

ROCHESTER HISTORY

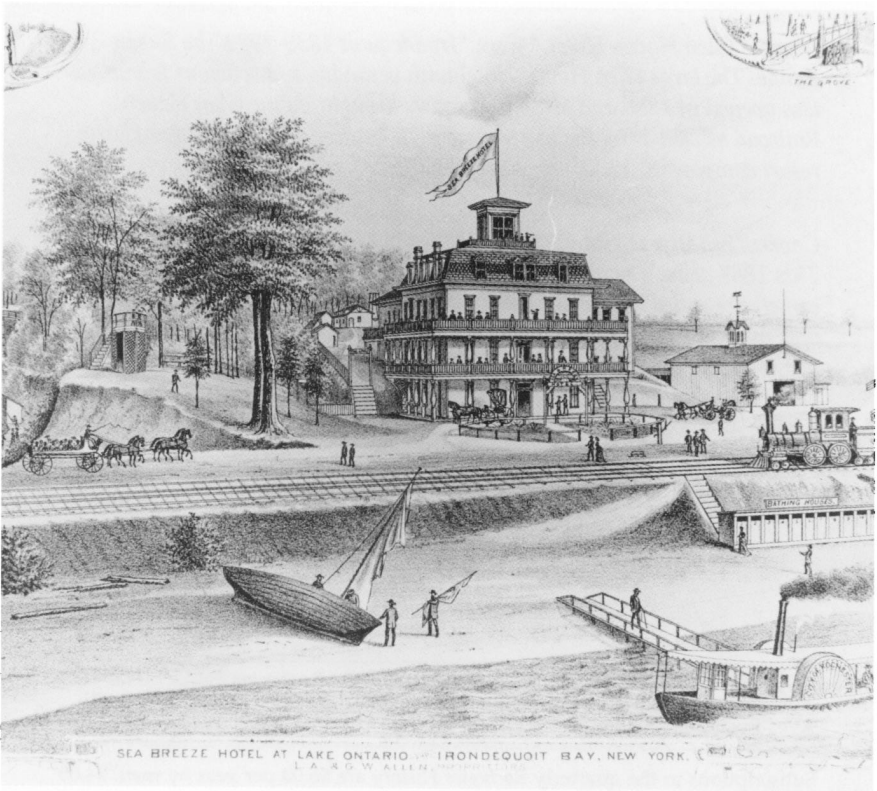
Edited by Ruth Rosenberg-Naparsteck
City Historian

Vol. LVI

Winter, 1994

No.1

Irondequoit Bay The Business of Pleasure *by Florence C. Smith*





Above: "Glen Haven Hotel," from "Irondequoit 1839-1989" by Susan Zande. The large Glen Haven Hotel with verandas and spacious lawns was opened in 1880 and attracted crowds brought by the Glen Haven Railroad as well as by the bay steamers. It became part of the Glen Haven resort complex in 1900.

Cover: "Sea Breeze Hotel," from History of Monroe County by McIntosh. This 1887 artist's rendition of the Sea Breeze House, or Hotel as it was sometimes called, pictures a busy summer season at this growing resort area on Irondequoit Bay where it meets the shore of Lake Ontario. Trains, horse-drawn carryalls, bay steamers and lake vessels brought daily visitors as well as overnight guests to enjoy picnicking, fishing, boating, promenading and other seasonal pleasures.

ROCHESTER HISTORY, published quarterly by the Rochester Public Library
Address correspondence to City Historian, Rochester Public Library, 115 South
Ave., Rochester, NY 14604.

Subscriptions to the quarterly *Rochester History* are \$6.00 per year by mail. \$4.00 per year to people over 55 years of age and to non-profit institutions and libraries outside of Monroe County. \$3.60 per year for orders of 50 or more copies.

© ROCHESTER PUBLIC LIBRARY 1994 US ISSN 0035-7413



"First Annual Outing, Rochester Pharmaceutical Society, Newport", c. 1905; courtesy, Irondequoit Historian's Office, Irondequoit, NY.

Many visitors to Irondequoit Bay in the late 1800s and early 1900s came on horse-drawn wagons called "carryalls." This group from the Rochester Pharmaceutical Society came to the Newport House around 1905.

Irondequoit Bay

The appearance of the Ferris Wheel at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893 was a striking symbol of a new American attitude towards amusement. It was a dazzling and enormous machine. A ride in its breathtakingly open seats cost money. Most importantly, it was something to do simply for entertainment.

Generations of Americans before this were brought up to believe that amusements were acceptable, even necessary, if they aided one's daily labor. Taking time out for a game or recreation offered rest and spiritual refreshment before getting back to work. Now this relationship between work and play was dramatically lost in the splendor of a new machine built just for the joy of riding it.

Journalists writing about the Exposition pointed out that visitors often bypassed the beautiful buildings filled with the newest and best products and artwork that the exhibiting countries could display — and to which admission was free. Instead they chose to pay admission and enjoy the exotic sights and sounds of the inner Midway Plaisance, where the Ferris Wheel was the main attraction.

For fifty cents one could ride this midway showpiece — the large and thrilling rotating wheel with suspended passenger cars made of steel

and designed by George W.G. Ferris. For 45 cents a visitor could enjoy all the attractions of the Moorish Palace, filled with mirrors, grottoes and fountains lighted with colored electric lights. For two dollars one could try ascending in a balloon for several hundred feet.

Not surprisingly, such well-known amusement centers as Coney Island and Atlantic City soon installed Ferris Wheels of their own. What is surprising is how readily some smaller towns and cities accepted these new amusements, in particular, Rochester New York. By 1890 its citizens supported, not one, but three amusement parks¹ with merry-go-rounds, games of chance, and other instant types of amusement which only forty years before had been in public disfavor. Two of them were on nearby Irondequoit Bay, within four miles of each other. The development and vitality of these two amusement parks is a truly remarkable story. It illustrates Rochester's leadership in accepting amusements as pure enjoyment rather than a refreshing pause before getting back to one's labor and moral duties.

Irondequoit Bay extends from its southern base at the outlet of Irondequoit Creek for about four miles north to the outlet at Lake Ontario. Surrounded by sandy cliffs, it has offered shelter in its many coves for countless visitors wishing to escape the winds and waves of Lake Ontario. Named by the Iroquois tribes which inhabited the region long before America was discovered by Europeans, this bay was a stopping place along the high ridge trail that connected their tribal lands. After Europeans discovered the land it became a strategic vantage point and gathering spot for the French explorer La Salle in 1669; for the Governor General of Canada, Marquis Denonville, in 1687; and for leaders of the French and Indian War in 1721.

In the late 1700s a small settlement with the imposing name of Tryon City, was located just south of the bay along Irondequoit Creek. It offered a store, a warehouse, and trade in such items as furs, liquor, potash, fish, and lumber. But by 1818 this settlement was abandoned and for the next twenty years only a handful of settlers seem to have paid attention to this part of the American frontier.

A few were interested in getting around the bay and on to other destinations. Caleb Lyon surveyed part of its east shore in 1812 to lay out a new Bay Road. In 1815 a road along the sandbar that separates the bay and Lake Ontario was surveyed from east to west as far as the narrow outlet. A ferry operated by 1822 across the center of the bay. By the late 1830s a "float" bridge had been laid across the point where the bay narrows and Irondequoit Creek enters through marshy lowlands. These were the beginnings of a transportation system that would transform Irondequoit Bay a half century later into a center for amusement.

The real center of civilization in those days was Rochesterville, a young settlement on the Genesee River, several miles and three waterfalls south of where it flows into Lake Ontario. By 1834 Rochesterville

was incorporated into the city of Rochester with a population of 12,252 people. In contrast, the only buildings on Irondequoit Bay, according to an 1837 diary, were a house and sawmills belonging to a settler named Mr. Vinton.²

Rochestarians swiftly made public improvements to their new city. Transporting goods and people was high on the list of priorities. Beginning with the completion of the Erie Canal in 1825, Rochester profited from the most up-to-date systems available. These improvements provided much of the stimulus that quadrupled the city's population in its first twenty years.³

During these years of development amusements in Rochester as well for most Americans were secondary to work. In the 1850s Catherine Beecher wrote in her popular *Treatise On Domestic Economy for the Use of Young Ladies at Home* that the only legitimate need for amusement was to strengthen the body and invigorate the mind so that "all our duties can be more cheerfully and successfully performed."⁴ At that time pleasurable activity that was not beneficial to one's mind or body was frowned upon by American writers, preachers, and others who represented the economic power, the morals, and the Puritan values of the American middle class.

Non-instructive entertainment to be enjoyed for its own sake was available, however, for those who chose to ignore this middle-class morality. Entrepreneurs had earned money from this type of entertainment for centuries. Theaters and traveling puppet and marionette shows had long attracted an audience in public places and earned some sort of income for the performers. Likewise, inns and taverns had served food and sometimes pleasure while providing income for their business-minded owners. But those who made a business of leisure time were not well-respected in Victorian America.

This was as true of Rochester as of any other thriving northeastern American city. In the mid-1800s Rochester society looked askance upon many activities that invited patrons to be absent from work and perhaps overindulge in food, drink, or boisterous behavior. To control such behavior, the Rochester Common Council passed penal ordinances "relating to nuisances" on November 11, 1862. Included were fines for any person keeping a "faro bank, shuffle board, bagatelle, playing cards, or any instrument, device or thing employed for gambling." Playing for liquor was also subject to penalty, as was operating a billiard table or a nine pin or bowling alley. Even flying a kite or bathing in the canal or river between 6 in the morning and 8 at night were forbidden within the city.

