



WALLY AND ALICE MENDENHALL, in front of the original cottage at Clements Beach.



THE ORIGINAL COTTAGE, Walean, as it looked in early years. Mosquito netting originally protected the front porch.

## Sale of clements beach—

# Era of family owned resorts ending?

...by Diana Boyt Jensen

The era of the family owned and operated resort came closer to an end this spring with the sale of Clements Beach by Wally and Alice Mendenhall. The resort, on Okoboji's south Manhattan Beach, has long been known as a center of family vacation activity.

The Clements Beach story begins shortly after Wally's parents, Drs. Walter and Jean Mendenhall graduated from Drake University in the early 1900's. The Mendenhalls travelled to the lakes region that summer, on the recommendation of a Drake faculty member, Dr. Ferdinand Smith. For two summers the Mendenhalls tented around the Okoboji shoreline before deciding to purchase land from Jim Myerly for their summer cottage in 1907.

They chose their lot on Okoboji's west shore for the advantages of the low bank and prevailing southern breezes. The nearest structures then were the Millers Bay Hotel and the Manhattan Beach Hotel.

The lumber for their cottage was shipped across the lake on steamers. When the steamer was in the bay, the men pushed the lumber overboard. Hopefully, it would float into shore.

For drinking water they had to row to Miller's Bay. Groceries meant a twice a week row boat trip, regardless of weather, across the Lake to Arnolds Park. In the winter time the Mendenhalls lived in Des Moines.

Dr. Jean Mendenhall's parents, William Hugh and Jessie Clements first visited their daughter at the lake in the summer of 1908. After the summer of 1913, Clements, a carpenter, purchased the lot next to his daughter and con-

structed a cottage.

### RESORT BY ACCIDENT

The Clements were soon enjoying visits at the lake from a host of friends and relatives. Over the years, Mr. and Mrs. Clements built cottages for the comfort of their guests.

Jessie Clements relished her role as hostess; she encouraged guests to stay at their retreat, as this excerpt from the Okoboji Protective Association Bulletin No. 22, published in May, 1926, attests:

"Anyone living on lake, having a preacher friend visiting them, who is willing to preach for the cottagers, will find a welcome and a place to preach at home of Mrs. Clements on South Manhattan beach. We have been favored by accommodating ministers and services are appreciated. Telephone Mrs. Clements."

W.H. Clements died in 1925. Services were held at home. The entire funeral party then boarded the Queen and travelled across the Lake to the Arnolds Park dock. Interment was at the Okoboji cemetery. Jessie Clements ran the resort until her death in 1934. She died in Boston, while visiting her daughter in the winter and her body was preserved. She also was buried in the Okoboji cemetery after being transported across the lake by the beloved Queen steamer.

Dr. Jean Mendenhall then ran the resort; in 1947 Wally and Alice Mendenhall gave up their teaching careers and took over. They then began a program building new cottages to replace the old, remodeling and adding the sand beach and recreation facilities.

### CHANGES

In early years, freight was delivered

to Clements Beach docks by the railroad owned Queen, Okoboji, Sioux City and Des Moines steamers. Later, the cottages had gas stoves, using a series of weights to compress the gas. When electricity came, each cottage had one bare bulb; power interruptions were an almost hourly occurrence. The early phone system, with a crank on the side, provided service for a few hours every day. But according to Wally Mendenhall, one of the biggest changes

at the resort was the result of Dutch Elm disease. More than 150 elms have

died within the past 5 years.

**OKOBOJI DISEASE**  
The Mendenhalls have very mixed feelings about the sale. They affectionately say that Okoboji is a disease-and they have it.

This will be their first summer away from the resort business- a business in which the resort has come before all else. They are certain they will miss it, as well as many of their long time guests.

The Mendenhalls are looking forward to enjoying the lake activities to the fullest.

When the need is greatest . . .  
place your trust in us.

Jerry Turner  
Steve Lundy  
Brad Smith  
604 Eleventh Street, Spirit Lake  
Phone 336-2575

## LAKES LIVING

Diana Boyt Jensen

Beacon Society Editor

### LAC hosts tole painting class; clay sculpture; new exhibit

Mary Herrick of Spirit Lake will demonstrate tole painting for the public on Sunday afternoon, June 19, from 2 to 4 p.m. at the Lakes Art Center, which is located on Highway 71 in Okoboji. Then classes will be held Monday through Wednesday, June 20, 21 and 22, and again June 27, 28 and 29 from 1 to 4 each afternoon at the Art Center.

