



JENNIE LAMB

Woman Extraordinaire

By Sally Smid

Perhaps one of the most outstanding women in our area's history has to be Jennie Lamb. Jennie seemed to be "ahead of her time" in the early 1900s. In those days men dominated in business. Women were denied a variety of rights and privileges and expected to hold traditional jobs such as domestics, secretaries, nurses or teachers.

Jennie Davison Lamb hailed from Smiths Falls and was married to Curzon Lamb. She helped run a dry goods store in the "Stedman's building". Curzon was also a druggist and had degrees in dentistry and optometry as well. The couple lived on 4 Elgin St. S. in Athens. The Lamb Drugstore was in the same building which now houses the Pharmasave Drugstore today. Some of the Lamb memorabilia and photos are featured on the walls of that store. Jennie was an active part of Curzon's business and manufactured medicines like Lamb's Lubricating Liniments, Horse Powder, and Indian Pills. She was also very involved in

the community. She was an accomplished pianist and singer and some of her sheet music from the WWI era is part of the Athens and Area Heritage Society's archives.

Jennie did not follow the usual role of "a woman's place is in the home" and even went to school to learn about photography, photo developing and print making. The exquisite photos that she took are perhaps her greatest legacy and remain one of the best chronicles of life in the area, especially



of Charleston Lake between 1905 and 1930. For many years she and her husband had a cottage on the Shacktown shore named Point Sylvia. Many of her photos were made into postcards and are part of the village's interpretive sign. AAHS (Athens Area Historical Society) was thrilled to receive a large donation of some of her memorabilia including original photos from her cousin Janet Johnston George who now resides in northern New York.

In the summer the Lambs and their friends would dress in formal attire and picnic at the Lake which is depicted on a Main St. mural. The Athens Museum now has their almost century old picnic kit as well as her driving goggles. A true testament to her liberated attitude. Very few women drove those early automobiles. While she and her husband had no children, she had a very close relationship with her niece Enid Stewart Bell, a nurse, who unfortunately passed away at a young age. Enid's wedding dress is part of the Lamb display at the Museum.

Jennie continued on at their cottage even after Curzon's sudden death in 1936. She often was seen driving her boat, "The Why Not", and helped for a time with the Drugstore. She eventually moved back to Smiths Falls to be with her mother and sister before passing away in 1974. She continues to be an inspiration and her hundreds of photos remain as an amazing legacy and resource today. [LH](#)

Photos courtesy of the Athens Area Heritage Society & Museum.

Above: A stylish Jennie Lamb poses with her camera and some photography equipment. Women's hats could be quite elaborate at times and were often redecorated to suit the changing seasons.

Below: A horse and sleigh is pictured on the ice beside the Lamb cottage on Charleston. Wintertime brought a whole new variety of sports and activities to the Lake.