It required a special occasion or a holiday to justify taking time even for the simple enjoyment of a fishing excursion.⁵ When there was occasion for recreation and rest from work it usually was private and unor-

ganized. One proper exception was the county fair.

Monroe County's fair was first held in Rochester in 1823. Fairs had society's approval because they emphasized the educational value of exhibits and competitions. But hucksters and concessionaires, the entertainment businessmen of their time, were not allowed by the community leaders who organized the fair to be inside the fair grounds. Nevertheless, when the state fair was held in Rochester in 1851:

*The road leading to the grounds for a mile or more was lined with booths for the sale of liquor and refreshments, besides many large and spacious tents devoted to the exhibitions of learned pigs, giants, dwarfs, and monstrosities, and indeed every possible attraction to draw attention and lighten the pockets of the country people and boatmen on the canal, to whom the occasion was a general holiday.*⁶

Clearly not everyone in Rochester agreed with Catherine Beecher. It can be argued that only an elite group of critics, ministers, educators, and reformers drawn principally from the Protestant middle class preached that leisure time should be used not for its own sake but for moral and social reasons. Their attitude was publicly supported, however, by the businessmen who published the newspapers, the books such as Catherine Beecher's, and other printed communications of that period.⁷

At the same time Rochester contained all the ingredients needed to change attitudes towards use of leisure time — a swelling urban population, increased time for leisure, increased spending power and a developing rail transportation system.⁸ The population rose from a little over 25,000 in 1845 to nearly 134,000 in 1890. Its leadership in such industries as the nursery business and the manufacture of shoes and clothing provided more spending power and shorter working days for its citizens. In 1860, for example, 50 firms agreed to a 7:00 p.m. rather than a 9:00 p.m. closing hour so that their clerks could have a few hours of leisure each day.⁹ The frequently discussed eight hour work day became a reality for many Rochester laborers in 1867,¹⁰ and summer half-day Saturdays became a reality in 1887.¹¹

The most important ingredient for developing amusement parks as centers for entertainment was Rochester's varied and up-to-date transportation system. Travel by boat on Lake Ontario and the Genesee River below the falls was important from time of the first settlement. The construction of a lighthouse near the mouth of the Genesee River in 1822 and piers built in the 1830s that went out beyond the sand bars improved river traffic. At the same time the completions of the Erie Canal across upstate New York boosted business activity as well as the population. The first steam engine was put to use on the newly organized Tonawanda Railroad between Rochester and Batavia in 1837. Another railroad was completed in 1841, connecting Rochester to the towns of Canandaigua, Geneva, and Auburn. Major improvements by

1842 on the aqueduct of the already successful Erie Canal further stimulated business and trade in Rochester. By 1880 railroads connected Rochester to other New York State cities as well as to its newly developing lakeside resorts.

Well before these suburban trolleys arrived, early settlers on Irondequoit Bay prepared the area for commercial development. In 1839 about 1250 settlers on the western side of the bay organized into the town of Irondequoit. On the eastern side 2235 settlers organized a year later into the town of Webster. Cliffs rising a hundred feet above the bay's shoreline meant that the easiest way to utilize it was by boat.

It was on this shoreline that business for pleasure seekers began quietly in 1840. That was the year when the early settler Joseph Vinton converted his sawmill on the Irondequoit side into a hotel. It was located on the south point of a cove about halfway between the Float Bridge and the outlet, later known as Newport Cove. His hotel was first known as the "Old Steam Saw Mill"¹² or as the New-Port (later spelled "Newport") Hotel.¹³

The word "hotel" meant something different in those years from the modern definition of a public facility that primarily provides lodging. An 1889 dictionary defined a hotel as "a house for entertaining strangers or travelers."¹⁴ Some of Irondequoit Bay's later hotels also provided sleeping quarters for boarders or summer vacationers and employed housekeepers and chambermaids. Bartenders and waiters were equally prominent, however, according to 1905 New York State census figures. Other hotels provided lodging only in the sense that they maintained never-used sleeping rooms as required by law if they were to avoid the hefty tax levied on saloons.¹⁵ In general, there was more emphasis on the feeding and entertaining of guests than on providing overnight sleeping space.

The Newport House became a popular place for food and entertainment. An 1859 description of a fishing trip to the bay states that the "host of the New-Port provided for our desires ... with fishing tackle and all the 'etcetera' of life on the wave."¹⁶ Two years later another article states that "the house is pleasant and spacious, its larder and bar well filled...They have during the winter been engaged in building new boats and boathouses, overhauling and adding to their stock of tackle ... [and have] every facility for the accommodation of parties large or small."¹⁷

This was the beginning of a thriving business that catered to the pleasure seeker who, this same writer went on to report, "seeks not where fashion flaunts itself for true enjoyment but wishes to breathe with nature." Still not the thrill-seeking type of leisure activity that historians attribute to later decades, it signaled a transition from morally or educationally motivated leisure to leisure for personal enjoyment.

Similar commercial activity was brewing on the Webster side of the bay. John Drake purchased farm land between Bay Road and the bay in 1846 and, according to Webster historian Esther Dunn, "from the first he had plans that went beyond farming his new land" as he began to improve his land and prepare to serve the public's pleasure in later years.¹⁸ A newspaper article in 1852 about the rise of land values on Irondequoit Bay to \$135 per acre gives further indication of awakened interest in the bay area.¹⁹

Commercial and recreational activity began to pick up by 1865, just as the Civil War was ending and life for most Americans was getting back to "normal." Mr. George Allen purchased about five acres of land in Irondequoit that fronted on both the bay and the lake, remodeled the home on that property into a three-story hotel and opened for business as the Allen Hotel.²⁰ Renovated again in 1868, the hotel entertained social and fishing parties. Service included meals and rental of sailboats, rowboats, and fishing tackle for its paying customers. Irondequoit Bay was a well-known fishing ground at this time. Its water were still unpolluted from urban sewage and a fish stocking program led by Seth Green, a local authority on raising fish, kept it well stocked.

Later renamed the Sea Breeze House, the Allen House was the beginning of a complex that would soon flourish as one of the busiest pleasure-related businesses on the bay. Similar hotels sprang up in the Charlotte area, where the Genesee River flows into lake Ontario. Taking advantage of the bathing, fishing, and boating opportunities available at the water's edge, this hotel business led the way to Rochester's early entry into the era of amusement parks.

Improved transportation furthered this development. In 1867 a bridge was built over the outlet from the bay to the lake. This permitted horses and wagons to cross in all seasons, even when the water was not frozen over or was too high to be forded. The private financing of this bridge provoked a Rochester newspaper editor in 1868 to argue that the bay was not private property and the outlet near that property should be owned by the state, not private citizens. The editorial concern was not that the bridge prevented all but the smallest boats, no matter who owned them, from entering but that already established commercial steamers were prevented from entering the bay and carrying on their business.²¹ This was the first of many controversies over bridging the entrance to Irondequoit Bay. The bridge stayed, however, and within ten years private businessmen financed an additional bridge to carry railroad track over this same narrow sand bar.

The 1871 directory for the city of Rochester lists eight railroad lines and five street car lines. In addition, three hack stands, authorized by city ordinance in 1868, accommodated horse-and wagon-type vehicles for hire within the city. But other transportation was necessary for traveling beyond the city into the country, especially down the steep grades

surrounding the bay. For this, horsedrawn wagons called "carryalls" were available at an hourly rate, which could accommodate twenty-four to forty passengers and were pulled by up to six horses. The driver was seated high on the vehicle and the closest team was sometimes forty to sixty feet in front of him.²² Carryalls brought picnickers and other visitors down the steep roads to bay resorts well into the 1900s.

The early 1870s marked a turning point in the use of Irondequoit Bay as a resort area. An editorial in the summer of 1869 expressed surprise that only about one in a thousand of Rochester's citizens took advantage of a resort area so close to the city. Its location afforded cheap and beautiful recreation, but was not yet attractive to very many.²³ Five years later the newspaper reports were quite different. A July 1874 news article claims that "at the present time between 100 and 200 persons visit the Newport House each day while others who go to other points upon the borders of the bay swell the daily attendance to about 500."²⁴

Increased popularity was not totally dependent on transportation improvements. Spurred by new attractions, shorter work weeks, and increased pocket money, Irondequoit Bay began to attract visitors from an economically broader audience. Some mid-1870s newspaper articles indicate that a fairly exclusive though not necessarily wealthy segment of society were the first to enjoy activities there. Campers came to "pitch their camp close to the water's edge and remain for days or weeks." Names of locally prominent families were reported as enjoying camping, fishing and socializing on the bay's shores. They lounged in their camp chairs, entertained other boaters who stopped by for chowder made from fish caught during the day, and left at sunset to go to the Newport House for the evening.

