

# Once Upon a Time...



## INDIAN BASKET WEAVERS

Information gathered from various newspapers and notes...

In this photograph from about the 1890s we see the family of Louis Watso in front of their basket shop at Blodgett's Landing, on the east shore of Lake Sunapee. These well-known residents made a living for years from the sale of baskets woven from sweet grass. They made the baskets themselves. Their customers were mostly summer visitors who wanted a pleasing souvenir to take home after a day of swimming or boating, or perhaps a steamboat ride.

A family member stated that Louis Watso had come to Lake Sunapee long before they were born (1916). Louis and his wife Catherine were full blooded Abenaki Indians from Canada. Evidently, quite a few Indians were migrating to the United States because of lack of work in Canada.

His family made and sold Indian baskets. Louis must have been quite an entrepreneur. He also owned quite a bit of property around the lake. He held several jobs - he was a game warden, a policeman and more or less in the real estate business as he bought and sold property.

Sometime between 1900 and 1916, Louis and his family moved to Claremont, where he was quite well known. He died in 1959, and was buried at Mountain View Cemetery in Claremont, NH. Catherine died in 1943 and was buried at the same cemetery. They had 6 children, 2 boys and 4 girls.

*Ed. Note: This old newspaper photo was sent to SooNipi Magazine along with some notes from family members attempting to learn more information about the Louis Watso family. If any readers have more info, send it to us, and we will forward it to the family.*

*SooNipi is always looking for old newspapers that cover this area. If you have a box in your attic that you'd like to share or sell, give us a call.*

*Also - We scan old photos, scrapbooks, glass negatives, brochures, articles - the older, the better. Our new color copier can scan up to 11"x17" documents or photos, and enable them to be used for research and articles. An entire scrapbook page can be scanned, without removing each item. Copies can be made for other family members, either paper or digital.*