

## History of the Silver Lake Association (SLA) Chapter #2

The first chapter recounted the history of Silver Lake. It explained how and why Silver Lake could have acquired its name. It was said from the time of the Seneca Indians to the first settlers, Silver Lake was described as “a little lake” and “pretty sheet of water”. Levi Silver came to town from Vermont in 1815. Mr. Silver, his wife and nine children took up residence in the west part of Perry and there operated a noted inn called “Silver Inn”. By the early 1830s, the body of water was recorded as Silver Lake, a name doubtless prompted from the name of these settlers and the beauty of the waters. Even today when the light conditions are just right and the waters are calm, a silvery sheen spreads across its glasslike surface.

One article found on the internet about the history of Silver Lake was located at: [http://www.csicop.org/si/show/the\\_silver\\_lake\\_serpent\\_inflated\\_monster\\_or\\_inflated\\_tale/](http://www.csicop.org/si/show/the_silver_lake_serpent_inflated_monster_or_inflated_tale/). This article by Joe Nickell, 1999, gives a more detailed account of Silver Lake and the Legend of the Sea Serpent.

The legend of the Sea Serpent attracted hordes of people to Silver Lake. Many cottages were being built around the lake and septic systems were installed to control the sewage. After time these septic systems began to leach into the lake and additionally, farm field runoff was also becoming an issue. The beauty of the lake began to give way to pollution. Algae scum and sometimes harmful algae blooms (HAB) were taking over the water’s surface. Weeds were in abundance and at times water levels were very low. The beautiful lake was now losing its appeal. Someone had to come to the forefront and take responsibility for this lake. If nothing was done, the investment values of these properties around the lake could plummet.

By the early 1960s, cottage owners were trying to come up with a plan for cleaning up Silver Lake. What can be done? How can it be done? Who is going to do it? How can just a couple cottage owners handle such a monumental task? How can communication to the lake community be accomplished? Keep in mind that this was done by volunteers, without using the technology of today; computers, cell phones, or the internet.

July 13<sup>th</sup>, 1961 became a very special day for the residents of Silver Lake. This was the day that 11 very passionate property owners of the Silver Lake community came together to form a Membership Corporation. With the help of Brown & Brown Attorneys at Law located in Warsaw, NY, they registered a Certificate of Incorporation in the State of New York named **Silver Lake Cottage Owners Association, INC.** (SLCOA), Robert E. Noonan, 8<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Supreme Court Justice approved the certificate. The original signees of the doctrine were, Nicholas Dovolos, Dr. Richard T. Williams, Morris Baker, Don Smith, Roy Ecker, Clarence Grossman, Harry Martin, Seth Tucker, Frank Murphy, Mrs. Eleanore Hoffman, and John B. Mollnow Jr.

So starts the day that this special group of property owners took the lead in bringing Silver Lake back to the day it was known as a “pretty sheet of water.” So much needed to be done, but where do you start? Conesus Lake had already organized a cottage owners association, which the SLCOA used as a guideline to follow the steps needed to be a successful organization. By-laws were written, meetings were held, and the community was joining together to tackle this monumental task of cleaning up Silver Lake. Three hundred members and an active Board of Directors could accomplish wonders, and had. What could be done about the other 600 cottage owners who had not joined the SLCOA? As you strengthen the organization, so it would be stronger. The list of possibilities of things which could be accomplished is long and only limited to the enthusiasm and support of those who enjoy Silver Lake.

Through their attorney Harry Brown, the directors were keeping in constant touch with the problems of water drainage from the lake, water pollution, roads, sewer development and wanted to be alerted of any questions that would arise. Some other issues that were in committee were; right of ways to the lake, spraying to eliminate insects, weed control, membership drive, adequate lighting of streets, and the numbering of cottages. In 1971, Ann Kimber

wrote that the loss of rooted aquatic species indicated that Silver Lake was at the edge of stability. Consequently, a plan to put a sewer system around the lake was justifiable by the index of species loss. In 1972, a Citizens Council for the Environment was formed and was active in trying to prevent further pollution of Silver Lake. In 1974, it was determined that the petitions that were signed for the formation of the Sewer District, which were originally circulated by the SLCOA were out of date and have become invalid. The responsibility of getting the petitions signed had to be done all over again. This time it had to be done with greater urgency and with much less time. Once more the SLCOA took the lead to get this task completed under the leadership of Dr. W. Merrill Humphrey (1974).

It was so important to save an area that had so much to offer. The community came together to help an area that was noted as a vacation destination, what some called "Vacationland." The people, some that owned property by Silver Lake for generations, came together for the benefit of the whole lake community.