Parties were part of a season schedule enjoyed year after year. Camping was considered a summer vacation that would require a week or more to enjoy the sports and visits to Newport House "to see what was going on there for pleasure."²⁵ Another article describing the Newport House activities disclosed that "Mr. Walzer was hosting a private supper and ball" and "at one time there were 50 carriages under the shed and all the boats were in use."²⁶ Certainly if the best way to spend the summer was to have a cabin on the bay, as an 1872 editorial proclaimed, one had to have money to do so.²⁷

By 1874, however, another editorial noted that the visitors included some from the working class. "The people of this city, businessmen, mechanics and others, are falling rapidly into the belief that it is for their own and the interests of their families to devote a day occasionally to pleasure and sport on Irondequoit Bay."²⁸

Probably many of the visitors were still middle class, but sheer numbers indicate that working class visitors were taking advantage of its proximity and choice of entertainment. They participated for a day or

an evening instead of a week or a season. Visitors were coming by the thousands according to an article in July of that same year, spurred by the seasonal reopening of Mr. Allen's "fun and commodious" hotel at Sea Breeze. A celebration dance, picnics, people camping out along the shore from Sea Breeze to Newport, the water covered with boats, cottages being built on the bluffs to the west - the area was seen as a lively place. All it needed, the article concluded, was a railroad bringing visitors to its doorstep to "make a lively business at the Sea Breeze and at all points on the Bay."²⁹

Getting more visitors to the bay was definitely on the minds of bay area businessmen at this time. Transportation was still a key ingredient and one important way was still by water. By this time steamship travel between Rochester, Sea Breeze, and other Lake Ontario ports was well established. To get around the problem of the low railroad bridge at the outlet, which kept these commercial steamboats from entering the bay, passenger boats designed exclusively for the bay were launched. The "Jennings", later renamed the "Webster", began operation in the early 1870s. It could carry thirty people "and was a sort of flat-bottomed raft with an upright steam boiler."³⁰ The "N. H. Galusha" was built in 1877 at Newport and made a ten-mile round trip of the bay for a fare of twenty five cents. This was one of the largest [perhaps the largest - see note] passenger boats on the bay and could carry from five to six hundred people.³¹

A cove just north of Newport House extended nearly a mile inland at that time and "between 1870 and 1900 this was considered the shipyard of the Bay."³² The year-round business of building and repairing boats paralleled the rise in public as well as private transportation by boat as the bay became more popular.

The railroads were viewed as the best booster for business, however. Not only did railroads provide easy and affordable transportation. Competing railroads to the Charlotte and Sea Breeze resort areas promoted and subsidized leisure activities at the locations they served. In turn, their promotion hastened acceptance of new attitudes towards the use of leisure time and new desires for pleasurable activities.

Beginning in 1853 railroads ran from Rochester to Charlotte, a few miles west of Irondequoit Bay. By the early 1870s large new lakefront hotels such as the 76 room Spencer House and the Cottage Hotel opened up in Charlotte for summer resort business. Dressing tents and bathing facilities, along with fishing and boating, began to pull summer visitors away from Irondequoit Bay, spurring new transportation efforts at both resort areas.

The first railroad to reach the bay was built by the Lake Ontario Shore Railway in the mid-1870s. It ran along the sandbar at the outlet over the controversial bridge, stopping to load and unload passengers near the Allen Hotel. It was viewed as " the first means of advertising

Sea Breeze as a resort."³³ By 1877 the Allen House, which by then was known as the Sea Breeze House, could advertise in the Rochester Directory that it was accessible from Rochester either by drive or by train. This new shoreline railway connected in Charlotte with the rail service running along the Genesee River into Rochester. A print of the Sea Breeze House appeared that year showing a four-story building with a cupola above it and porch railings at every level lined with people. A description of the picture states that it "shows patrons arriving by steamer, train, and carryall. For fun they had the choice of eating, promenading, boating, bathing, and viewing the lake and bay from either of the two towers or from the cupola."³⁴

Two years later a second railway provided a direct north and south link. This new railway was called the "Dummy Line" in reference to the type of locomotive first used, one with a boiler that was entirely enclosed so that the engineer and fireman could walk on either side of it while the train was in motion.

Granted a state charter in 1879, this railroad company was capitalized at \$65,000 and stock was sold at \$100 per share. All the officers of this company were Rochester men, risking their money on the interest of Rochester's citizens in spending their leisure time enjoying the pleasures of Irondequoit Bay. The vice-president of this railway, according to the Rochester City Directory for 1881, was N.H. Galusha. With a steamship also running under his name, this businessman surely had a great interest in attracting visitors to Irondequoit Bay.

The company purchased several acres in the northeastern part of Rochester near Irondequoit³⁵ for a station and roundhouse and fifty acres "bordering on the shores of the Lake and the Bay, for the purpose of constructing a summer resort to attract passengers to the Lake."³⁶ Thus began Irondequoit Bay's first amusement park, rivaling the developing amusement center at Charlotte and keeping pace with the kinds of amusements offered at Coney Island and Atlantic City.

Competition pushed development at both properties. It also hastened the acceptability of spending leisure time and money on dining out and enjoying lakeside activities. In 1883 the Charlotte railroad line made major improvements. At the same time commercialized leisure activities expanded all around the bay.

On the Webster side, John Drake continued to make his property more attractive by building a road down the steep glen from Bay Road to the water's edge and erecting a small restaurant and bar. A lawn was created and planted with many willow trees. Accessible by boat as well as by horse-drawn vehicles, it became a popular picnic spot in the 1870s known as Drake's Landing. All through the 1880s, Drake continued to enlarge his establishment by adding a large hotel with a ballroom and a barn which could stable one hundred and twenty five horses. He died in 1890 before his plans to double the size of the stable could be accomplished.³⁷

Meanwhile, the bay's first commercial venture at New-Port continued to offer new facilities. By 1870, Joseph Vinton's hotel had been purchased by Mr. Walzer, whose activities as host had already been noted in newspaper articles about summer life on the bay. The hotel was known at this time as the Newport House. For the next ten years Walzer "built up a reputation for fine dinners at his hotel and attracted many of the rich and well-to-do." Then, in the winter of 1880, the bay claimed his life when he went walking out on the ice and drowned. Newport House was taken over by a Mr. Sours, who built horse barns, sheds, additional hotel rooms, a pavilion, and large docks for the steamboats that traveled around the bay. He graded the steep hills and built a road for horse-drawn vehicles.³⁸

The reputation of the Newport House for fine dining continued. It also became known as the best place to go fishing. "People drove from miles around, stabled their horses, rented a boat and fishing tackle and were off."³⁹ Nearby at the cove entrance, a thirty-foot square building called the "Minnow House" was erected out over the water on pilings. It held a screened-in tank about ten feet square and four feet deep containing fresh minnows to sell to the fishermen.⁴⁰ In 1882 a new bridge was built over the cove between New port House and nearby Dodge Club Point.⁴¹

The similarities between Rochester's amusement developments and Coney Island were not lost on a news reporter in 1880 when he wrote an article headlined "Rochester's Coney Island." Only two years before, the article stated, opportunities for public entertainment were limited and visitors were mainly looking for a few days of quiet recreation on the beach or in the picnic areas. Now the railroads were bringing large numbers of people which meant that the numbers of houses for entertainment "would have to be rapidly increased." The reporter concluded that "the Bay Railroad has opened an avenue for citizens to obtain a breath of fresh air at a moderate sum."⁴²

This vitality lends support to the idea that enjoyment of leisure activities at Irondequoit Bay for their own sake rather than for their moral and aesthetic value was accepted by the 1880s and that the middle class was leading the way. Photographs of the busy docks at Newport House and Sea Breeze show well-dressed people who could afford not only to go on these excursions but could purchase photography equipment as well. Newspaper accounts about individual Rochestarians and their resort activities indicate that they were important and well known enough to be of interest to their general readership. Although picnicking and strolling need not be expensive activities, others like camping, dining, and dancing at private parties held at the hotels, were activities for those with time and income more typical of middle income families.

For another decade, lower income families were probably still not able to afford the time or the money needed to spend on these luxuries. This was a time marked by growth as well as setbacks. An 1887 news-

paper article describes additions to the bay area of several new cottages and clubhouses. It also mentions that the railroad "is adorning its grounds at Sea Breeze and doing excellent service in the number and regularity of its trains."⁴³ Some of the improvements were made necessary by the destruction of the Sea Breeze hotel in November, 1885, by fire — an ever present threat. Newspapers reported that the fire was discovered about 2 a.m. and its origin was a mystery, leaving the bartender, another employee, and the owner, Mrs. L.A. Allen, barely enough time to escape. The boat house and a pavilion escaped damage but the entire hotel burned, an estimated loss of \$12,000.⁴⁴

Despite setbacks like this, the first warm weather of each spring brought out the crowds, searching for outdoor amusements and cooler weather at the water's edge. On the last day of April in 1888 a sudden temperature rise "to 80 degrees in the shade" encouraged 2,000 people looking for cooler breezes to pay their first visit of the season to the lakeside. The trains leaving every hour from Rochester's North station discharged their passengers where the Sea Breeze Hotel and railroad station with its long covered walk had formerly stood. The "half burned walk still remains as it was left by last winter's fire" but "all the rest of the debris has been cleared away and the framework of a portion of the new hotel is up." It was too early for the bay steamers to be running but "pleasure seekers [could still enjoy] fishing, boating, walking on the beach or strolling through the grove."⁴⁵

The attraction of these familiar activities kept development of resort facilities moving into the 1890s. Summer camping sites, private homes, and clubs originally built for private use gave way to hotels and fishing headquarters for the public — smaller versions of Newport House and Drake's Landing. Local history accounts, Platt insurance maps, and census figures include establishments like the Bay View House, opened in 1871 and later renamed the Bay View Hotel; the Sandbar House in Webster; and the Outlet House, opened in 1884 and later renamed Reholz's (see Chart I). Typically, the owners transformed a private house into a place where summer guests could eat, drink, and stay overnight.

