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Newsletter

ADIRONDACK
ARCHITECTURAL
HERITAGE

Working on the Railroad

Adirondack Daily Enterprise

Chris Brescia explains railroad infrastructure to AARCH tour group.

For the past year, Howard Kirschenbaum has represented AARCH at regular meetings of the Citizens Advisory Committee on the Remsen-Lake Placid Adirondack Railroad Corridor. Along with 22 other North Country constituencies, AARCH was invited by DEC Commissioner Thomas Jorling to advise a DEC-DOT (Department of Transportation) joint task force on future uses for the corridor.

After ten years of litigation following the temporary revival of the railroad for the 1980 Olympics, the 120-mile-long, 100-foot-wide corridor was reclaimed by the state two years ago. Initial public meetings indicated a great interest in seeing the railroad revived. There is also considerable support for using the corridor as a multiple-use recreational trail for hiking, skiing, snowmobiling, biking, horseback-riding and other similar recreational purposes.

AARCH's position, which is shared by most members of the advisory committee, is that railroad operations should be restored on the corridor to the extent this is feasible. Multiple recreational uses should also be allowed along the corridor

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From the President

We have received many kudos for the first issue of AARCH's newsletter. We certainly appreciate all those encouraging comments and remind you that the continuing success of *The Newsletter* will be greatly aided by your participation. Please send Mary Hotaling (new address: 22 Catherine Street, Saranac Lake, NY 12983) any and all clippings, news blurbs, articles and even rumors that have to do with historic properties, architecture, community planning and historic preservation in the Adirondack Park. And send in your questions on Preservation Technology for Carl Stearns to address in future issues. Photographs of historic buildings and sites in the news would also be welcome.

Some members have asked how AARCH's membership renewal system works. Here's a brief explanation. If you joined AARCH in the first quarter of any year, you will receive a membership renewal notice in January the following year. If you joined AARCH in the second quarter of the year, you will receive a renewal notice the next April. And so on for the third and fourth quarter. In this way our membership income is distributed relatively evenly throughout the year, and you will receive your renewal notice at the same time every year.

We've actually been very pleased with our renewal rates. Of our first and second quarter 1991 members, 85% renewed their memberships this year! We are told that this is a truly remarkable renewal rate. Apparently, first-time renewals in most organizations come in around 60-65%, with the rate rising to 85% on the second or third round.

Many corporations have matching grant programs in which employers match their employees' contributions to non-profit organizations. All you need to do is pick up a short "matching gifts form" from the Public Relations Office in your company, take a minute to fill it out, and send it in to AARCH. AARCH completes the form, verifying that you made the contribution, sends it back to the company, and the company sends AARCH a check matching your contribution. Please check to see if this applies to you, and thank you all for your support.

Please note, in the "Resources" section, that AARCH has initiated a new aspect of its educational program. We have launched a mail order clearinghouse of materials on historic preservation in the Adirondacks. This is the first time that there has been a collection of all these materials in one place. It is our hope that the AARCH materials center will not only make it convenient and predictable to order these books and materials, but will help call attention to the variety of historic resources and historic preservation activities in the Adirondack Park.

Howie Kirschenbaum

The View FROM ALBANY

The new address for the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), effective October 1, 1992, is:

New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, & Historic Preservation
Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau
Peebles Island, PO Box 189
Waterford, NY 12188-0189

The new phone number for the Bureau is (518) 237-8643.

Following is a list of recent survey and nomination activities in the Adirondack Park handled by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, & Historic Preservation in the past two to three years:

These properties have been listed on the National Register of Historic Places within the last year: Adsit Log Cabin, Willsboro; Wiawaka Bateau, Lake George; Saranac Lake, 60 individual nominations and 3 historic districts; State Theater, Ticonderoga; and the Hamilton County Courthouse complex, Lake Pleasant.

