

Henry's Wedding

Submitted by Village of Richfield Springs Historian Harriett Geywits

As part of an international service order, a branch of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows known as the Ocquionis Lodge No. 818, was started in Richfield Springs in 1900. A auxiliary branch of this organization called the Ocquionis Rebekah Lodge No. 515, was started in 1922. The Rebekah Lodge is based on the character of notable women in Biblical history whose kindness and hospitality to humble and unknown strangers was thought to be the portrayal of the character of women.

The symbols relate to the work done by the organization: The beehive represents the cooperative teaching of the advantages of united efforts; the moon and seven stars represents the ever changing order of the universe and all of nature and suggests to the members the value of system, regularity and precision in all undertakings; the dove, a universally recognized emblem of peace, is recognized through the mission of love and charity, of tolerance and forbearance with members to strive to bring happiness to others and to promote peace; the lily, long regarded as the emblem of purity, stands for the purity of character of thought, word and of action to which members of the Rebekah Lodge strive.

In order to carry out their humanitarian efforts, the Lodge needed to raise funds. One of their most energetic efforts occurred in 1932 when Lodge No. 515 staged a production of 'Henry's Wedding' at Shaul's Theatre. This was a community effort and showed the spirit of cooperation which was typical of the area during that era. Let's see what the Mercury had to say about the production:

"Henry's Wedding, the big three-act comedy of married life and old time 1890 styles is to be staged under the sponsorship of the Ocquionis Rebekah Lodge. The show is said to contain a million laughs. The Rebekahs are meeting with hearty co-operation throughout the community and a number of the men and women who stand out in amateur theatricals here have very graciously consented to be members of the cast.

The show deals with the story of the bachelor bridegroom of 55 attempting to get married for the first time to a widow of 49 who has been married three times before. His young nephew, Jack, does not want him to get married because it will cut him out of a \$100,000 bequest in his grandfather's will. Things are completely upset when Uncle Henry announces he is to be married on the same day as his nephew and wants to make it a double wedding. Jack, of course, makes an attempt to prevent the wedding of his uncle and resorts to kidnapping, which leads to a lot of comical situations and complications to the plot.

Detectives O'Flaherty and Mugs are called in to

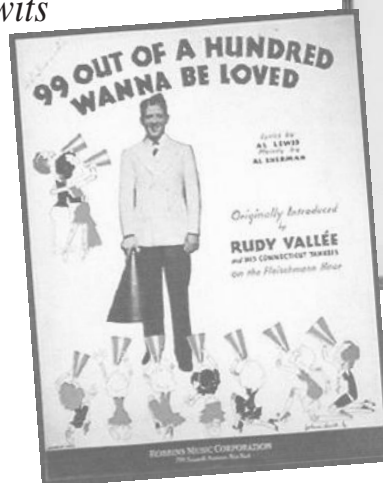
solve the mystery but fail to do so. Susan Christopher, the jilted lover of Uncle Henry, is accused of 'bumping him off' and is put in handcuffs and started off to jail, when lawyer Brown intercedes and handles the case for her. In his conference with Susan concerning her case, he lets her know he is madly in love with her and proposes - and Susan sings the famous song 'Ninety-nine Out of A Hundred'. (This was a popular sentimental song from the 1930s made famous by Rudy Vallee which expressed the idea that ninety-nine out of a hundred times, love affairs are doomed to fail!)

In all the misunderstandings and ridiculous situations that follow, Mary, Jack's finance, refuses to marry him because she thinks there is something strange about the whole affair. Jack first decides to postpone his wedding and then to hurry it up and finally thinks he is all set to get married before his uncle, ready to rush the wedding through when his uncle appears on the scene. But everything ends happily because Samantha Green suddenly finds out that Mary's ancestors came over on the Mayflower with her own ancestors and so immediately, a life-long friendship starts and Samantha is willing to give the money to Jack and Mary regardless of the will.