A detailed history of one favorite bayside landmark known for many years as the Birds and Worms illustrates this transformation of a private club into a public hotel. The Birds and Worms began as a cabin erected on 5 acres of land just north of the Newport House. It was incorporated in 1872 "for the protection of fish and game, and to enforce game laws of the state."⁴⁶ A cook was in constant attendance and the club was run by one of largest social organizations in Rochester, according to a newspaper article in 1874.⁴⁷ The club raised money for a number of years for charitable as well as social purposes by holding the Birds and Worms Ball in downtown Rochester for as many as 1000 people.⁴⁸

Present day descendants of the family that purchased the hotel in 1896 remember that the club began in two parts. The larger part was

originally by itself on the bayside property and was known simply as "The Worms." The smaller part was uphill overlooking the bay, a hunting sanctuary known as "The Birds." Club members lifted and brought "Birds" downhill one winter, skidding it out onto the ice at Point Pleasant and over to join "Worms." Sometime in the 1880s it opened to the public. A photograph taken before 1896 shows the two sections and identifies "Englert and Weible" as the proprietors.

As was true for a number of these wooden structures, fire damaged the Birds and Worms in 1890, but it was rebuilt. In 1896 Charles Stoffel and his wife Christine Marie Gottschalk bought it and the surrounding acres on Little Massaug Cove from Dennis Vanderlinde. They lived in the smaller part containing the kitchen. The first floor of the larger section was maintained year-round as a public bar and dining room but probably did not offer overnight accommodations until a later renovation in the early 1900s.⁴⁹

Not only were public facilities increasing. 1890 was also the beginning of another remarkable period in Irondequoit Bay's history when developers began to cater to large crowds with less expensive, short-term activities that working class as well as middle class customers could afford. The dance craze, stage shows, sidewalk concessions and thrilling new rides dramatically changed the amusement scene.

It was in 1890 that Irondequoit Bay's second resort opened about two thirds of the way down the west side of the bay. With the Sea Breeze resort area drawing large crowds and the Charlotte area still attracting throngs of people, local businessmen seized the opportunity to open the Glen Haven hotel and "bid fair to outshine all the other resorts around" with beautiful grounds "and large verandas and dining rooms that could seat four hundred people."⁵⁰ To link with the new hotel, a new railway had already been established the year before from the center of Rochester to Glen Haven. These entrepreneurs obviously hoped that the leisure activities available at the new hotel would attract passengers to their railroad. An advertisement in the 1890 *Rochester City Directory* for the Glen Haven Railroad reads:

THE SHORTEST, PLEASANTEST, AND CHEAPEST ROUTE TO THE
BAY
TICKETS FOR THE ROUND TRIP, 20 CENTS
A NEW AND ELEGANT HOTEL, LATELY COMPLETED, AT THE
TERMINUS
OF THIS RAILROAD
THE FINEST PLACE IN THE VICINITY OF ROCHESTER FOR PIC-
NICS⁵¹

Between June 1889 and June 1890 this railway line carried 115,582 passengers. Presumably most of this volume occurred during the summer season.⁵² Keeping up with the competition, the Dummy Line going to Sea Breeze also made improvements around 1895 to its rails

and cars, as well as to the grounds at Sea Breeze by building more hotels, pavilions, walks, and bridges.⁵³ An electric power company was privately built in 1890 to take care of the area's need for this new source of power.⁵⁴ Expansion occurred elsewhere on the bay as well. Two new steamboats were inspected and reported ready for passengers in August of 1890.⁵⁵

Evidence of new ways of spending leisure time at the bay appeared in these same years. The new pavilion at Sea Breeze which opened in 1889 had a stage which featured family entertainment.⁵⁶ The new hotel at Glen Haven had "a very large dance hall surrounded with a wide balcony for spectators. Under the balcony on one side of the hall was a complete stage arrangement for the band, burlesque shows, vaudeville, and concerts."⁵⁷

Considering that the city of Rochester required everyone to obtain a license who wished to exhibit or allow performances by theaters, circuses "or any concert, musical entertainments, exhibitions or dances, or series of lectures for private emolument or gain" as late as 1881,⁵⁸ the dancing and entertainment at these new hotels must have been special attractions for the hotel patrons. With such large facilities, these entertainments were less private than the camping and dinner parties of the 1870s and '80s and behavior was less controlled.

Indeed, as early as 1883, newspaper accounts presented evidence of uninhibited behavior and middle class concern about intoxication and boisterous behavior at Sea Breeze. The *Union and Advertiser* complained that there were many small annoyances and that "the element of semi-intoxication is ever present to invite disturbances, and competitive games lend their influence to provoke contention and discord." The activities available at Sea Breeze included a bowling alley, a beer garden with a brass band, a Punch and Judy show, and a shooting gallery. All of these amusements invited physical and more uninhibited behavior than fishing or dining at a hotel. By contrast, the article also noted that things were quieter at smaller establishments "up the bay."⁵⁹

Gambling and the shooting galleries continued to bring problems in the 1890s and complaints from representatives of the middle class. Following the accidental shooting of a lady at one of these shooting galleries, the sheriff warned that gambling must stop and the newspaper hoped to bring this to the attention of the "large number of people who have been conducting gambling games at Sea Breeze and other lakeside resorts."⁶⁰

Growth brought other problems to the area in the 1890s. By this time the population of Rochester had reached nearly 134,000 and there was mounting pressure on the natural environment. Sewage that drained into the bay from surrounding homes and businesses began to alter the fish population in the bay. Only carp, an edible but strongly flavored scavenger type of fish that plows up the bottom of ponds and lakes, seemed to thrive. In addition, the fishing was threatened by the battles

going on between the local fishermen and the game warden over the issue of fishing with nets. By this time it was illegal to use nets in Lake Ontario or its bays any closer to shore than half a mile. Evidently local fishermen chose to ignore this illegality. The sheltered bay made it easy as well as tempting to set illegal nets at night and fill them with as much as a ton of edible fish.⁶¹

A general financial recession in 1893 contributed to other problems that the railroads were experiencing. Many railroads in this period were installing new and safer equipment, as well as changing from steam- to electric-powered trolleys. The changes in ownership occurring in both of the railroad systems that connected Rochester to Irondequoit Bay (Chart II) are indicative of a financial struggle to maintain these businesses while making a profit. To make matters worse for the Dummy Line, a bad accident in April 1899 caused two passenger cars to overturn, killing one person and injuring more than a hundred. Suits for damage against the railroad company brought bankruptcy although a new company, the Rochester and Suburban Railroad, was soon formed.⁶²

In the meantime, business was so poor for the Glen Haven Railroad company in 1895 that it ran no trains at all that year. By 1898, however, the new owners of the company had recovered, reporting an increase of about 25,000 passengers over its first full year of operation from June 1889 to June 1890.⁶³

The businessmen running these two railroads needed to meet their financial obligations. How did they manage to enlarge their operations and make a profit on their investments? The answer lies in their promotion of new leisure time activities to encourage more people to ride their trains. This is exactly the course taken by the owners of the Glen Haven Hotel and railroad line. Irondequoit historian, Maud West, explains:

As was the custom in all parts of the United States, the trolley company [Irondequoit Park Railway] purchased land at some favorable location for the purpose of establishing an amusement park which in turn would mean a tremendous growth in the railway's passenger business. In this case, the first sod was turned for the Glen Haven resort on September 11, 1899.⁶⁴

Indeed, in 1899 a large hill near the Glen Haven Hotel was leveled to fill in surrounding marsh land in order to create about six acres of level ground for an ambitious new resort. In a disapproving tone, West continues:

Instead of making the grounds more attractive, they erected carnival booths and a midway. There was a high ferris wheel, a roller coaster and a miniature railroad built which ran in and out of the coves and gullies around the grounds...The entire grounds were fenced in and an entrance admission charged.⁶⁵

Rather quickly a new resort was developed to promote leisure-time business on the bay. But the fact that a hotel had already been operating on this point of land for ten years undoubtedly paved the way for the this amusement park's success over the next twenty years. The transportation was in place and the reputation of the hotel was already established. Crowds of daily visitors were already predisposed towards spending money and time here.