The properties listed below have been declared eligible for the National Register by the State Review Board, and nominations are in preparation: Adirondack Railroad; Camp Dudley Road Historic District, Westport; Mixter Blacksmith Shop, Warrensburg; Owens Farm, Willsboro Vicinity; Paul Smith's Hotel Cottages, Brighton; St. William Catholic Church on Long Point, Raquette Lake; Silver Lake Lodge, Hawkeye, Clinton County; Trudeau Sanatorium, St. Armand; Veterans Memorial Highway, Wilmington; Westport Historic District; and Wiawaka Holiday House, Lake George. Two Multiple Property Type nominations resulting from surveys are also in the works: Moriah Mining Resources, consisting of four historic districts and 10-12 individual nominations; and Moriah Religious Properties, eight individual nominations.

Seven surveys of Adirondack communities have been received: AuSable Bridges (intensive level); AuSable Valley (reconnaissance level); Bouquet (reconnaissance: agricultural resources); Lake Placid Main Street (intensive); Town of Moriah; Town of North Elba (reconnaissance-intensive); Wadhams and Environs (reconnaissance).

Railroad, *Continued from page 1*

wherever such uses can safely coexist with rail operations. There may be some places - narrow rock cuts or narrow bridges, for example - where, in the short run, rail and recreational uses cannot safely operate simultaneously. Still, in the long run, our vision should be to see the entire corridor available for *both* uses. This can be done by re-routing the recreational trail around such obstacles, for example.

A major question has been the economic feasibility of rail operations. The committee reviewed a number of feasibility studies, which were encouraging. There are some 250 successful tourist railroads around the country. Sections of the Adirondack corridor from Old Forge to Beaver River and Lake Placid to Tupper Lake have conditions at least as favorable as most of these tourist railroads. Passenger, charter and freight operations pose additional opportunities. Most committee members and state agency staff believe that some combination of these uses can create an economically sustainable operation. Outside funding, however, will be needed initially to restore the corridor and track to operable condition. While the $15 million or so figure to restore the entire line seems daunting in today's economy, proponents argue that the restoration does not need to happen all at once. They point out how the state routinely spends at least *a million dollars per mile* to improve state roads. They suggest that spending $1.5 million a year for ten years does not seem very much to restore an entire railroad that would bring on-going economic, recreational and cultural benefits to the region.

Meanwhile, amidst all this discussion of feasibility, a living experiment with the Adirondack Railroad was taking place in the Old Forge area. The Utica-Lehigh Valley Chapter of the National Historic Railroad Society received a permit from DOT in late April to operate a four-mile tourist operation called the "Adirondack Centennial Railroad." The line would run from the railroad station in Thendara to an area alongside the Moose River called Minnehaha. With only two months to pull it all together, the group, headed by Mark Kavouksorian (an AARCH member, incidentally) performed small miracles. They received donations of money, stone, railroad ties, fuel, the use of a locomotive and two passenger cars, the use of the Thendara station, and hundreds of hours of volunteer labor clearing brush, restoring the old station, and setting up a small museum and gift shop. The untimely Conrail strike almost "derailed" their plans, but again miraculously, the locomotive and passenger cars arrived on July 3, in time for the next day's scheduled grand opening.

John Caruso

Adirondack Centennial Railroad conductors

With such an intensive push to get the railroad operating, they hardly had time or energy for any advertising. Yet from the moment the ticket window opened on July 4, they hardly had time to breathe. Extra runs had to be added to the schedule to accommodate the hundreds of daily riders. By the end of August, two new passenger cars were purchased. By season's end, 61,900 adults and children had ridden the Adirondack Centennial Railroad. So much for the feasibility question, at least for short-line tourist operations. Proposals are now in hand at DOT to extend operations both toward Utica and toward Beaver River next year. DEC's co-director of the task force, Benjamin Zodikoff, has said that the state will grant permission for operations in 1993, but no details have yet been announced.

Meanwhile the Citizens Advisory Committee and DEC-DOT Task Force continue to meet. By winter, it is expected that the committee and the state agencies will have concluded their deliberations and that an overall plan for the corridor will be ready to go to public hearings. AARCH has been one important voice in the process, advocating not only the preservation of the historic structures and artifacts along the corridor, but restoring operation of the railroad that has been so important in history and development of the Adirondack Park. We have also been an active supporter of the Adirondack Centennial Railroad, providing on-going consultation in many areas, making a key contact that resulted in a several-thousand dollar grant for the railroad, and helping to publicize their efforts.

