



**The Rensselaerville Falls**

## **THE EDMUND NILES HUYCK PRESERVE, INC.**

P.O. Box 77

RENSSELAERVILLE, NEW YORK 12147

# **NEWSLETTER**

(518) 797-3440

Summer 1983

## **The Rensselaerville Falls**

The RENSSELAERVILLE FALLS, pictured above, occur where the Ten-Mile Creek cascades over relatively erosion resistant sandstones from the Middle Devonian seas, deposited over 350 million years ago. (they've aged alot!!) One of the charter purposes of the Preserve is the protection of this beautiful example of a waterfall from a hanging valley.

The Ten-Mile Creek, a tributary of the Catskill Creek and the Hudson River, flows through the Preserve and Rensselaerville, in a pre-glacial valley. During the last ice-age, when much of the Hudson and Catskill Valleys were filled with ice (c. 13,000 B.C.), the Ten-Mile Creek flowed slowly through the valley onto the Catskill ice field. The ice greatly eroded the Hudson and Catskill Valleys, and when it melted, the ice free valleys of their tributaries were at a much higher elevation, resulting in a "hanging valley" waterfall. Erosion caused the Ten-Mile Creek waterfall to move upstream, and thereby lowering the downstream valley close to that of the Catskill Valley.

The upper reaches of the Falls are composed of non-marine sediments of blue-green sandstone, which overlie black shale, indicative of sediments from brackish water, which in turn overlie reddish sandstones of the non-marine "Oneonta Formation". The lower elevations of the Falls, just upstream from the Huyck Mill foundation, are composed of marine sediments of the "Hamilton Series" of blue-gray shale. The Hamilton Shales are responsible for the cascades of the lower Falls, including those of the Grist Mill Pond, and falls behind the hamlet of Rensselaerville.

Massive erosion-resistant muddy sandstone form the lip of the Falls. The exposed under face of softer shales are eroded faster, undercutting the lip, which then collapses, enabling the Falls to continue their upstream migration.

The photograph above was taken by Mr. William Rice in 1975. The Falls have changed during that short time, and will continue to do so.

(Manfred P. Wolff, Associate Professor, Geology, Hofstra University, Ed. JPR)

## **The President's Viewpoint**

The arrival of summer means the arrival of The Preserve's peak of activity. One has to be in on the daily management of those activities or be familiar with the grand finale of "The 1812 Overture" to realize what a production it is to put together a summer season at The Preserve.

In early May, the Scientific Advisory Committee completes its analysis of grant applications and makes its awards, extending invitations. This year 8 scientists will be in residence on Preserve scholarships. In addition, we will have a self-financed group from SUNY Stonybrook as well as a 50 member group of micrologists toward the end of the season.

People and programs mean housing. The Preserve has embarked upon a 5 year project of up-grading all of our residences. We are dealing with lovely old buildings all of which are in great need of a variety of health care. Bull Frog Camp needed its electric system replaced, Pond Cottage had to have its seven ton brick chimney structure removed to stabilize its interior wall incline. The Ordway House has a serious sill condition and our paint contractor declined to estimate the cost of painting and fixing all the small panes of glass on the side porch; Eldridge Lab has to have a septic system and sinks in place before scientists can use its facilities and we can have meetings there. All of these places have to be cleaned, opened, lawns cut, etc.

All of these activities and projects have to be fed through The Preserve office in the form of phone calls, contractors, appointments, work plans, etc.. It is time consuming, detailed work which must be accomplished in too little time. Our spring, if that's what it was, was of little assistance.

Without the combined effort of Deborah Gordon, our business manager, Dennis Ryan, our groundsman and the great cooperation of Ken Bryan and Jim Perkinson we could not be as well along as we are.

Then there are 1400 acres of woodlands and meadow which have their needs. The lake in spring, the pond, trails, bridges, roads and the dam.



## Dr. W. J. Hamilton, Jr.

Dr. W. J. Hamilton Jr., Professor Emeritus of Zoology, Cornell University, informs us in response to our winter Newsletter that the beaver, once the lake is frozen over, draws its food supply from branches it has stockpiled in the backwater reservoir it has created by building its dam. The food is stored in the deepest part of the lake or reservoir, and reasonably near the beaver lodge. (Dr. Hamilton, has had a long association with the Preserve, having made a biological survey 45 years ago — Thank You Dr. Hamilton!) J.P.R.

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## Golf Club Storage for Gnomes?

Golf club storage for gnomes? What smaller forms of life have you discovered on the Preserve? Take a magnifying glass — Can you find the creeping Thyme-Leaved Speedwell on the trail to the top of the Falls? Have a good summer on your Preserve!!!