Competition from Glen Haven's amusement park spurred the older and more gradually developed Sea Breeze resort area toward the same kind of rapid expansion a year later. The Sea Breeze railroad line was improved once again and steam engines replaced by electric trolleys. The resort came under new management at the turn of the century and many operators of concessions and amusements were invited to rent space and erect new rides and buildings. According to West, the large grounds could accommodate crowds easily. The cool grove of trees, the beaches, the dancing pavilion, the concessions, and still the fishing offered a variety of amusement and "every foot of space had something to offer. By then the park extended from its Culver Road entrance to the outlet about a mile away."⁶⁶

Like Coney Island and the other amusement parks sprouting up at this time, Sea Breeze became home to large permanent amusements made possible by the new technology in the metal industry. One operator erected a figure-eight roller coaster in 1903, a truly thrilling ride in cars that had no friction device under the rails to keep them from jumping off. In 1904 George Long, Sr., brought one of his family-built merry-go-rounds to the park, the beginning of that family's association with Sea Breeze's development and survival that continues today. By the early twenties the first roller coaster had been replaced by four newer ones.⁶⁷

Not only the railroads spurred this new leisure business. After 1900 gasoline motor launches appeared on the bay, eventually becoming more popular than the steamboats. In 1909 five local men who owned six gasoline powered boats formed the Irondequoit Navigation Company. These boats, some of which could carry up to seventy-five people and were in use until 1925, ran from Sea Breeze to Glen Haven, stopping at all public docks in between.⁶⁸

The owners of the railroads and passenger boats contributed greatly to the popularity of all the resorts and hotels of Irondequoit Bay, as well as the rival amusement area at Charlotte, by promoting the "Pink Ticket Trip." For five cents, passengers could board a Rochester trolley anywhere in the city and obtain a transfer. At either Glen Haven or Sea Breeze they could surrender their transfer plus an additional twenty cents for a combination trolley and boat ticket. This ticket was good in either direction for a round trip through the bay, an hour-long side trip along the shoreline to Ontario Beach at Charlotte, and finally back to

Commercial Transportat

1830	1840	1850	1860	1870	1880

Float Bridge



Bridge Over Outlet



Carryalls



Steamboats: THE JENNINGS



N. H. GALUSHA



WOODWORTH

DAMASCUS

LOOKOUT

Irondequoit Steam Navigation Company

Lake Shore Railroad

(Rome - Watertown & Ogdenberg Branch, owned by New York Central)



"Dummy Line," Rochester to Sea Breeze

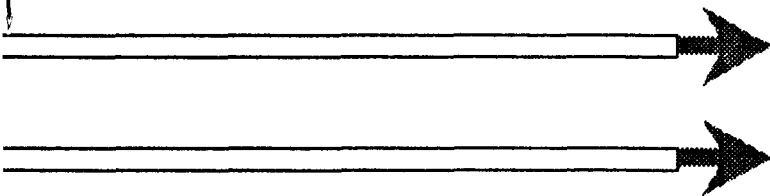
Rochester & Suburban R.R./Rochester and Lake Ontario R.R.
New York State Railroad Trolley

Rochester and Glen Haven Railroad

Glen Haven Railroad Co.
Irondequoit Park Railway
Rochester and Sodus Bay R.R.
Rochester Railway
New York State Railways

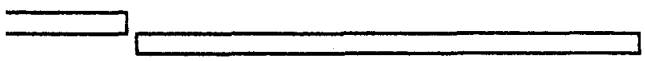
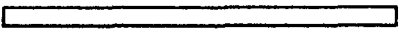
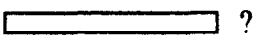
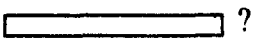
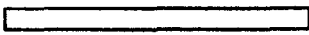
tion at Irondequoit Bay

1880 1890 1900 1910 1920 1930 1940

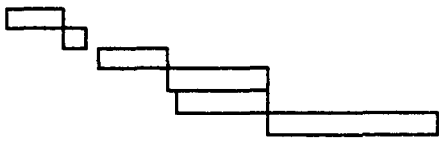


(later THE WEBSTER) carried 30 passengers

(later THE GLEN HAVEN) carried 175 passengers



} closed down and replaced by buses



the city. This special transportation arrangement is mentioned in many memoirs of the area including those of Rochesterian Judge Van Voorhis:

During the summer, when our family wanted to have a day's outing, we would take an excursion that was extremely popular in those days. The point of departure was Charlotte, which was, of course, very convenient for us; we could walk there. People from other parts of the city took the Lake Avenue trolley to Charlotte for the excursion boat that took passengers to Sea Breeze, four miles away. There they could pick up another boat that made a circuit of Irondequoit Bay, including stops at Newport House and Point Pleasant. Arriving at Glen Haven at the southern end of the bay, they returned to Rochester on the Glen Haven streetcar line. The trip took a full day and was very enjoyable.⁶⁹

The transportation network and the lure of leisurely pleasant activities attracted permanent residents as well as daily visitors. The Pink Ticket excursions, Sunday dinners at the Point Pleasant Hotel, and pleasant fishing memories encouraged families to build summer cottages on narrow tent-size lots around Sea Breeze or land surrounding other hotels. Year round trolley service began in 1908 and water and electric service was installed a few years later, encouraging many to build year-round homes as well. The Point Pleasant Volunteer Firemen's Association began holding Field Day's in 1917 to raise money for equipment and services to the growing community. This sense of community undoubtedly helped stabilize the leisure-time businesses during the next decades of dizzying changes.

By 1915 the dance craze that consumed the nation was in full swing in Rochester. The owners of the Sea Breeze trolley line encouraged the building of a dance hall, and a second dance hall called "Dance Land" was in operation by 1924. Residents of the area vividly recall how the girls would come with family and friends to wait around the outside rail. A full dance band orchestra played the current favorite music and the young men paid ten cents for the opportunity to invite a girl to dance the fox trot. After each dance, the pavilion operators cleared the floor and started again.⁷⁰

World War I and the onset of prohibition had a great impact on area leisure time business men and women. They continued to flourish, however, keeping up with the exuberance of Rochestarians in search of entertainment and responding to changes in the laws and the availability of goods.

At The Birds and Worms, for instance, facilities continued to expand. Around 1909 the smaller building was torn down and a two-story, flat-roofed addition was built in back of the larger part. It had ten rooms upstairs and six downstairs, including a bar, poolroom, kitchen, dining room, and a front room where kegs of beer and a supply of ice were

kept. A 144 foot porch wrapped around the front of the old part and much of the new addition, facing the still refreshing view and cool breezes. Christina Stoffel and her daughter, Elizabeth, then started renting out rooms in the new addition. Some of the guests were from Rochester. Others included a prize fighter who came to Rochester periodically for training and a number of Jewish visitors who came from New York for their week's vacation. These guests and another Jewish family who rented a nearby cottage were grateful to be welcomed by the Stoffels — many hotels did not. They repaid the kindness during the war years by supplying the hotel with scarce and rationed sugar, which came from supplies available to Jews for their sacramental wines.

The hotel served whiskey until Charles Stoffel died in 1918. At this point the Stoffels' daughter, Elizabeth, and son-in-law Carl Tornow took over operation of The Birds and Worms, renting it from Christina in order to provide an income for her. For the Tornows the temperance movement and impending prohibition laws became an opportunity to establish their hotel as a temperance place. Guests continued to come for dinners and summer vacations from near and far. One memorable guest, a local violinist, came for a number of summers and practiced his music, which he could not do during the hot summers in the city without opening his windows and annoying his neighbors.⁷¹

It is no wonder that the period of 1900 to 1930 is described by area residents and historians as a period of great prosperity on the bay. The culmination of that prosperity had to be the opening in July 1925 of the Sea Breeze Natatorium, the world's largest salt water pool at that time. Developed by a traffic manager for the New York State Railroad, it cost \$300,000 to build. As big as a football field and heated to 70 degrees Fahrenheit, it was surrounded by a promenade and bleachers. Devices such as water slides, a water wheel, and a high diving tower provided artificial means for amusement in the water. One could use the Natatorium all day from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. for the admission price of \$3.00.⁷²

"That was something to go to the Natatorium - it was exciting," remembers one long-time Rochester resident, who was twenty years old in 1929.⁷³

It was not destined to continue this way however. While the birth of commercial amusement on Irondequoit Bay offers insight into American taste for amusement, so does its demise. The short history of the Natatorium provides the most dramatic example of the downward change in fortune experienced by Irondequoit Bay. It seems, at first glance, to coincide with Black Tuesday in October of 1929 when the American economy received a shocking blow upon the sudden collapse of the nation's stock market. The next ten years was a grim period of unemployment and poverty all over the United States, and in many other parts of the world as well.

A year after the onset of the Depression, the entrance fee for the Natatorium had dropped from three dollars to twenty five cents. By 1931, this enormous, expensive, and recently popular amusement had been abandoned as a pool. The bleachers, locker rooms, and restaurant were torn down. By the late 1930s it was roofed over and turned into a Bingo hall.⁷⁴

The Depression is easy to blame for this business collapse. Other studies of leisure time in the 1930s show that Americans were indeed spending less money on their leisure activities right after the Depression began. For example, admission prices were reduced for professional games and sports, and the crowds, except for the most important contests, were smaller in 1932 than in 1929.⁷⁵ But the admission price for the Natatorium had been dropping since its very first years - before the Depression hit.⁷⁶

Even more damaging to this simple explanation for decline is the history of Glen Haven. By 1910 it had become a full-fledged amusement park with an open air theater, rides such as a merry-go-round and the "Mystic Chut [sic]," and concession booths. It reached its peak of activity in World War I.⁷⁷ But by 1923 it had closed down for good. In 1928 the Glen Haven Hotel burned down and was never rebuilt. Thus, the Glen Haven resort had died even before the Depression spelled widespread commercial failure. Ontario Beach Park at Charlotte closed even earlier in 1919.

