

Sandy Terraces—A Storied History

By Pete Williams

CAPE COD, Mass.—Sandy Terraces Associates, the AANR-affiliated, family nudist resort in Cape Cod, Massachusetts, will celebrate its 60th anniversary this year. The 9.36-acre campground in the community of Marstons Mills plans a weekend-long celebration fitting for a club with a storied history.

The origins of Sandy Terraces actually date back to the early 1940s when a pioneering nudist purchased four and a half acres of property along a pond and built a beach. He constructed several flights of concrete steps to connect the terraces leading down to the beach, hence the current name: Sandy Terraces.

The club joined the American Sunbathing Association (now AANR) in 1947 as the Pilgrim Health Society, but the club folded just three years later, with little improvements made to the property. A dozen “Pilgrims” asked the landowner if they could reopen as a co-op, which became Sandy Terraces Associates. The group immediately went to work

installing a hand water pump near the beach, built the first outhouse, and constructed swings for the kids at the far end of the beach.

With membership on the rise, members built a second outhouse in 1952. A spring diving board was installed at the beach. Space was carved out of a dense briar patch to create a volleyball court.

With the members gaining momentum, the landowner suggested in 1952 that about three and a half acres of the camp property be turned over to a trust. An agreement was drawn up establishing four self-perpetuating trustees who would hold and oversee the property. The following year, 1953, is considered the founding of the club in its current incarnation.

In 1954, the club purchased an adjacent 4.86 acres of woodland to the north with a \$4,800 bank mortgage, which was paid off by the members ten years later.

The club made numerous improvements



Welcome to Sandy Terraces, there have been many changes through the years.

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throughout the 1960s and 1970s. Development encroached in the 1980s and land prices skyrocketed. In 1985, the owner of six and a half acres of woods to the north of Sandy Terraces offered to sell the property for \$250,000. When the club could not come up with the price, the owner sold to developers, who built new homes on the land.

That prompted Sandy Terraces to fence the entire property and the fences have been rebuilt and made higher over the years because of storm damage and increasingly bigger homes constructed nearby.

In 2009, construction began on a 20-by-60 foot heated swimming pool, which opened in the summer of 2010. Located near the tennis court and adjacent to a new bathhouse, it immediately became the hub of club activity.

These days, the club draws visitors from New York, Boston, and those making their way through the northeast on their way to Maine and New Hampshire. The club is located at the beginning of Cape Cod and those visiting the area use Sandy Terraces as a home base while they

explore the rest of the cape or take ferries to Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard.

Cape Cod is best enjoyed from late June through late September. Many visitors prefer September, when the crowds are gone but the weather still remains relatively warm. Sandy Terraces, with its wooded, old-time nudist flavor, is considered a hidden jewel among regular visitors and nudists in the Northeast.

Sandy Terraces will mark the 60th anniversary over the August 2-4 weekend, highlighted by a car show featuring hot rods. All current and former members will be invited to the affair, which also is open to the public. Given that nearly all improvements to the property have been handled by members over the years, the anniversary celebration will be a fitting tribute to one of AANR's oldest clubs.

For more information, visit www.sandyterraces.com.

