

Major Events – The Second Hundred Years

Teddy Roosevelt

On September 14, 1901, the North Creek station became the focus of national attention. Five days earlier, while in Buffalo, President McKinley had been struck down by an assassin's bullet, but was believed to be recovering. Vice President Theodore Roosevelt had detained at North Creek and from there he traveled more than forty miles deep into the Adirondack wilderness, setting up camp at Lake Colden. On September 13th the Vice President was informed that McKinley had taken a turn for the worse and Roosevelt left his camp and prepared to return to North Creek. Since no further word awaited when he arrived at the Tahawus Clubhouse, Roosevelt decided to spend the night and leave for the North Creek station in the morning.

At ten o'clock that evening, the sounder clattered to life in the small North Creek depot with the message "The President is dying!" The message was sent to the Vice President at once and the lantern-lit, three-leg relay began, racing him toward the station where a special train was waiting under the charge of Superintendent C. D. Hammond.

Somewhere this side of the Boreas River, clinging to a careening wagon, Theodore Roosevelt became the 26th President of the United States. Eloise Cronin Murphy recalled the story she had heard many times from her father, Mike Cronin, who drove the last leg of the dangerous relay. It seems her father knew that McKinley had died before Roosevelt arrived at his relay point, but chose not to tell Roosevelt the news."

White Water Derby

The main event in the quarter-mile stretch of water in North River comes the first Saturday in May when the Whitewater Derby holds its Novice and Giant Slaloms.

The Hudson River Whitewater Derby, the nationally known canoe competition originated in North Creek in 1958 by the Johnsburg Fish and Game Club, started as a one-day eight-mile downriver race. There were 25 craft on the river representing 44 entrants.

For the 1960 White Water Derby, more than 15,000 persons lined both sides of the Hudson River from the bridge at North Creek to Riverside to witness the Johnsburg Fish and Game Club's downriver classic in which 48 entries whipped the white water.

It was part of North Creek's third and most successful (at that time) Derby which saw 126 contestants participating compared with 104 in 1959.

Sponsorship of the annual Hudson River White Water Derby changed in 1978.

The races were originated in 1958 by the Johnsburg Fish and Game Club, which conducted the community event for 20 years.

The current sponsoring group includes the volunteer workers on the event, and was incorporated as a not-for-profit organization under the name Hudson River White Water Derby, Inc.

The Fish and Game Club retained the rights to the sale of buttons for the races, donated equipment used in the races and a sum of money to assure continuation of the event.

2007 marked the 50th Anniversary of the Whitewater Derby.