Sea Breeze was not closed down by the Depression, but it did suffer through some very lean years in the 1930s. By 1940 fire had destroyed the Danceland Pavilion and the Virginia Reel roller coaster. Neither were replaced, and a number of other rides were no longer there.⁷⁸ A number of hotels around the bay survived the Depression and remained open into the 1940s and 50s (Chart I), but no new ones of any significance appear in the available data after 1912.

The Depression undoubtedly contributed to these lean years but other factors are also responsible for the reduction of Sea Breeze's popularity and for the earlier demise of Glen Haven and Ontario Beach Park. An inherent problem with the kind of amusement that these new resorts offered was boredom. It was fostered by competition between Sea Breeze and Glen Haven and amongst the dance pavilions and dining facilities of all of the hotels in the bay area. When the Glen Haven Hotel was advertised in 1880 as the finest place in the vicinity for picnics and the Griebels Hotel was described as the best place to get quick lunches in 1894,⁷⁹ these two hotels were offering enticements to prospective customers. Visitors were encouraged to make choices and think about what each facility had to offer.

At this same time the whole Irondequoit Bay area was still competing with the Charlotte amusement area as well as with Sodus Bay to the east. Newspaper editorials made this clear early on with such com-

ments about the pleasures and sport at Irondequoit Bay as the lament that "if transportation was as ample as that to Charlotte it would leave that favorite spot far in the rear."⁸⁰

The amusement parks used "newness" and "uniqueness" to entice customers with such installations as a new roller coaster, a bigger pavilion, and a unique bridge. This promoted boredom with the old attractions. An article about Coney Island in a 1905 issue of *Harper's Weekly* addressed this issue. It suggests that the reason for Coney Island's great popularity was that "there is hardly a concession on the ground which does not appeal directly to the emotions."

*The concessionaire is constantly on the lookout for some new way of exciting old emotions....The place has developed a sort of emotional Frankenstein whose desire for the bizarre is constantly on the increase. I visited several shows in which the audience had already begun to show signs of disappointment.*⁸¹

Novel amusements which appeared in the 1920s contributed to the decline. Some, like the craze for dancing, were incorporated into the hotel and amusement park facilities around Irondequoit Bay. But others, like the motion pictures and the radio, drew visitors away from these resorts. Residents of Rochester or the New York City area who were teenagers in the 1920s and 30s confirm that for them amusement parks were not as popular as dancing and going to the movies elsewhere.⁸²

A look at changes in transportation service to amusement parks on the bay suggests another reason for the decline in the bay's popularity. As automobiles became more affordable, railroad companies running northeast from Rochester to the bay began closing down. The Sodus Bay line was discontinued in 1927, even before the Glen Haven hotel burned down. The Sea Breeze line was replaced by buses in 1936. Commercial steamboat service on the bay had disappeared by the 1920s, and the Irondequoit Navigation Company ceased operations in 1925.⁸³

Public transportation was still available by bus to the Sea Breeze area, but hotels in other areas could only be reached by privately owned boats or automobile. Certainly the widespread ownership of automobiles by the late 1920s, when there were 23 million cars registered in the United States, opened up new and attractive places to visit, even for those Rochesterians who had only a weekend, a day, or even just an evening to spend on leisure time amusements.

A factor not to be overlooked when explaining the declining popularity of Sea Breeze and other commercial businesses on the bay was continuing concern about the behavior of those who visited these places. One resident remembers that the Newport Hotel was a very nice place to go for family dinner on a Sunday or for dinner and dancing on sum-

mer evenings in the 1920s. But Oklahoma Beach on the sand bar across the bay outlet was not a very nice place to go. It had a reputation as a landing spot for "rum runners" bringer illegal liquor from Canada, and several "speakeasy's" served liquor there during Prohibition. She always wanted to see what it was like but never went. And by the time her own children were teenagers in the 1950s she would never let them go to Sea Breeze because it had changed so much since she had enjoyed going there.⁸⁴

Probably a combination of all these factors caused Irondequoit Bay to lose its appeal for many of the thousands who had flocked there on nice summer days in its heyday. Commercial amusements, which had survived World War I and the Depression, began to show their age. Hotels got shabby, boarded up, and sometimes burned while concessions along the lakefront at Sea Breeze deteriorated.

Some businesses held on by scaling down and changing operation methods. The Long family purchased some of the Sea Breeze resort property, added fencing and other security measures, charged an admission fee, and eventually installed a new water activities area to keep going. Larger hotels like the Newport House and Point Pleasant promoted their bar and dining business, especially after the repeal of Prohibition in 1933. Company outings and political gathering kept them busy all summer and well into the fall, recall residents of the area. Buslines replaced the trolleys in the early 1930s, keeping transportation available for those who could not yet afford an automobile. The scarcity of gasoline and less time available for leisure during World War II brought a spurt of activity to the bay because it was close to the city.⁸⁵ In general, however, the bay was left to idle, carried along by the permanent community established during the bustling first decades of the century and the inherent attractions of water and cool breezes on hot summer days.

Not until the 1960s and 70s brought the Pure Waters program, to improve water quality and the fish population, and the removal of the lakeshore railroad tracks and bridge over the outlet, did leisure-time business at Irondequoit Bay revive. Developers built new condominium-type housing for more carefree living, beginning with the demolishing of the Bay View Hotel in 1974 to make way for luxury apartments. Convenient and private access to the water allowed work and daily living to be closely combined with play for those who could afford it. The number of groups studying and wishing to control this kind of growth around Irondequoit Bay in the 1990s is proof of the bay's renewed popularity as well as a reminder that popularity created problems in the past and can create them again in the future.

Thus the tradition of commercial amusement begun by Joseph Vinton and John Drake has changed attitudes toward leisure once again. Catherine Beecher's view in 1848 that the only legitimate amusements were those which aided the successful performance of one's

duties changed by the 1870s and 80s. The turn-of-the-century attitude symbolized by Coney Island and resorts on Irondequoit Bay viewed amusements as a vacation from work to be enjoyed with abandon. These attitudes in turn paved the way to a modern attitude that promotes the combination of work and play in one lifestyle for those who can afford it. Rochester has been a leader in these changes - and it was business men and women who led the way.

Florence Smith is the lead educator for adult programs at the Strong Museum in Rochester. This article was inspired by her recent relocation with her husband to the Irondequoit Bay area and research for a masters thesis while attending S.U.N.Y. at Brockport.

Endnotes

1. For a discussion of all three amusement parks near Rochester as well as other parks less well known than Coney Island, Atlantic City, and the Midway Plaisance, see: Richard Flint, "Meet Me in Dreamland: The Early Development of Amusement Parks in America" (*Nineteenth Century Magazine*, Vol. 8, Nos. 1-2, 1982).
2. Elizabeth Yule, untitled and unpublished paper which includes the memories of George Cooper, whose father moved to a farm above the west side of the bay in 1837 (dated November 21, 1911).
3. Blake McKelvey, *A Panoramic History of Rochester and Monroe County, New York* (Woodland Hills, CA: Windsor Publications, 1979) 52-54.
4. Catherine E. Beecher, *A Treatise on Domestic Economy for the Use of Young Ladies at Home* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1858) 244.
5. Blake McKelvey, "Rochester Learns to Play: 1850-1900" (*Rochester History*, Vol. 8, No. 3, July 1946) 1-2.
6. "State Fair at Rochester," *Gleason's Pictorial Drawing-Room Companion* (October 18, 1851).
7. John Kasson, *Amusing the Million: Coney Island at the Turn of the Century* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1978). Kasson maintains that this moral elite lost control of American behavior in the late 1800s to newly rich industrialists and the children of the old elite who ventured beyond their childhood boundaries of behavior. Businessmen sensed this change and offered more uninhibited and sensual amusements, culminating in the early twentieth century with the flamboyant Coney Island amusement center.
8. *Ibid.*, 7.
9. Blake McKelvey, *Rochester: The Flower City, 1855-1890* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1949) 24.
10. *Ibid.*, 119.
11. *Ibid.*, 224.
12. *Union and Advertiser*, 24 May 1861.
13. Maude I. West, *Irondequoit Story: A History of the Town of Irondequoit (Suburb of Rochester, County of Monroe, State of New York) Covering the Years 1839-1957* (Irondequoit, NY: The Town of Irondequoit, 1957) 67.
This establishment is mentioned by Susan Zande in her booklet

Irondequoit 1839-1989: A View from the Past, A Vision for the Future, published by Irondequoit Press-Wolfe Publications in 1989. Zande describes Joseph Vintner as an early settler who arrived from Connecticut in 1812 and refers to his inn as the New-Port House. Both Zande and West give it credit for being the oldest hotel on the bay.

14. William D. Whitney, ed., *The Century Dictionary* (New York: The Century Co., 1889).
15. Douglas Stoffel, "Favorite Spots Around Irondequoit Bay" (Paper filed at Irondequoit Town Historian's Office, 1985). To draw the line between a private social club and a public saloon in New York State, the Raines Amendment was passed in 1897. As explained in Rochester's *Union and Advertiser* on April 22nd of that year, hotels were defined as having at least 10 bedrooms above the basement floor. To avoid classification as a saloon, dining rooms were to accommodate at least 20 diners and any bars serving liquor be located in a separate room. Guests were persons who visited the hotel for meals at regular hours when meals were served or who hired rooms at regular rates and not merely to be served with drinks. At stake was a \$500 tax imposed on saloons.
16. *Union and Advertiser*, 16 August 1859.
17. *Union and Advertiser*, 24 May 1861.
18. Esther A. Dunn, *Webster ... Through the Years* (Webster, NY: Webster Town Board, 1971) 268.
19. *Rochester Daily Advertiser*, 7 April 1852.
20. West, *Irondequoit Story*, 64.
21. *Union and Advertiser*, 22 June 1868.
22. West, *Irondequoit Story*, 46.
23. *Ibid.*, 4 August 1869.
24. *Democrat and Chronicle*, 24 July 1874.
25. *Union and Advertiser*, 16 July 1869 and 17 July 1869.
26. *Ibid.*, 23 July 1869.
27. *Ibid.*, 24 July 1872.
28. *Ibid.*, 30 May 1874.

