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Newsletter

The Shippey Family: Adirondack Architect and Builders

Ward Grover Shippey (1885–1963)
Courtesy of Thomas Lynch

This is the story of several generations of the Shippey family, who settled in the Adirondack region in 1804 and made their mark here as building material suppliers, contractors, and as an architect. Their legacy is deep and rich and reflects the spirit and ingenuity of our 19th- and 20th-century ancestors.

Franklin Pierce Shippey (1852–1923) was born at Queensbury, N.Y., the son of Dewey and Mary (Potter) Shippey. Both sides of his family were involved in the building and lumber industry. His paternal grandfather, Joseph Shippey, Jr., operated a sawmill on the Hudson River near Sherman Island in the first decade of the 19th-century. His maternal great-grandfather, John Van Dusen, Jr. floated logs down the Hudson River as early as 1816. Col. Zenas Van Dusen, his maternal great-uncle, owned extensive timberlands in the southeastern Adirondacks and for many years owned a major saw mill at the Feeder Dam near Glens Falls.

Frank Shippey, contractor and builder, dealer in roofing slate and hardwood flooring, operated his business from a brick building at the rear of his home at 51 Notre Dame Street in Glens Falls and his lumber yards lined both sides of present-day Shippey Street. His contracting work was remarkably varied. In 1887 and 1888, he built two tollbooths, at Halfway Brook and French Mountain, for the Glens Falls–Lake George Plank Road Company. He constructed his own home in 1892 and it has both Colonial Revival and French Second Empire features. The interior staircase was a showpiece built of curly maple. He also was the

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From the President

Dear Members and Friends,

Carl Stearns, George Canon, Steven Engelhart, Janet Null, and Chuck Vandrei present DEC Commissioner Erin Crotty (center) with the completed Camp Santanoni Conservation Plan.

Once again I have the privilege of reporting to you some of AARCH's significant accomplishments in 2003 and some of our exciting plans for the year ahead. Many of you will recall that in January of 2003, Mary Page Hickey donated a substantial property, the former Kingsland Nail Works in Keeseville, to AARCH. I am pleased to announce that, in December, we sold the property. AARCH will use the proceeds from this sale to begin to build an endowment and to have funds available for special future projects.

We have also played a substantial role this past year in helping to create the Adirondack Arts in Education Partnership. This project, spearheaded by the Silver Bay Association with support from the New York State Council on the Arts, seeks to increase the level of arts and humanities enrichment programs in the Adirondack region's public schools through education, technical assistance, and grant support. It will mean great things for students across the region and will create opportunities for AARCH and others to connect with schools and communities in new ways.

I am also delighted by our increasingly important role in the management of Camp Santanoni. In 2003, a major architectural conservation planning study, commissioned by AARCH with support from the Getty Grant Program (see full description on page 12), was completed. We were also awarded a $92,000 matching grant from the state's Environmental Protection Fund for the restoration of Santanoni's boathouse, a project we expect to begin, if not complete, in 2004. Both of these projects, taken with our other educational, planning, and conservation oversight work, show AARCH's crucial importance at this National Historic Landmark site.

I hope you will join me in celebrating our successes and in taking part in our work and activities in the year ahead. Thanks for your encouragement, enthusiasm, and support.

Bill Johnston
President

AARCH Welcomes Albert Combs to its Board of Directors

AARCH is pleased to welcome Al Combs to its board of directors. Al is retired after 33 years with the Naval Intelligence Service. He is member of the American Alpine Club and has led mountain climbs and outings in the western United States, Canada, Nepal, and New Zealand. He and his wife, Linda, have owned property in the Adirondacks for 25 years and currently live in North Creek. Al is a volunteer at the Adirondack Museum and is presently a member of the Johnsburg Planning Board.

