

The History of the Silver Lake Association (SLA) Chapter #3

In the 1960s the SLCOA was involved with so much more than just planning the cleanup of lake pollution. You discover why this organization went to extremes for its community. This area was just beginning to notice its potential as a vacation destination, and opportunity was abundant for growth in this sort of business. People began to believe that the SLCOA was what Silver Lake needed to keep this "Vacationland" enjoyable for years to come.

In the 1969 issue of the Silver Lake Directory an article noted: *"The Associations at Silver Lake account for much of the interest and activity which is carried on, especially during the summer. Each year the show put on the Fourth of July by the SLCOA becomes more spectacular, and it is not accomplished without a great deal of planning and working together. Proceeds from the sale of flares are used to pay for the fireworks display. The Farewell to Summer Parade of Boats which is sponsored by this same organization, gave a trophy for the first time last year and a great many boats turned out with clever and unusual decorations. These projects provide a fine camaraderie, and it is encouraging to the people who have been initiating them to see the splendid response they have had."*

Throughout years the SLCOA communicated through the Silver Lake Directory. Each summer the community would look forward to receiving this yearly publication. Here are a few notes from these early Silver Lake Directories.

- 1965 - The publishers of the Silver Lake Directory are searching for cover pictures which would lend themselves to duotone printing. The picture had to be a sharp black and white print and a scene of a representative activity at Silver Lake. Prizes were awarded as follows; 1st - \$10, 2nd - \$5, 3rd thru 5th - \$2.
- 1968 – This year was the thirteenth year of the publication of the Silver Lake Directory. During this time there was a vast change and improvement at Silver Lake. Every year in the Silver Lake Directory the SEE-LINES articles provided information that the SLCOA was involved in and kept the whole community abreast of all the important activities, matters, and issues.
- Besides the names and addresses of the lake residents, lake worthy articles and information was included.
- One of the first entries in the 1973 meeting minutes was; *"The corrections of the addresses in the lake book (Vacation Guide) were completed for Mrs. Moxon. It took several hours of work to complete this detail."* It was asked, *"Can we eliminate non due payers from the directory?"* The answer given was, *"It is a directory of all residents of the lake, not just members of the Association."*
- Mr. White, now of the Perry Herald, agreed to print the directories under a different name and would have them ready for a June 1977 distribution. The directors of the SLCOA were going to deliver the directories for the first time.

From the editions pre-1960 to 1973 the directory was titled *"The Silver Lake Directory"*. The title was changed in 1977 to the *"Silver Lake Vacation Guide"*, when the Perry Herald started printing the directory. This title lasted until the year 2007 when the directory was printed by a different publisher and was renamed back to the *"Silver Lake Directory"*. The Silver Lake Directory continues to bring valuable information to everyone and it is still a publication the lake community looks forward to receiving each year. The following information is copied from the directories that were available from the 1960s.

Officers of the 1960s; Presidents – Russell Fontaine, Frank Murphy, Dr. Richard Williams -**1st and 2nd Vice Presidents** – Roy Ecker, Fred Ball, George Sinclair, Jr. - **Secretary/Treasurer**– Mrs. Mildred (Mid) Brown.

It was said that approximately 4500 flares were lit in 1964. In 1966 there was a community sing-a-long on the Institute dock, and from either end of the lake came gaily decorated party boats, one carrying Joe Gambino and Company, musicians, the other Kelly's Old Timers. It was unfortunate that the second annual "Farewell to Summer Parade" was ruined by a major cloud burst before all the boats passed the judges stand. Guests of Honor on the lead

boat were Miss Debra Ann Serventi, Miss Sea Serpent and Miss Wyoming County Fair and Jane Cook, winner of these same titles the previous year. The other decorated boats would follow forming a parade. This is the first reference to a Boat Parade that I found in the directories; 50 years later we are still enjoying this activity. One variation to the parade is that the "Farewell to Summer Parade of Boats" was held the last weekend in August and the parade now titled "Howard Benedict Memorial Parade" is held July 4th. The name of this parade was given in memory of the late SLCOA President (1986-1988) Howard Benedict.

Some other activities that were going on during the resurgence of the area made sure everyone would have something to do. The July 3rd Fireworks was displayed at the Drive-in Theater by its owner Harry Martin; a dance at the Country Club; and a dance at Sandsabarn were held the July 4th weekend. The Perry Raceway had a double header and a demolition derby; and there was a dance at Tucker's. The Harvest Regatta in September continued to be one of the major events at the lake. The winners of the 1967 Regatta were; 1st place-Dick Halligan, 2nd place-Jack Swanson, and 3rd place-Bill Neal. The activities continue at Silver Lake that includes; the Silverland Roller Rink; and fine Park facilities were available to everyone. There was the YMCA Camp and many camps at the Institute, the Swim School and planned programs at nearby parks to round the slate. Trailer and tent camping areas have sprung up everywhere. But to continue to have the enjoyment of these lake activities the lake issues would have to be resolved.

So you can see why it was so important for the SLCOA to do what they could to improve the quality of Silver Lake. So many people enjoyed this "Vacationland." Much had to be done to correct the issues to keep Silver Lake flourishing as a vacation destination. The SLCOA was beginning to get the tools and the manpower needed to accomplish this task.