29. *Ibid.*, 24 July 1874.
30. West, *Irondequoit Story*, 59.
31. Dunn, *Webster*, 268-9. Zande (see footnote 13) lists the seating capacity of this boat at a much lower but still impressive number of 175 people. The boat is described as a double decker and the only side-wheeler on the bay. Its name was changed to "Glen Haven" after that resort opened in 1889.
32. West, *Irondequoit Story*, 54.
33. *Ibid.*, 64.
34. Willis Broadbrooks, ed., *Irondequoit Centennial Album, 1839-1939* (Irondequoit, NY: Irondequoit Historical Society, 1st reprint edition, 1977), unpagged.
35. Located on Portland Avenue at Bay Street.
36. West, *Irondequoit Story*, 47. West goes on to explain that it was called the Dummy Line because it used the "dummy type" of locomotive with a boiler that was enclosed for its entire length to permit the engineer and fireman to walk on either side of it while the train was moving. This locomotive was originally used in Philadelphia to transport people around the grounds of the 1876 Centennial Exhibition.
37. Dunn, *Webster*, 268.
38. West, *Irondequoit Story*, 67.
39. *Ibid.*, 70.
40. *Ibid.*, 62.
41. *Union and Advertiser*, 11 November 1882.
42. *Union and Advertiser*, 16 July 1880.
43. *Union and Advertiser*, 10 June 1887.
44. Notebook 24, Ed Spellman Collection (St. John Fisher Library, Rochester, NY), 25.
45. *Rochester Morning Herald*, 30 April 1888.
46. *The Rochester Directory*, (Rochester: Drew, Allis & Company, 1881), 510.

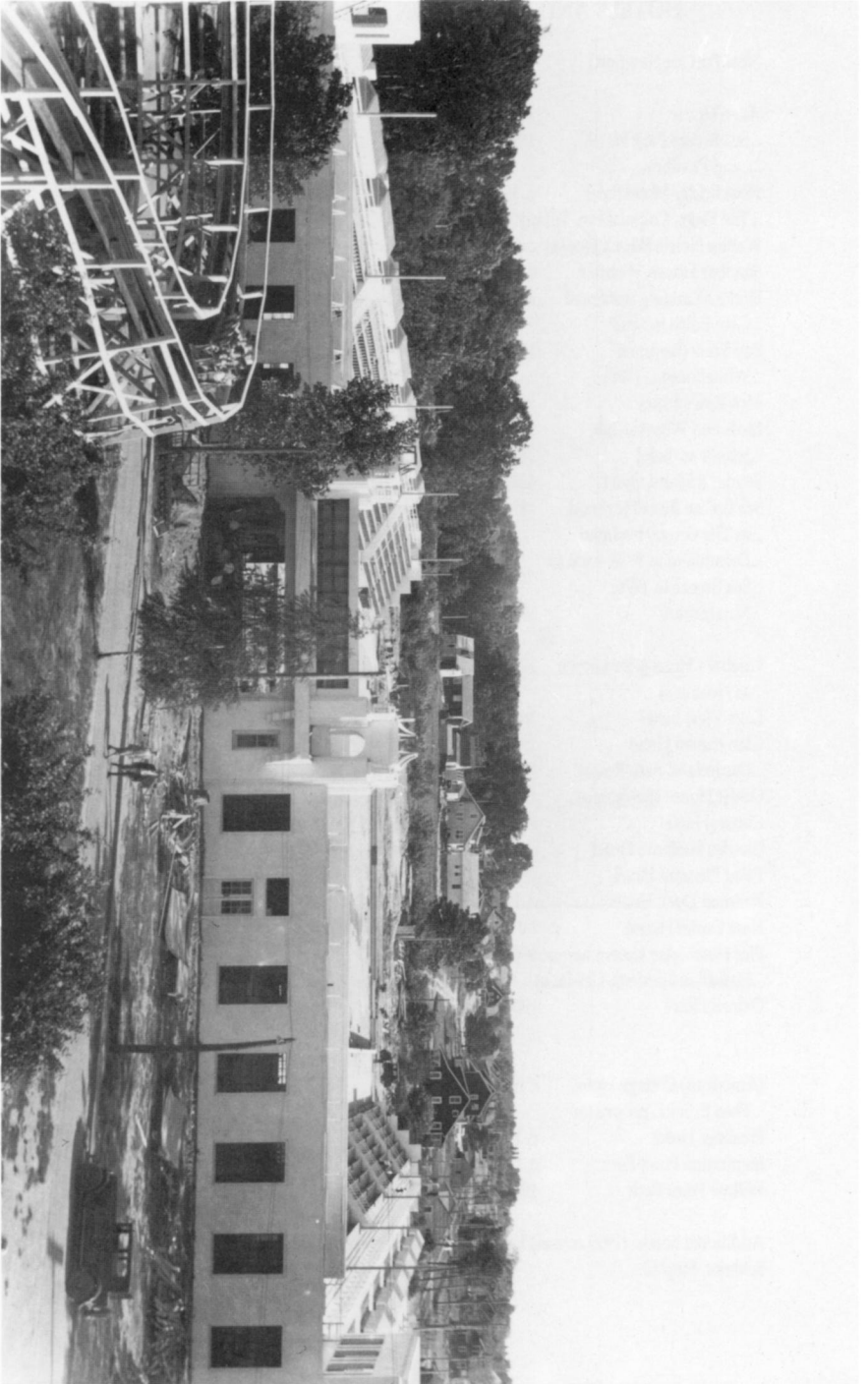
47. *Democrat and Chronicle*, 24 July 1874.
48. *Democrat and Chronicle*, 6 and 8 January, 1873.
49. Interview with Jean Tornow, granddaughter of Christina and Charles Stoffel; August, 1992. The Stoffel/Tornow family operated the Birds and Worms Hotel until 1940. It was reopened in 1941 under new management and again became a private club when it was purchased by the Newport Yacht Club in 1946.
50. West, *Irondequoit Story*, 70.
51. *The Rochester Directory*, (Rochester, Drew, Allis & Company, 1890), 966.
52. West, *Irondequoit Story*, 51.
53. *Ibid.*, 49.
54. *Ibid.*, 66.
55. *Union and Advertiser*, 6 August 1890.
56. Walter Sassaman. *The Story of Sea Breeze Amusement Park* (pamphlet with no publication information), unpagged.
57. West, *Irondequoit Story*, 70.
58. *The Rochester Directory*, (Rochester: Drew, Allis & Company, 1881) 523.
59. *Union and Advertiser*, 25 June 1883.
60. *Ibid.*, 14 July 1896.
61. West, *Irondequoit Story*, 62.
This account goes on to relate the efforts of a group of local fishermen, the "Carp Crew," which succeeded in a partial restoration of the fishing grounds between 1935 and 1939 by netting thousands of pounds of carp and shipping them by train to fish dealers in New York (probably New York City). By 1957, West reports that the Monroe County's Pure Waters program and the introduction of salmon to the lake had restored the area's reputation as a good fishing area.
62. *Ibid.*, 49-50.
63. *Ibid.*, 51. The figures given are 115,582 passengers for the year ending June 30, 1890, and 140,000 for 1898.

64. Ibid.
65. Ibid., 72.
66. Ibid. By 1946 the park covered 35 acres, West estimates.
67. Interview with Merritt Price, son-in-law of George Long, Jr., who was 12 years old when his father first operated his merry-go-round at Sea Breeze; September, 1992.
68. West, *Irondequoit Story*, 61.
69. Memoirs of Judge Van Voorhis, courtesy Elizabeth Yule.
70. Interview with Clarence and Mildred Mueller, longtime Irondequoit residents; August, 1992.
71. Tornow interview.
72. Zande, *Irondequoit 1839-1989*.
73. Florence Smith, "Leisure Time in the Great Depression" (unpublished).
74. West, *Irondequoit Story*, 66.
75. Jesse F. Steiner, *Memorandum on Recreation in the Depression* (New York: Social Science Research Council, 1937) 92.
76. Zande, *Irondequoit 1839-1989*.
77. Ibid.
78. Sassaman, *Story of Sea Breeze*.
79. *Union and Advertiser*, 3 July 1894.
80. *Union and Advertiser*, 30 May 1874.
81. Theodore Waters, "New York's New Playground," (*Harper's Weekly*, 8 July 1905) 976-980.
82. Smith, "Leisure Time in the Great Depression."
83. West, *Irondequoit Story*, 61.
84. Interview with Anne Foxluger, longtime Penfield, NY, resident; May, 1991.
85. Mueller interview.

