

MEDFORD LAKES COLONY ARCHIVES

The Lakes' Memories

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

You can assist the Archives efforts to celebrate the town's and Colony's Centennial in several ways.

- If you have documents, artifacts or photographs that help tell the town's story, you can loan or donate them to the Archives. Volunteer archivists Gail and Michael McCormick will arrange to pick up and return materials.
- Donate money for supplies. The Archives are important, but the Colony is responsible for the upkeep of the dams, parks, lakes and recreational facilities in town. The archivists are working to preserve history within professional standards but at reasonable expense.
- Donate time to help with the Archives. We will teach you how to do work such as abstracting records into research files, identifying photographs and artifacts for cataloging and display, and locating new collection items.

WHAT IS THE RESULT?



Camp canoeing class, One Beach, ca. 1949

History hasn't stopped. **Your** times, **your** memories can be preserved. Donations of documents, photographs and artifacts, **especially** with identifying information, are welcome. Float groups and organizations associated with the Colony should consider placing records with us. Documentation of the log cabins is wanted. Biographies of residents who have gone on to prominence can be preserved.

Remember, the residents of 2127 will want to know who we were and what we did, 100 years ago.



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THE COLONY ARCHIVES



WHAT ARE THE ARCHIVES?

The Medford Lakes Colony Archives are the historical papers, photographs, publications and organizational records of the Colony, the home owners association established by town founder Leon Todd, that preserve the stories and images of this unique town.

Medford Lakes originated in a far different fashion than typical New Jersey towns. Most towns have long histories, begun by Quaker or proprietary settlers. Medford Lakes was a planned community, developed in the 1920s as a recreational resort for Philadelphians, featuring water sports, hunting, fishing, and equestrian events, in a rustic, “pioneer”

setting of lakes and log cabins. Carved out of Medford Township, its early history was rural and agricultural. Few records survive from those early times.

All that changed when Clyde Barbour and Todd purchased a plat of pine-lands in 1926 and created a community set on a chain of lakes. The Colony served as a local “government” keeping records and issuing a newsletter. Those documents were the beginning of the town’s history and eventually the Archives.



Early metal beach tags, 1930s and 1940s

As the community grew, these records accumulated at the Colony offices, along with other items, like Native American artifacts, and scraps from the Revolutionary War iron operation, Aetna Furnace. The residents began creating new events, like Canoe Carnival, and organizations, like Camp

However, the records had no single keeper until Clint Alexander, a lifelong resident, began collecting and organizing materials. Without Clint’s 30 years of work, much would have been lost. But with his passing in 2008, the collection again had no one tending to it.

In late 2018, a new volunteer effort resumed Clint’s work, compiling the records into an Archives to support the upcoming community Centennial in 2027. While a good start was made, the Covid pandemic stopped that work in its tracks in March, 2020.

Now, that work has resumed, and the volunteers are looking for community support so that the Centennial will be more than just a festival. The Archives project intends to create research files about people, organizations and events, sponsor a lecture series by local and state experts, assist with the publication of a new town history, construct a new history exhibit, and to create digital editions of the *Colony News* and Colony records.



Camp athletic medal for baseball throw, presented to Clint Alexander, 1934.