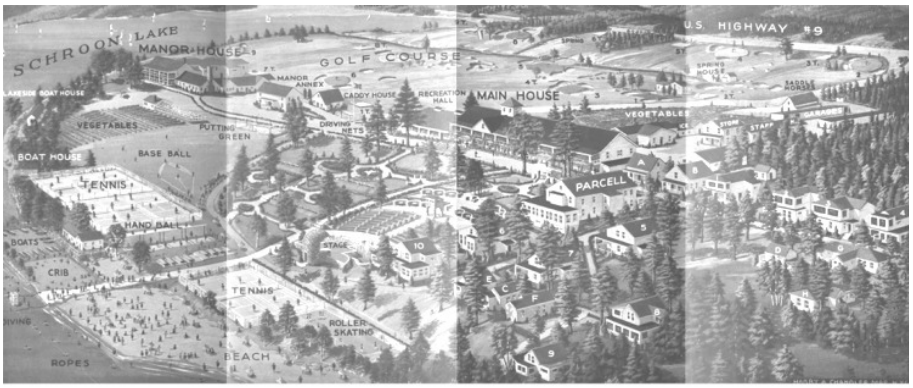
Ski Tour of Camp Santanoni

On **Saturday, February 28th**, AARCH will sponsor a guided cross-country ski tour of Camp Santanoni. The tour will be led by John Friauf, a former AARCH board member and licensed New York State guide, and Rob Engel, author of *Santanoni: From Japanese Temple to Life at an Adirondack Great Camp*. The round-trip ski is about 10 miles on a gently sloping carriage road. At the main camp, participants will also see some of the camp's interiors. Ski conditions are usually excellent, but the trip will not be held if there is not enough snow. Meet at 10 AM at the Santanoni parking area off Route 28N in Newcomb. Tour fee is $10 per person. Preregister is required by calling (518) 834-9328.

The Shippey Family ……*continued from page 1*

contractor for a number of larger houses on Warren and Glen streets and throughout the city of Glens Falls, including homes at 43 and 47 Notre Dame. One of his larger contracts was for the Glens Falls Home for Women, a massive brick structure built circa 1903, on the corner of Warren and Prospect streets.

Frank Shippey married Elfreda McEchron in 1878 and they had six children, four of whom survived to adulthood. The Shippey boys: Dewey, Arthur, and Ward Grover all followed their father into the building trades. Dewey became a noted carpenter, Arthur specialized in plumbing and electrical work, and Ward Grover became an architect. The brothers often collaborated as partners on major projects, along with their brother-in-law, Jesse Dumas. They worked together constructing the original Green Mansions complex in the town of Chester and a number of projects in Hague and Schroon Lake.



Bird's-eye view of Scaroon Manor, Schroon Lake. Courtesy of the Adirondack Museum

Ward Grover Shippey (1885–1963) was a self-taught architect. He took a correspondence course from an architectural school in Philadelphia and his license is on file at the Warren County Clerk's Office. Ward began his career at the age of 18, when he designed the entrance booths for Luna Park on Lake Ontario near Rochester, N.Y. Ward's office was located at 59 Crandall Street in Glens Falls during his entire career. I well remember the penny farthing bicycle that hung on the wall of his office. As a boy, I once asked grandpa for a set of blueprints and he handed me his drawings for a Flying A gas station he had designed for the corner of Glen Street and Sherman in Glens Falls. I was thrilled! Grandpa's day often started in the late afternoon and he was more creative and productive when "left alone." He would return to his office after dinner and work until early morning, often chain-smoking Lucky Strikes and, now and then, catching a catnap on the day bed in the back room of his office.

Ward was fond of using materials native to or manufactured in the southeastern Adirondacks. Rough sawn joists and rafters, board-and-batten siding, peeled log support columns, Granville slate, brick from Glens Falls Brick & Terra Cotta Company, native stone foundations — all were part of his palette. His commissions included private homes, barns, cottages, inns, hotels, and commercial and municipal buildings.

Ward's early style combined the then popular English Tudor with Arts and Crafts elements. He often incorporated some English influence in his buildings by combining maroon brick, clapboard, stucco, peeled log, and native stone. Ward was noted for extending decorative hip roof rafters beyond the edge of the roof. These features come together in his complex at Schroon Lake built by the Shippey brothers for Phil Rice. Originally known as The Brown Swan Club, today it is the Word of Life Inn. Ward designed a number of buildings in the Schroon Lake area, including the English Tudor post office and commercial complex now known as the Yellow Coach Motel, the theater and cottages for Oscar Seagle at the Seagle Colony, Scaroon Manor for Joseph Frieber (where only the outdoor theater and a shelter on the former golf course still stand), and the Tisch family home on Schroon Lake.

At Indian Lake, Shippey combined his signature brick and stucco style in a Tudor design for a movie theater. He used a similar approach in the commercial building (former bank) and movie theater on Route 9 at the center of Chestertown and built by the Wertime family. At Hague, Ward designed major components of the Arcady Club complex, a lovely English Tudor

The Shippey Family ……. *continued from page 3*

Shippey's Tudor Revival style work can be seen at the Yellow Coach Motel in Schroon Lake and the gas station in Hague.

style house at Sabbath Day Point, now owned by the Hobbs family and a stucco gas station and garage on Route 9N.

