



This building, which currently operates as a Bed & Breakfast, was built in two major sections. The first was a 2 story, gable front, Greek Revival, built in

the mid-1800s. This is now nearly completely obscured by the 4-bay French Second Empire addition that spans the front. The new façade is dominated by a Mansard roof, off-center tower, and wraparound porch all dating to c. 1870. This building shows the transition from early settlement into the tourism industry that has been so important to Westport's survival.

One of the earlier residences in Westport is this 3-bay Greek Revival with a side hall plan. The heavy rectangular massing of the main section and full return on the pediment emphasize the temple form which was the inspiration for this style. Later additions include wings and a porch. The location, set back from the road on a hill indicates the original owner was a prominent figure.



The Westport Library was built in 1887 in the Shingle style, which aside from the obvious use of shingles, generally presented as an asymmetrical structure featuring varied architectural elements such as dormers and changing roof lines. This modest library includes these characteristics as well a unique octagonal clock tower. The stretch of lawn below the building has been designated a park for public use, and will remain so according to the deed that granted the land to the library association.



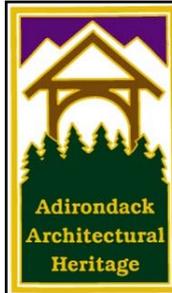
Architecture of the Champlain Valley



Wadhams and Westport

Permanent settlement in **Westport** by European colonists began after the end of the French and Indian War (1763). In 1764 William Gilliland was granted 2,300 acres, land including present-day Westport, which he named "Bessboro" after his daughter. Major Hezekiah Barber was the first permanent settler in Westport (1784) on land along Lake Champlain off the Camp Dudley Road. The village was originally called "Northwest Bay", and it became a major settlement because of the availability of waterpower and its suitability as a port. In 1800 Charles Hatch and John Halstead established a commercial wharf. With the opening of the Champlain Canal in 1823 an era of growth and prosperity began based on development and export of the natural resources and products of the surrounding area. In 1876 the Delaware & Hudson railroad reached Westport. This additional transportation link contributed to the resort development of Westport. Alice Lee bought the former Halstead Tavern in 1887, and expanded it into a grand hotel called the Westport Inn. The oldest continuously operating boys camp in the country, Camp Dudley, established in 1885, relocated to Westport in 1891. In 1881 the Essex County Fairgrounds made Westport its permanent location. From 1906 to 1924 Westport was the homeport of the steamboat *Ticonderoga*, which traveled the lake between Plattsburgh, Burlington, and other ports.

The 1960's were a critical period for Westport as it was for many nearby communities. The opening of the Adirondack Northway enabled even better transportation to and from Westport, contributing both to growth of seasonal homes and to decline of the village's retail role. Many traditional economic activities, such as dairy farming and mining (in nearby Town of Moriah), went into decline. The demolition of the functionally obsolete, but beloved, Westport Inn in 1966 symbolized this critical turning point in Westport's history. However, demonstrating the cyclical nature of things, the Westport Inn's site has been reborn as Ballard Park. The old D & H depot now serves as an Amtrak station, home for the popular and highly regarded Depot Theater, and an art gallery. The Fairgrounds is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, its main exhibit building, Floral Hall gloriously restored, and a new wave of farmers are establishing themselves in the area -- part of a new wave in agriculture based on the interest in locally grown foods, organic foods, and the concept of Community Supported Agriculture.



Adirondack Architectural Heritage (AARCH) is the regional, nonprofit historic preservation organization for the Adirondack Park. This tour is one of over fifty events AARCH is offering in our 2009 program schedule. Further information is available by contacting AARCH at 518-834-9328 or by visiting our website at www.aarch.org.

AARCH would like to thank Bill Johnston for helping to prepare and lead this tour.

*To learn more about Westport history visit:
The Westport Heritage House Visitor Center
6486 Main Street*

Open Sun. and Mon 11:00-2:00

Tues. thru Sat. 10:00-4:00

www.westportny.com

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WHAT TO LOOK FOR...

ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS, MATERIALS, STYLES, FUNCTIONS, ALTERATIONS

Settlement of **Wadhams** (originally called “Coates Mills”, in 1815 “Braman’s Mills”, and subsequently “Wadhams Mills”) began in the early 1800s, the hydropower potential of the Boquet River falls being an obvious locational determinant. The earliest settlers were Jesse Braman in 1801, who came from Massachusetts, and his brother-in-law, Aaron Felt, who came from New Hampshire. Shortly afterwards, Felt established a gristmill. Since agriculture was the earliest activity at settlements along the Boquet, local industry addressed the immediate needs of the settlers. 1822 General Lumen Wadhams arrived and began development of sawmills. With the opening of the Champlain Canal the next year, the transportation that the canal afforded to the growing cities of the northeast enabled an era of industrial and residential expansion in Wadhams. The majority of the structures here were constructed between 1825 and 1860 as reflected in the prevailing Greek Revival style. One of the most interesting hydropower developments in Wadhams is the hydroelectric plant, built in 1904 by Daniel Payne to furnish electricity to the Witherbee, Sherman and Company iron mining operations at Mineville in the Town of Moriah. Later the electricity was distributed in the Wadhams and Westport area. The power plant went out of service in 1969. In the mid-1970s the power plant was purchased by Matt Foley and Liz Rapalee, who renovated it for the purpose of providing power to an electric furnace for a glass blowing enterprise. Today the power is sold to an electric utility company. This is one of the oldest operating hydroelectric plants in New York.

Although Wadhams is no longer a small industrial and commercial center, it has evolved into a “center” of another sort. The Wadhams Free Library, which dates back to 1895, now occupies a new building constructed mainly by volunteers in the early 1970s and enlarged by volunteers in 1999. The library’s many stimulating programs, including a very popular Wednesday evening lecture series, result in a full to over-flowing parking lot during its open hours as it draws people from the surrounding countryside. It is remarkable that the residents of Wadhams and the surrounding area have made this commitment to the cultural enrichment of the community, making the Town of Westport one of the few places in the North Country that possesses two libraries. Likewise, the parking area in front of the Dogwood (formerly Merrick’s) Bakery, occupying the 1829, J. R. Delano general mercantile building, is always full during open hours. This first new business in Wadhams in recent memory has built a devoted patronage from the surrounding area drawn by the quality of its breads, soups, and other edibles, restoring vitality and activity to the community. This summer a Saturday morning farm and craft market on the lawn of the United Church of Christ will further stimulate activity, contributing to the renewal of Wadhams as an alive, cross-roads hamlet.

Wadhams



Built in 1829, this brick, gable front building is the oldest commercial structure in Wadhams, constructed as a home for

a general mercantile and inn. It represents the transition from the Federal to Greek Revival style, incorporating elements of both. The semi-circular fanlight in the gable, and the center hall plan are Federal, while the partial cornice return and 3x5 bay massing indicate Greek Revival influence. The ell addition dates to the mid-20th century.

The United Church of Christ occupies this simple timber frame building that was built in 1837 as the home of the First Congregational and Presbyterian Society. The church originally stood across the Boquet River to the west, but during the winter of 1865-66 it was moved across the ice to its current location. As with the store down the road, this building shows the transition into the Greek Revival style. Though restrained, there are some stylistic elements present, such as the return on the cornice line, and the flat entablature and transom lights over the doors, that identify Greek Revival and Federal influence. As with many buildings in Wadhams, some late 19th century alterations have been made. In this case, the replacement windows featuring numerous small panes surrounding a larger one, indicate the Queen Anne period.



The prevalence of Greek Revival architecture in Wadhams indicates a period of prosperity during the early to mid 19th century, which led to increased population and construction. This house is one of several along Main Street that exhibit the vernacular interpretation of the style, incorporating basic elements such as the side hall plan and cornice returns on the gable. High style details that would identify the house with a professional builder, however, are missing. This indicates the house was built by local labor, most likely for middle class occupants. The porch was a later addition, and the windows are replacements.



Westport

This Italianate commercial building was constructed in 1877 as an annex to the Westport Inn, which stood across the road in what is now Ballard Park. The second floor retains a high level of architectural integrity from that period. The window surrounds are heavily ornamented and feature a mixture of flat and arched hoods, and brackets and dentil molding highlight the cornice line. The ground floor was altered around 1930 when three bays were added along the eastern façade creating separate commercial areas.



Hoodmold, Hood molding

The projecting molding of the arch over a door or window, whether inside or outside; also called a dripstone.