As it turns out, three couples are to be married; Uncle Henry and Samantha, played by Milo Swift and Mrs. Frank Bouton; Jack and Mary, played by Caulder Curtis and Mrs. Harley Pickens; and Lawyer Brown and Susan Christopher, played by Milton Wiltse and Miss Daisey Reed. Milton Lennebacker and Tony Famulare are two friends who attempt to stop the tying of the knots. Allen Chambers and Alex Smith are two hard-boiled detectives. Mrs. Kenneth D. Watson is the cook and Roy Trebing her lazy husband. Norman Slocum is a traffic cop. Virginia and Marie are played by Mrs. Kenneth Watson and Miss Angeline Agresti.

The high spot of the production is the Beaus and Belles of Grandma's time portrayed by forty prominent villagers who will show exactly how those of 1890 dressed and danced. This specialty will all be costumed in the famous old styles of 1890 when the people drank pink lemonade at picnics and rode in buggies drawn by horses.

Another outstanding feature is the Brethren and Sisters of the Mystic Shrine, composed of approximately forty of the village's most prominent men and women singers. This group sings a number of old-time minstrel and spiritualistic songs. In addition to this, there are a number of high school choruses which round out the production as a big



Wedding', under the sponsorship of the Rebekah Lodge, was the best production of this nature seen here to date and was thoroughly enjoyed.

success."

There was a glowing report following the show which said that 'Henry's



This was just one of the ways in which the local Rebekah Lodge worked within the community to fund their many charitable and benevolent activities while emphasizing the watch-words of the Order - Friendship, Love and Truth.

You may notice that the plot of this play sounds very familiar. Some things are said to never change and that includes this story line which was as popular in 1932 as it is today.

Anglers Sought For Bass Tournament

The Richfield Springs Community Center's Annual Bass Tournament is scheduled for Saturday, July 20 rain or shine, at the Canadatego Lake Boat Launch, on 135 Dennison Road, just off US Route 28, Richfield Springs.

Registration is from 5:30 a.m. to 7:00 a.m. Fishing will be from 7 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Weigh in is at 1:30 p.m. A free lunch will follow weigh in for all anglers as well as sponsors. Fee is \$25 per person, \$15 per person for 12 and under. For tournament information either call Bill Kosina, Tournament Coordinator, at 315-749-3286 or e-mail bill@richfieldzone.org

Cash prizes this year total \$1000 plus 5% of registration fees and will go to the top three boats (total bag weight) and heaviest lunger. There is a limit of three bass per boat.

Cash prize sponsors are: Andela Products/Ruby Lake Glass, G-Tech Marine, Bello Electric and Excavating, James Jordan Associates, Architects and JC Bait and Tackle (in memory of Laura Duncan-Bachanas). There will be a 50/50 raffle, a beer basket raffle and door prizes of fishing related items.

This event is in cooperation with the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation-Central Region.

For information regarding the Richfield Springs Community Center call 315-858-3200 or visit us at <http://www.richfieldspringscommunitycenter.org>

Registration Opens For Run & Walk

The Richfield Springs Community Center is currently accepting registrations for its 22nd Annual RSCC "Sundae" Run and Walk scheduled for Sunday, July 21 at the Richfield Springs Veterans Club Pavilion, 13 Lake Street. It is sanctioned by the Route 20 Road Challenge.

Categories include a 5K, 10K, and 2 mile walk. Race start time is 8:15 a.m. Complete race information and pre-registration are available by going to <http://www.richfieldzone.org> and click on the "Fundraiser" tab or go to <http://www.runsignup.com/RSCC> Participants may also register race day from 7:00-8:00 a.m. New this year, two tier pricing for participants who want a tech shirt versus those who do not.

Stewart's Shops is the exclusive Corporate Sponsor of the 22nd Annual Sundae Run and Walk.

The Run and Walk's coordinator is Bill Kosina and can be reached by calling 315-749-3286 or e-mailing bill@richfieldzone.org

For more information regarding the Richfield Springs Community Center and its programs, check out our website at <http://www.richfieldspringscommunitycenter.org/> and Like Us on Facebook: Richfield Springs Community Center.