Between the Centennial Railroad and the Citizens Advisory Committee, a great deal of momentum has now been built for restoring the Adirondack Railroad. There are still some major barriers to overcome, but so much positive energy and success have already been generated, that this is one effort that will be very difficult to stop.

Can't you hear the whistle blowing?

Barbara Parnass

AARCH tour visits barns at Camp Santanoni, Newcomb.

Slow and Steady at Santanoni

In the last issue of The Newsletter, we reported how the state was writing a Unit Management Plan for the Santanoni Preserve. The plan would recommend reclassifying the land around the buildings as a historic area and would describe many of the details for how the historic buildings and the surrounding Forest Preserve would be managed. The Adirondack Park Agency would then hold public hearings on the reclassification. That process continues to move forward. We will keep AARCH members posted, particularly in regard to the public hearings.

At the same time, the Preservation League of New York State received a grant from the Open Space Institute to do an analysis of the condition of the buildings at Santanoni and to make recommendations for their stabilization and longer-term preservation. Wesley Haynes and AARCH Board member Carl Stearns are working on that project. Their results should be very helpful in developing a plan for Santanoni's preservation.

For the second summer, AARCH and the Town of Newcomb cooperated in hiring an intern to live in the woods by Newcomb Lake and serve as an interpreter for the visiting public at Santanoni each day. Our interpreter was Jim Mudd, who is a graduate student in the Regional and Community Planning Program at Kansas State University. Jim did an excellent job working with the public and received many favorable comments from hikers and wagon riders who appreciated learning about the historic camp.

New this summer is that Jim had the keys to the main lodge at Santanoni. He was able to open the doors each morning and close them in the evenings. For the first time in many years, then, the public was able, legally, to view the interiors of the main buildings. That AARCH was given the key for this purpose both symbolizes the state's new commitment to preserving Santanoni as an important educational resource and also speaks very well of the positive, cooperative relationship that AARCH has built with the Department of Environmental Conservation. We appreciate all the support we have received from the department - from the highest levels in Albany to the local forest ranger and maintenance staff.

Finally, we are excited about the enormous amount of information on Santanoni's history which has been coming to light this past year. Robert Engel, AARCH's Santanoni intern from last summer and now Assistant Curator at the Adirondack Museum, is doing his master's thesis on the history of Santanoni. Winthrop Aldrich, Historic Preservation Officer of DEC, has been doing a great deal of historical research in the process of writing the Unit Management Plan for the department. AARCH Board members and members Howard Kirschenbaum, Paul Malo, Carl Stearns, Don Williams and Craig McDonald have all been doing research as well. All this has resulted in Santanoni visits and oral histories with several members of the Pruyn family and former workers, the resurfacing of the Santanoni guest registers, more photographs from the camp's early years, and many new letters, articles, artifacts, and much valuable information. All this is already enhancing the tours and slide presentations AARCH has done on Santanoni and should ultimately help develop an excellent interpretive program for the historic site.

News & Notes

CLINTON AND ESSEX COUNTIES: The Legacy Resource Management Program of the United States Department of Defense, which includes the stewardship of historic resources, plans to inventory Atlas missile silos as relics of the Cold War. Seven of these silos, part of a circle around Plattsburgh Air Force Base, lie within the Adirondack Park, at Harrigan's Corners, Chazy Lake, Clayburg, Sugarbush, Ausable Forks, Boquet (Lewis) and Willsboro. The missiles were removed in 1965 and a number of the silos, now filled with groundwater, have been sold to private owners.

ELIZABETHTOWN: The Garondah Estate/Country Club, vacant and threatened by deterioration, is now in the hands of the Keeseville National Bank, which withdrew it from an auction planned for August 29. Included were the three-story, 17 bedroom main building, c. 1900, and the single-room Casino, with cathedral ceiling, stone fireplace and attached tennis court.

GLENS FALLS: Protecting and promoting the historic resources of the Lake Champlain, Lake George and Hudson River region is the theme of a conference which will be held at the Queensbury Hotel in Glens Falls on Friday, November 20, 1992. The meeting is sponsored by the Lake Champlain Basin Program which, through its Management Conference, is charged with developing a comprehensive pollution prevention, control and restoration plan for Lake Champlain. Contact: Nichol Forsht, Moderator, Champlain-Hudson Conference, PO Box 736, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866-0736.

