



Ames Farm Inn has been hosting summer guests since 1891.



It took two years and \$50,000 to build Kimball's Castle, which was completed in 1899.

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new, lively place to play in, one with an ideal lakeside setting that was perfect for a summer night.

The Gardens reached the peak of its popularity in the post-World War II era when big bands played there twice a week and a house band kept the joint jumping with lively swing music.

GILFORD

Heading south the next town on the lake is Gilford, once a part of Gilmanton and known originally as the Gunstock Parish. In 1812 it became a separate community and was named for the Revolutionary War battle which took place at Guilford Courthouse in North Carolina.

Gilford was a farming community for much of its history and parts of it were annexed to the city of Laconia in 1893.

In 1895 Benjamin Ames Kimball, president of the Concord & Montreal Railroad, purchased 300 acres on Lockes Hill near the Glendale section of Gilford and set out to build a castle, which would be a replica of one he had seen on the Rhine River in Germany.

It took two years (1897-1899) and \$50,000 to build the castle, which is still visible high above Belknap Point. Kimball spent winters in Concord at a mansion that still stands in front of the Capital Theatre on Main Street.

In the summer he moved to Gilford and had a railroad station built down



The Lake Shore Railroad had a stop near Mount Major.

the hill from his property so he could commute to and from work in his private rail car.

Further south is the Ames Farm Inn, one of many farms with waterfront property that turned to tourism once the rail-

roads arrived in town. The Ames family has welcomed summer guests at its lakeshore farm since 1891.

Still family-owned, Ames Farm Inn is a popular launching site for boats See **LAKE HISTORY** on 20

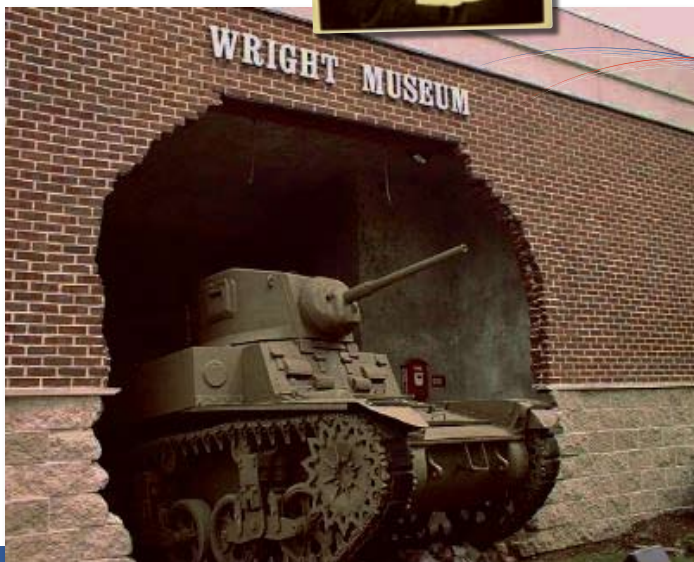


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