Tole painting goes back to the 18th century as a decorative folk art. Metalware and wood implements, boxes and furniture sported bright figures and scenes in enamel, lacquer and gilt. Mary has adapted the use of oil paints in a modern, yet traditional painting technique to this early art, and does custom pieces for people.

She studied at the Art Institute of Chicago and the University of Iowa. Mrs. Herrick taught adult education classes for ILCC in Milford this past year. In Albia she and her husband, Rupert, shared a gift and import shop, specializing in custom framing, and also conducted art and craft classes.

Denise Cook of Algona returns again this year to instruct classes in clay sculpture starting June 23 and 24, and again June 30 and July 1. These will be all-day sessions from 9 to noon and 1 to 4 p.m., and they will include classic figure building from live as well as "still life" subjects.

Mrs. Cook combines being a wife and mother with sculpting. She attended Briar Cliff College in Sioux City and earned an Associate in Arts Degree in Education. In later years she took evening classes in sculpting in Mason City taught by Cliff Carlson, the famous sculptor from Wesley, Iowa. She attributes much of her enthusiasm for sculpting to him. In the past Denise has exhibited at MacNider.

Watercolor workshops with Richard Williams of the Staff of Fine Arts Department of Iowa Lakes Community College, Estherville, will include creative techniques in watercolor.

These classes will be Monday through Wednesday, June 13, 14 and 15 and again June 27, 28 and 29, 9 to noon each day.

Williams is no stranger at the Lakes Art Center, having conducted classes in all media of art in recent years. He is a graduate of Yankton College, received his Masters Degree from Mankato State College, and has taken graduate courses at the universities of Iowa, Colorado, Montana and South Dakota.

### Pink Bazaar is Friday at Mall

The annual Dickinson County Memorial Hospital Auxiliary Pink Bazaar will be Friday, June 17, beginning at 9:30 a.m., at the Great Lakes Mall in Spirit Lake. This is one of the Auxiliary's major fund raising events. Receipts are used to purchase needed hospital equipment. Recently purchased by the Auxiliary were mammography equipment and a mist tent.

Chairmen in charge of the committees are:

**Baked Goods**  
Mrs. Jennie Ellis, 336-3659  
Mrs. Hadley Shaffer, 832-3654

**House Plants**  
Mrs. A. H. Dobbertein 336-1768

**Books**  
Mrs. F. A. Fielder 332-7537

**Crafts & Hand Work**  
Mrs. Melvin Goff 336-4206

**Nearly New & Children's Toys**  
Mrs. Lucille Lieneman 336-2494

**Chance Table**  
Mrs. Bob Boettcher 336-1730

**Membership**  
Mrs. Jim Bell 336-1047

He has exhibited in the neighboring states of Nebraska, South Dakota and Minnesota, as well as Iowa.

On June 18 the exhibit in the West Gallery will be changed to the Watercolors, Drawings and Oils of Larry Ferguson. This will remain on display up through July 1.

Ferguson is an assistant professor at the Iowa State University Design Center. His works have been exhibited at the Midwest Biennial Show in Omaha and the Sioux City Annual Art Show; and he has had one-man shows in Idaho, Missouri, South Dakota and Iowa.

Anyone needing further information on the classes and summer activities is urged to call 332-5433, or write to the Lakes Art Center, Highway 71, Okoboji, Iowa 51355.

### OYC plans teen party

The Okoboji Yacht Club will hold a teen age party (ages 12-17) at Omaha Beach Point Thursday, June 23 from 7:30-11 p.m. Admission is \$1 per person. Reservations are a must and may be obtained by calling 332-5325 (Haggarts), 332-5501 (Fitzgibbons) or 332-2616 (Hardings). Reservation deadline is June 21.

Every boy should bring an extra T-shirt along, one that he will recognize as his own. He'll bring it home again. Everyone should bring a stick suitable for roasting hot dogs and marshmallows.

No cars will be allowed inside the Omaha Beach Compound. Parents - please plan to drop off and pick up your teens at the entrance.

The rain date is Monday, June 27, same time, same place.

## GIFTS

.....for Dad's Special Day

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