JAY: NYS Department of Transportation plans to build a new bridge 600 feet upstream from the covered bridge in Jay. Of the 125 bridges within Essex County, 68 are in need of repair and six are already closed, according to the *Plattsburgh Press-Republican*. The state inspects bridges, and has been quicker to close them since the collapse of the bridge on the New York State Thruway in the 1980s resulted in several deaths.

LAKE PLACID: After the stained glass windows were removed from the Annie Dewey Chapel of the Lake Placid Club to storage, a suspicious fire on October 1, and measures taken to contain it, destroyed a portion of the lakeside Forest Clubhouse. On the recommendation of the building inspector, the Lake Placid North Elba Historic Preservation Commission issued a certificate of appropriateness for the demolition of that wing. Subsequently, the owners also obtained permission from the commission to demolish the remaining wooden parts of the rambling main clubhouse. The Agora wing, which includes the Agora Theater, the chapel and the brick Agora suites, protected under an agreement with the Federal Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, will be left intact.

Crawford & Stearns, Architects

Garondah Lodge, Elizabethtown

NEW YORK CITY: The 20th Annual Statewide Conference of the Preservation League of New York State will be held April 23-25, 1993, in New York City. Call the League at 518 462-5658 for more information.

PAUL SMITHS: The Midlantic National Bank initiated foreclosure proceedings in May against Camp Topridge for $1.5 million, due to the failure of Roger Jakubowski to meet the mortgage payments. New York State received the camp on Upper St. Regis Lake as a bequest from Marjorie Merriwether Post, who died in 1973, and sold it to Jakubowski in 1987. The bank intends to sell Topridge but has not formally listed it at this time.

RAQUETTE LAKE: Camp Sagamore received a $50,000 grant from NYS's 1986 Environmental Quality Bond Act for the repair and restoration of the roofs on several buildings in the camp complex. The non-profit Sagamore Institute operates interpretive and educational programs at Sagamore, one of the Adirondack Great Camps. A previous grant under this program funded the stabilization of a barn at the camp. The Adirondack region received two of 32 historic preservation grants made across the state, totaling over $1.6 million.

RAQUETTE LAKE: The future of historic St. William Catholic Church on Long Point is in question. Built by

News & Notes

William West Durant in 1890, the complex, which includes the historic church, the rectory, and a more recent dormitory building, is owned by the Diocese of Ogdensburg and was used for many years as a summer retreat center by the Conventual Franciscan Friars. The church building is suffering severe foundation problems, and as of November 1 the Friars have given up their use of it. St. William's was a special concern of the late Tony Garvan, a life-long summer resident of Raquette Lake and a founding member of AARCH's Board of Directors. The future ownership and use of the property is to be decided shortly by the Bishop of Ogdensburg.

SARANAC LAKE: The former Will Rogers Memorial Hospital, which opened in 1930 and was the last sanatorium built there, is advertised for "sacrifice sale" at $700,000. The 57,000 square foot Tudor Revival building, by Saranac Lake architects William Scopes and Maurice Feustmann, specialists in sanatorium design, was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1983. It has been partially remodeled into apartments. Call 518 523-2519 for further information.

TICONDEROGA: The Fort Ticonderoga Association has been granted $50,000 from the last of NYS's 1986 Environmental Quality Bond Act monies for roof repair and restoration on the barracks buildings. Originally constructed in 1755 at the time of the French and Indian War, the Fort underwent substantial rebuilding in 1908 and opened as a museum during World War I.

TICONDEROGA: PRIDE of Ticonderoga has been awarded funding of up to $142,165 by the NYS Urban Development Corporation (UDC) for targeted downtown commercial facade improvements. The award will cover architectural design fees and 50-50 matching grants to about nine property owners for facade construction work. Repaving of Montcalm Street by the village and staff supervision by PRIDE both contribute to the required local share of investment.