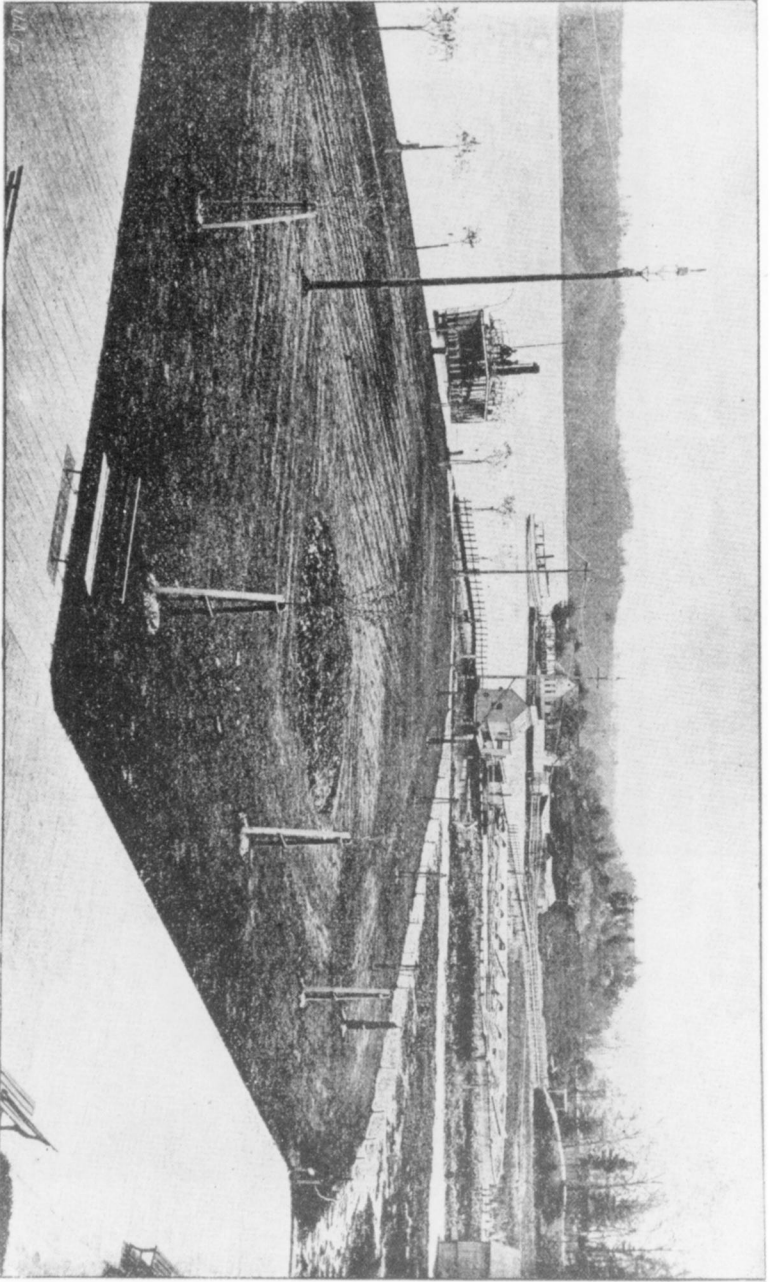
HOTELS AND RESORTS ON IRONDEQUOIT BAY TO 1940

New Port (or Newport)	1840-beyond 1940	original buildings replaced by marina & restaurant in 1980s
Allen House	1864-1885	burned down, November 1885
...Sea Breeze Park Hotel	1886-1909 & beyond?	built by Lake Ontario RR to replace Allen House; Pavillion burned, 1909
.....and Pavillion		still exists (remodeled) unoccupied
Float Bridge Hotel (later	c. 1850-beyond 1940	
...The Flags, Colonial Inn, Tiffany's)		
Walton House (Monk House)	c. 1850-1874?	near float bridge
Sandbar House, Webster	c. 1850-?	
Drake's Landing (renamed	c. 1870-beyond 1940	rebuilt as restaurant in 1952
...Glen Edith in 1892)		
Bay View (renamed	1871-beyond 1940	demolished in 1974, became condominium site
...Whitehouse c. 1905)		
Mrs. Rau's Hotel	c. 1872-?	near float bridge
Birds and Worms Club	1873-1890	remodeled in 1914, became yacht club in 1946
...rebuilt as hotel	1890-beyond 1940	
Snyder's Island Hotel	1877-1925?	
Sea Breeze Resort (opened	1879-beyond 1940	new management in 1900, property leased in 1937 & then purchased in 1946 by George W. Long
...as The Grove; renamed		
...Dreamland in 1938, back to		
...Sea Breeze in 1970)		
Natorium	1925-1931	covered over & used for bingo hall, storage
Griebel's Hotel (also known	1879-beyond 1940	burned down in 1951
...as Hebing's)		
Lake View Hotel	1880-1909	burned down
Glen Haven Hotel	1880-1928	burned down
...Dreamland Park Resort	1900-1923	closed down, became housing site
Outlet House (Rebholz's)	1884-beyond 1940	on sandbar, Irondequoit side
Cottreal Hotel	c. 1890-beyond 1940	became private home
Charles Heilbron Hotel	c. 1890-1902?	at outlet
Point Pleasant Hotel	1897-beyond 1940	burned in December 1954
Railroad Dock Hotel	c. 1900-1924?	
New Outlet House	?-1917?	on sandbar, Webster side
Pier Hotel (also known as	1900-c. 1940	near Sea Breeze between railroad and Lake Ontario
...Hawaiian Gardens, Geisler's)		
Oxford Hotel	1906-1925?	Irondequoit steamers docked at bayside boat landing on Irondequoit side of sandbar
(American) Cottage Hotel,	c. 1912-?	
...Theo E. Seitz, proprietor		
Heubner Hotel	c. 1912-?	on sandbar
Inspiration Point Park	c. 1924-?	(Webster) became home sites
Willow Point Park	1930-beyond 1940	(Webster) became condominium site

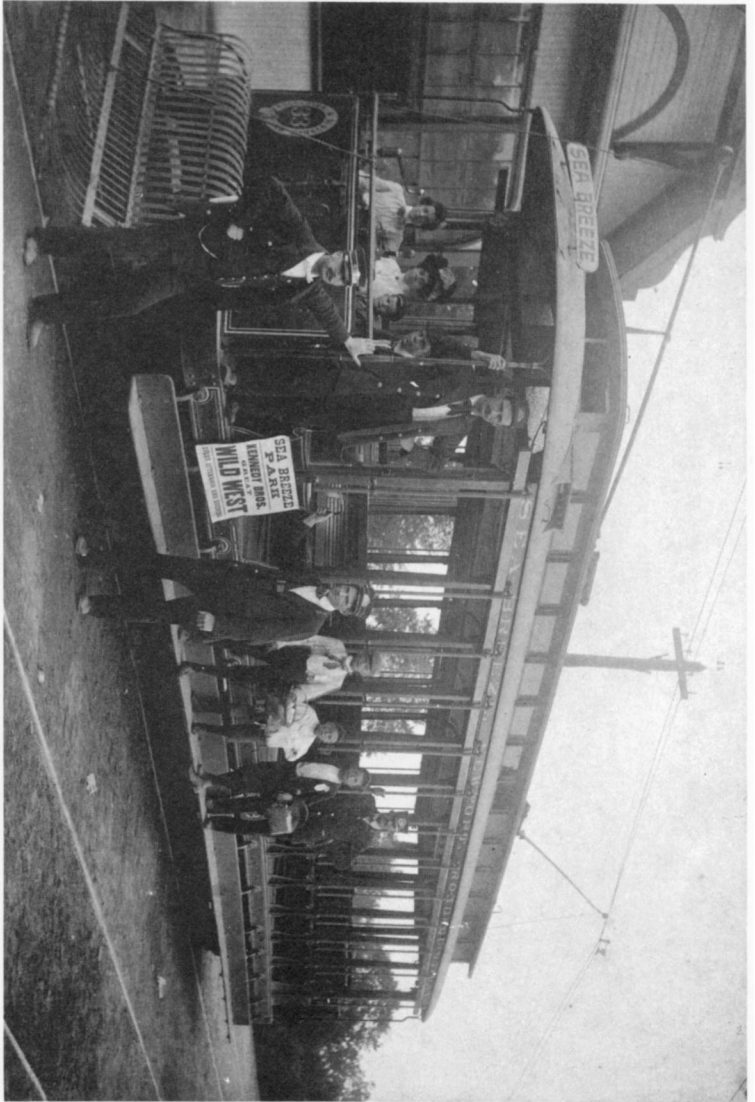
Additional hotels: (1905 census) Patt, Reuter, McGinn, Windsor; (1924 Platt Map) Moose, Grove, Schlafer, Stop 12



"The Natatorium Under Construction," 1925, courtesy Irondequoit Town Historian's Office. The Natatorium at Sea Breeze Amusement Park offered swimming and water novelties in the world's largest salt-water pool until it was shut down in 1931.



*"Boat Landings along the Sea Breeze shore of Irondequoit Bay," c. 1893,
from "Rochester's Summer Resorts," courtesy Strong Museum.*



"Car #33 at Sea Breeze Station," c. 1905, courtesy Alan Mueller. Operators and a few passengers pose on an open bench motor car of the Rochester Suburban Rail Road Company, which transported thousands of visitors to hotels and resorts on the west side of Irondequoit Bay.