## President's Viewpoint (con't)

The vandalism, too, got off to a good start with the destruction of the ladies' dressing cabin at the lake. It will not be replaced. The men's dressing cabin will become a unisex facility.

In addition, we are aware of the use of trails for motorbikes and walking dogs unleashed. While we cannot eliminate such illegal, careless use of our properties, The Preserve has enlisted the cooperation of the Environmental Conservation Police office in Westerlo and the Albany County Sheriff Voorheesville Patrol in our effort to reduce the threat to persons, property and wildlife. Members and friends of The Preserve are urged to call either of these agencies at the numbers listed below at any time there is evidence of a violation of appropriate respect for the general membership interest. The Preserve is prepared to prosecute where there is obvious evidence of willful intent to destroy or damage physical property or endanger the natural habitat and welfare of the wildlife within Preserve boundaries.

The Board of Directors has authorized the formation of a Conservation Committee which will advise the Board on all matters concerning forestry and woodland/meadow management. More about that at our 20 August annual meeting.

Have a grand summer and include The Preserve lands in your plans.

Environmental Conservation Police, Westerlo: 872-1715  
Albany County Sheriff, Voorheesville: 765-2351

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## Annual Membership Meeting

(Business Meeting and Year-End Report)

**August 20, 1983**

**2:00 p.m.**

**Eldridge Laboratory**

at

**Lincoln Pond**

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Details of

## 1st Annual Members Symposium and Picnic

On August 21, 1983  
to be announced.



## 1983 Grant Recipients

1. Buchanan, Claire, Ph.D. Univ. of New Hampshire, 1978. "Water Flow Through Myosotis Lake and Lincoln Pond in Summer and Its Effect on Zooplankton."
  2. Daniels, Robert. Ph.D. Univ. of Calif., Davis. 1980. "A Study of the Distribution and Ecology of Crayfish in the E. N. Huyck Preserve".
  3. Hay, Lauren. B.S. Tufts Univ., 1982. Fellowship in "Hydrologic Model of the Huyck Preserve."
  4. Houle, David C. Ph.D. S.U.N.Y. Stony Brook, 1985.  
Hey, Emmanuel B., Ph.D. S.U.N.Y. Stony Brook, 1985. Co-authorship "The Relation of Dispersal among Microhabitats to Genetic Variation in *Drosophila athabasca*."
  5. Siegfried, Clifford. Ph.D. Univ. of Calif., Davis 1974. "Nutrient Budgets and Phytoplankton Dynamics of Myosotis Lake, Edmund Niles Huyck Preserve."
  6. Townsend, Daniel S. Ph.D., S.U.N.Y. Albany, 1983. "Physical, chemical, and biotic account of the Preserve based on reports of investigators, C.T. Male Study and other sources (annotated bibliography.)"
  7. Wilcox, R. Stimson. Ph.D. Univ. of Michigan, 1969. "Alternative Territoriality Strategies in a Water Strider."
  8. Patti Dunsik, Lifeguard; Ichthyological sampling of Lake Myosotis, in exchange for use of Davis Cottage for living purposes. June 1 - Aug. 20.
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### NOTICE: Dr. Claire Buchanan

Dr. Claire Buchanan, in studying the water currents in Lake Myosotis will be adding a non-toxic, rapidly diffusing dye (Rhodamine WT) to the Ten-Mile Creek above the lake (So don't be surprised!) The dye, which first appears bright-orange red will help answer several questions, such as:

- 1) How fast does water from the Ten-Mile Creek flow through the lake?
- 2) How much mixing occurs between creek water and lake water?
- 3) Does quick flowthrough wash out a large portion of the lake's zoo plankton?

She hopes to be able to evaluate the water quality of the lake and its biological capacity, which could supply us with some answers to Rensselaerville's drinking water supply. J.P.R.

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Membership Dues: August 1983 - August 1984

|                                   |           |          |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|----------|
| Junior (17 yrs. or younger) ..... | \$5.00    | \$ _____ |
| Active .....                      | \$10.00   | \$ _____ |
| Supporting .....                  | \$25.00   | \$ _____ |
| Contributing .....                | \$50.00   | \$ _____ |
| Sustaining .....                  | \$100.00  | \$ _____ |
| Patron .....                      | \$1000.00 | \$ _____ |

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please make all checks payable to The E.N. Huyck Preserve, Inc., and mail to the above address. Tax deductible: Annual report is on file and available through the N.Y.S. Department of State, Charities Registration section, or the Preserve. **Thank you.**

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Mrs. Deborah M. Gordon, Business Manager  
Mr. Dennis Ryan, Groundsman

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