

Pictures of the Past

The Ark in Indian Neck

In July of 1879 a schooner was found by George Averill of Branford on Morris Rock off Clam Island in Indian Neck. No crew could be found and the cargo of pine boards was scattered in the water. A few days later the captain of the boat came forward and explained that the 75-foot schooner was the "Jenny Lind" out of Sag Harbor. The crew had been picked up by a passing fishing steamer after the boat had swamped.

George Averill took possession of the boat and pulled it to shore. He converted it into a popular restaurant at the western end of Linden Avenue and named it "The Ark" after Noah's famous boat. The establishment was open in the summer offering shore dinners, clam bakes, ice

cream and boat rentals. It was especially popular for reunions and offered a panoramic view of the Branford shoreline.

The Ark was run by George Averill until his death in 1908 and managed from that time by his son Louis Averill. The Averill family continued operating the restaurant until it closed in 1920.

The Ark was replaced by summer cottages but the inn was still standing in 1938. During the hurricane on Sept. 20 of that year, Cliff Collin's boat "Rose" came ashore and collided with the building causing extensive damage and tearing off the porch. The building was divided and made into two summer cottages. Only memories of the Ark remain.

Jane Peterson Bouley



Photo by Mason Fooks Smith, courtesy of the Branford Historical Society

THIS WAS the popular restaurant "The Ark" in Indian Neck.