TICONDEROGA: PRIDE of Ticonderoga and the Ticonderoga Festival Guild have been working together to revive the State Theater as a not-for-profit, multi-purpose community arts center, and recently succeeded in listing it on the National Register of Historic Places. The property is currently the subject of a bankruptcy proceeding which has to date prevented the architectural study necessary to secure capital funding.

UPPER JAY: Wells Croft Lodge, probably the largest and finest house in the town, has been vacant for at least 20 years, and is continuing to deteriorate, while most outbuildings on its remaining fifteen acres are no longer standing. Built early this century as a summer house by Jean Wells Smith and her husband Wallace Craig Smith of Saginaw, Michigan, Wells Croft is constructed of stone, half-timbered stucco and shingle, with many large rooms, including ten double bedrooms on the second floor. Daughter of Charles Wells, an early settler of Upper Jay, Mrs. Smith donated the Wells Memorial Library there. Wells Croft is for sale.

Viola Rosenheck, where are you? We have lost this member's address. Please write or call AARCH if you can put us in touch again. Thank you!

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Crawford & Stearns, Architects

St. William Church on Long Point, Raquette Lake.

WESTPORT: The Adirondack Park Agency held public hearings in September and October regarding a campground proposed for Barber Point on Lake Champlain. Some parties to the hearing argued that the proposal would negatively impact a varied and significant historic landscape, the Camp Dudley Road Historic District, which includes the pioneer Barber farm, an unusual Prairie-style camp, a Lake Champlain lighthouse, and Camp Dudley.

WILLSBORO: Community leaders and interested parties are negotiating with the Canadian Pacific Railroad, owner of the former Delaware and Hudson line, to find an alternative to their plan of tearing down an historic railroad building and replacing it with a modular building for crew quarters.

Publications

On January 1, 1993, AARCH will begin a new service of distributing books and materials on architecture and historic preservation related to the Adirondack Park. This list represents the initial collection, which will no doubt grow over the years. Any of the following materials may be ordered after the New Year by sending a check (sorry no credit cards) to Adirondack Architectural Heritage, Box 159, Raquette Lake, NY 13436. Add ten percent ($1. minimum) for shipping and handling. NY State residents must also add the applicable sales tax on the total, including on shipping and handling.

Adirondack Furniture and the Rustic Tradition by Craig Gilborn. New York: Abrams, 1987. 351 pp, cloth, $60.00.

Crossing the River: Historic Bridges of the AuSable River by Steven Engelhart. Keeseville: Friends of Keeseville, 1991. 42 pp, paper, $6.00.

Cure Cottages of Saranac Lake: Architecture and History of a Pioneer Health Resort by Philip L. Gallos. Saranac Lake: Historic Saranac Lake, 1985. 186 pp, cloth, $24.95.

Dawn of the Great Camps. Plattsburgh: WCFE-TV, 1987. 30-minute videotape, $19.95.

Durant: The Fortunes and Woodland Camps of a Family in the Adirondacks by Craig Gilborn. Blue Mt. Lake: Adirondack Museum, 1981. 170 pp, paper, $19.95.

A Fair Land to Build In: The Architecture of the Empire State by Brendan Gill. Albany: Preservation League of New York State, 1984. 60 pp, paper, $6.95.

Fairy Tale Railroad: A History of the Mohawk and Malone by Henry A. Harter. Utica: North Country Books, 1979. 320 pp, paper, $24.95.

Great and Gracious on "Millionaires Row:" Lake George in Its Glory by Kathryn O'Brien. Utica: North Country Books, 1978. 292 pp, paper, $22.50.

Great Camps of the Adirondacks by Harvey Kaiser. Boston: David Godine, 1982. 240 pp, cloth, $50.00; paper, $35.00.

Hamlets of the Adirondacks: History, Preservation and Investment by Roger Trancik. Adirondack Park Agency, 1983. 60 pp, paper, $5.95.

Hamlets of the Adirondacks: Development Strategies by Roger Trancik. Adirondack Park Agency, 1985. 132 pp, paper. $5.95.

How to Care for Religious Properties by Michael F. Lynch. Albany: Preservation League of New York State, 1982. 40 pp, paper, $2.00.

