

Will Cressy... On Blodgetts Landing & The C.O.A. - In His Own Words...

Will Cressy did so much for Blodgetts Landing in the early 1900's that it might just as well be named "Cressyville" or "Cressy Landing" or "Cressytown". Here are a few of his thoughts on the COA and Blodgetts.

C.O.A. AND L.S.P.A. ARE GOOD ANGELS OF LAKE SUNAPEE, SAYS CRESSY

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By Will M. Cressy

Selected excerpts...

Probably the letters - C. O. A. - mean nothing to you; but to the summer dwellers of Lake Sunapee they mean much. They mean even more than much; they mean pretty near all there is to Lake Sunapee... C. O. A. stands for the Cottage Owners' Association of Blodgett's Landing.

Twenty-seven years ago we, (Mr. and Mrs. Will Cressy) became summer dwellers at Blodgett's. Being of a hospitable nature we began to invite our actor friends up to spend a week or a month. And about everyone that visited us immediately bought or built a home. The result of this was that quite an actor colony sprang up there.... Anyone ought to have been able to foresee the next result. You can no more keep an actor from acting than you can keep a prohibitionist from cheating... And these actors wanted to act. Of course it would be under the heading of "a benefit." There was no fire department, no police department, no poor people. There was a Spiritualist Society, but it had more money than the actors did.

Discovered the C. O. A.

And then one day some bright soul discovered it; discovered something they could hang a benefit on. The C. O. A. They must need money. They surely didn't have any... It was decided to give "A Monster Benefit Vaudeville Performance for the Cottage Owners' Association of Blodgett's Landing."

The Grand Idea

After days of worrying, "Bill" Matthews struck the Grand Idea... We would build a real casino or club house. And as the C. O. A. now had more money than anybody else, we would all join the C. O. A. and get that sixty dollars for a starter. And so we did. And with that sixty dollars we built a six thousand dollar club house, the C. O. A. Casino...

Biggest and Best

And we kept on doing it ever since, until today we have the biggest and best casino on the lake and probably in the state. We have a splendidly equipped stage and, auditorium, reading rooms, a circulating library, billiard and pool tables, bowling alleys, two pianos, a fine Victrola, bath houses, a fine bathing beach. We bring Champagne's Orchestra up from Concord every Saturday night for a dance, and take the orchestra from Soo-ni-pi Park Lodge for a mid-week dance every week. We book traveling shows and run a few moving pictures. And each year we give, at least, one grand vaudeville show by "Our Actor Friends"...

As our community has grown our society has expanded in its scope until today we handle about everything. We have built and keep up a mile of six-foot plank walk. We support the entire street lighting system. We handle all the sanitary department. We collect and dispose of all garbage. We own and operate the fire department. We handle the wood and ice problem. We keep the bathing beach in condition. We conduct the life-saving station. We employ a caretaker from Sept. 15 to May 15, Not so bad for starting in with three kerosene lamps and sixty dollars...

A Princely Gift

In appreciation of the spirit shown and the results obtained, Mr. Henry Bowles of Springfield, Mass., has recently presented to the C. O. A. four acres of the beautiful grove surrounding the Casino to be used in perpetuity as a public park...