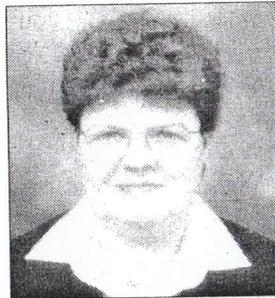


Short Beach Illumination Day began in 1884

One of the highlights of the summer season was the Illumination Day held in August at Short Beach. The poetess Ella Wheeler Wilcox, who was an avid swimmer and enjoyed gala affairs, started the event around 1884.



PICTURES OF THE PAST

Jane Bouley

Swimming and canoe races were held at Long Beach (Beckett Avenue), along with a diving competition. There was also a naphtha launch regatta and many activities for the children, including sack races. A concert was held in the evening, followed by fireworks.

All of the cottages along Main Street (now Shore Drive) – from Nellie Greens to Granite Bay – were strung with Japanese lanterns also

called “illuminations.” All of the lanterns were lit when the bell at the Chapel rang and the illumination provided a beautiful sight. Many people took the 30-cent cruise on Edwin Baldwin’s streamer “White Star” to view the spectacle. The boat owners of Short Beach also decorated their boats with lanterns and a boat

parade added to the festivities.

Eventually, Illumination Day became Short Beach Days and the event was moved to Labor Day weekend and expanded to include tub and running races, dances and ski shows. Short Beach Days were suspended

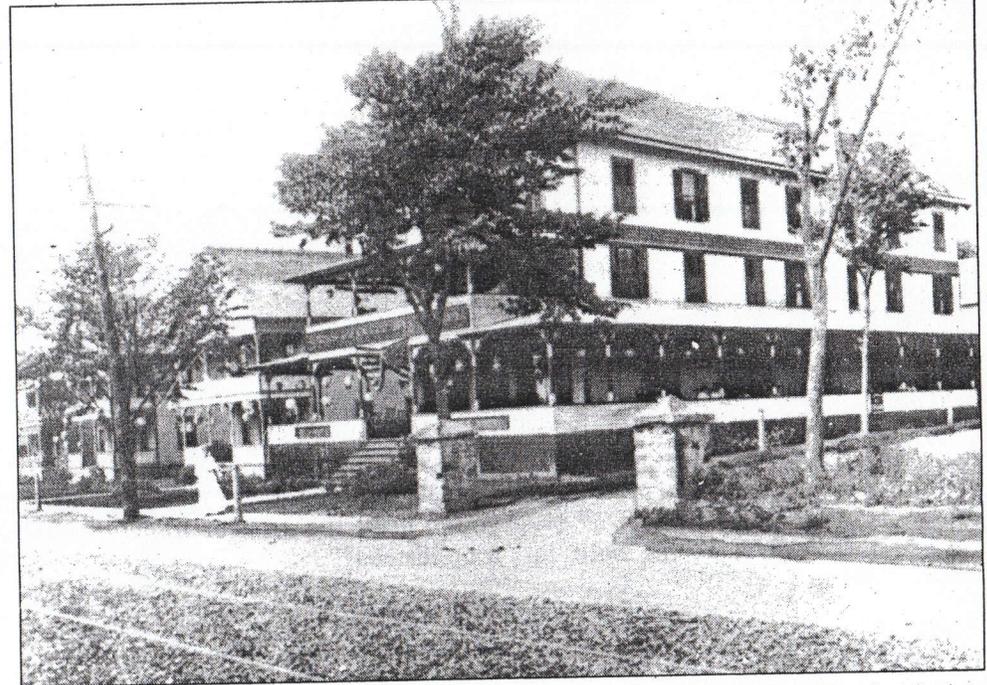


Photo courtesy of the Branford Historical Society

Lanterns decorate the Granite Bay Hotel and adjoining cottages during the annual Short Beach Illumination Day.

during World War II, but resumed in 1946.

This year the people of Short Beach are recreating Illumination

Day by lighting their homes on Sunday, September 1 at 8:30 p.m. A second lighting will take place on September 11.