Museum of the Adirondacks, Second Edition, by Craig and Alice Gilborn. Blue Mt. Lake: Adirondack Museum, 1991. paper, $5.95.

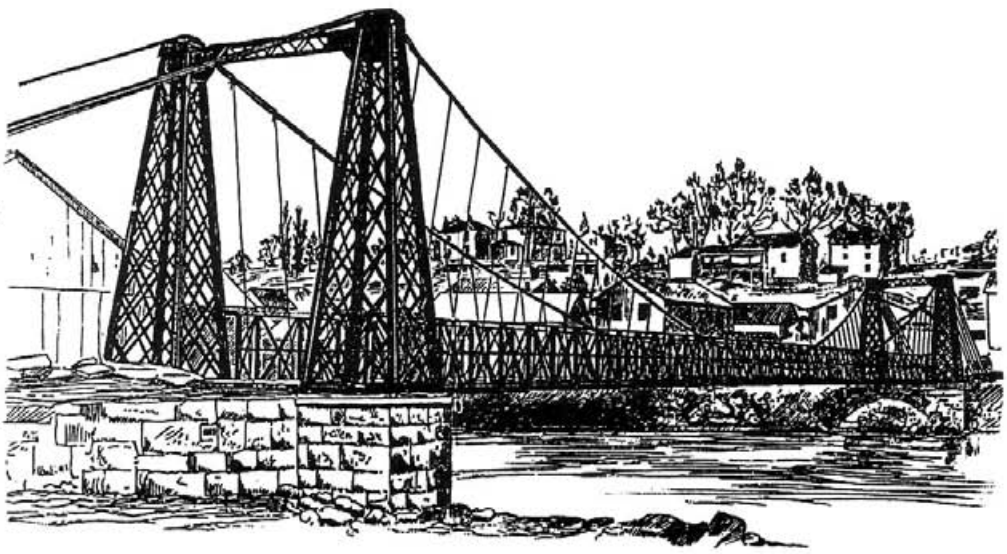
Old Lake George Hotels by Betty Ahearn Buckell. Lake George: Buckle Press, 1986. 100 pp, paper, $15.00.

Preservation and Repair of Historic Log Buildings by Bruce Bomberger. Preservation Brief #26, National Park Service, US Department of the Interior. 16 pp, pamphlet, $2.50.

Preservation Directory: A Guide to Programs, Organizations, and Agencies in New York State. Albany: Preservation League of New York State, 1988. 230 pp, paper, $10.00.

Silver Bay Association: A Pictorial History 1900-1935 by Mark Johnson. Silver Bay: Silver Bay Association, 1992. $60.00

The Story of Sagamore by Howard Kirschenbaum. Raquette Lake: Sagamore Institute, 1990. 72 pp, paper, $4.95.



Preservation Technology
with Carl Stearns, A.I.A.

Seasonal buildings, historically, have had no need for heated basements or enclosed crawl spaces which would spare utilities and footings alike from the ravages of frost. The plumbing systems are drained in the fall, and the foundations are left to freeze if they are above the frostline. Because there is typically no basement wall, support is derived, as at St. William's on Long Point (below), from a uniform grid of stone piers which may or may not have cementicious footings or spread bottoms to carry the building's weight. If St. William's does have any depth to its piers, they rest below the watertable, being on the shore of Raquette Lake. Sooner or later, fluctuations in the watertable and instability of silty or argylaceous soils catch up with the piers and they start to tilt. In the springtime, the situation becomes worse when the frost leaves the piers; despite the building's weight, the piers are not restrained laterally, and irregular forces from above and beneath continue the tilting process. Often piers rise and fall and in some cases are no longer in contact with the building's sills. The most certain remedy for this condition is the installation of a continuous, steel-reinforced concrete footing, or grade beam on well-drained ballast (crusher stone or gravel) if at a depth above the known frost level. This structural component is difficult to install under an existing building's perimeter, and even more so under interior pier lines, but it is a measure which is undertaken quite frequently by Adirondack contractors. Sometimes new additional beams or girders can span between two perimeter piers and eliminate centerline piers and footings with considerable savings realized.

Crawford & Stearns, Architects

Adirondack Architectural Heritage

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