttime attack, a highly trained select group of George Washington's Continental Army troops defeated British troops in a quick and daring assault on their outpost in Stony Point.

Both sides suffered heavy losses in the battle. Rebecca had been badly wounded on the battleground near the Hudson and was swiftly carried home to the manor house. Although she was young and strong, she passed away due to her injuries and was buried in the graveyard near the manor house. Barclay was devastated by her loss and mourned bitterly. He relied heavily upon his best friend, Robert Erskine, for emotional support. But shockingly, within a few weeks of Rebecca's death, Erskine died after catching a bad cold while on a mission for George Washington in New Windsor. Robert Erskine was also buried at Ringwood...Barclay was left utterly alone.

Legend has it, that over 200 years later, the state was repairing the graveyard, as the property had become a state park by that time. Headstones were uncovered, cement repaired and the stones erected to solid positions. One man, while digging debris away from one of the graves discovered an oxidized object.

Upon a professional cleaning and restoration, they discovered a beautiful pocket watch, which when opened, displayed a music box, and although it no longer played, the title of a waltz was engraved into the cover, and beneath the title were the words, "To my Rebecca, may we waltz in life, and after life".

By Tuxedo Park magazine





Restaurant • Piano Bar • Lodging

The Breezy Introduces Chef- Prepared Artisan Meals... Delivered!



Crab Cakes



Salmon



The Breezy
(845) 477-8100
www.thebreezymealprep.com



The Breezy Restaurant introduces **Canine Cuisine!**

They'll think every day is Christmas!
Made with Love by Chef Morgan!

with the same ingredients as your Breezy Favorites!
\$8.99 per meal

Our Customers say: **"Woof! Woof-woof! Arrf!!"**

Translation : *(Mummy! Better than bag food!)*

Call The Breezy! 845-477-8100

Who's a good owner? You're a good owner!

620 Jersey Ave, Greenwood Lake NY, 10925



*From our lake to your gates...
The Breezy Restaurant on Greenwood Lake
Brings you chef prepared meals delivered to
your door*

"TRUSTED IN THE PARK"



The Breezy is a family owned restaurant situated on the shore of Greenwood Lake. We bring home-delivered meals ready for your freezer on a weekly or monthly basis.

Order online or call- (845) 477-8100
www.thebreezymealprep.com
620 Jersey Ave, Greenwood Lake, NY 10925

Menu

Crab Cakes
Salmon
Bratwurst
Breezy- Zagna
and More....



Owner, Paul
Balogh with his
son chef
Morgan

We cater to you