In the town of Horicon on the eastern bank of the Schroon River, he designed Camp Wakonda in the 1930s. The current owners note that Ward also designed their private home at the complex, one that was built on the foundation of an earlier house that had burned. At Hulett's Landing, Ward designed and oversaw the construction of a casino for Hulett's Hotel in 1915. This structure burned to the ground just three years later.

In the Glens Falls area, Ward Shippey produced many commercial projects. One of his earliest commissions was the Broad Street Fire Station built for the city of Glens Falls. My favorite commercial structure is his design for the Braydon & Chapman building at 144–146 Glen Street, a structure wherein the second and third floors are suspended from large roof beams by an interior bracing system. His other commercial buildings include: Warren Tire Company on 92 Warren Street; Hill Electric Company at 174 Broad Street; ABC Equipment & Refrigeration Company at 28–30 Elm Street; Glens Falls Paint & Glass, now Mailings Made Easy at 80–82 Warren Street; the Colonial Restaurant at 38 Elm Street; Hart's Café, now Talk of the Town, at 74 Hudson Avenue; and Joy Department Store in South Glens Falls.

In the 1920s and 1930s, Joe Frieber, owner and developer of Scaroon Manor, introduced Shippey to friends who were developing resorts in the Catskills. Few architectural historians are aware of this connection between the Adirondack resort hotels and the famous hotels of the Borscht Belt in the Catskills. Ward designed many of the buildings at Grossinger's, including the main hotel that epitomized what came to be called Sullivan County Tudor. He also designed structures for the Nevele and Concord hotels.

Ward Grover Shippey died on April 3, 1963, at Glens Falls. Many of his architectural drawings are on display at Terrio's restaurant on Route 9 just south of Schroon Lake. He is buried in the Shippey family plot at Pine View Cemetery in Queensbury.

Tom Lynch is a graduate of SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry at Syracuse. He is an avid historian and author of two books and numerous articles on genealogy. He is currently records manager and archivist for Warren County, N.Y. and resides in Saratoga Springs. Tom is the grandson of Ward Grover Shippey.

New Properties on the National Register of Historic Places

In 2003, several properties in the Adirondacks were listed on the State and/or National Register of Historic Places. These include:

- Wells Memorial Library
  Upper Jay
- Wellscroft
  Upper Jay
- Whiteface Veterans Memorial Highway
  Wilmington
- Town of Brighton Town Hall
  Brighton
- Wakeley Mountain Fire Tower
  Lake Pleasant

This publication and much of AARCH's good work is made possible, in part, with funds from the New York State Council on the Arts, a State agency.

AARCH Supports Preservation of Region's Fire Towers

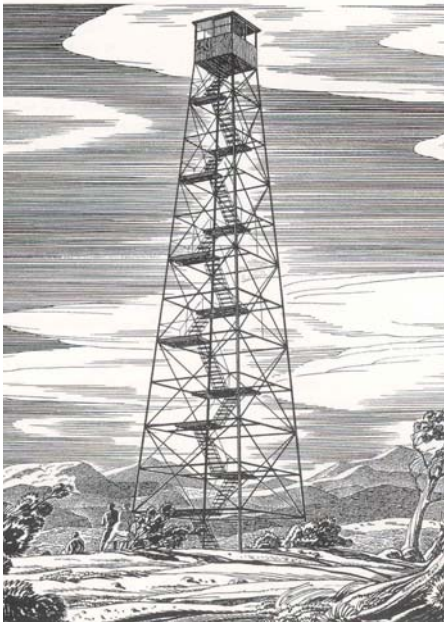
In the past year, AARCH has stepped up its support and advocacy for some of the region's more endangered fire observation towers, including those on Mt. Adams and on St. Regis and Hurricane mountains. Like the preserved towers on Arab, Blue, Cathedral Rocks, Goodnow, Hadley, Kane, Poke-O-Moonshine, and Snowy, AARCH is confident that these towers too can be used to provide breathtaking views and to interpret the natural and cultural history of the Forest Preserve for visitors.

The main preservation "sticking point" for these towers is their state land classification. AARCH believes the retention and preservation of these towers can be accomplished within the framework of the State Land Master Plan, if the immediate areas around the towers were reclassified as Historic or Wild Forest. Because the towers would be used for public recreation and educational purposes, their presence would not be in conflict with other public uses of the surrounding area.

The preservation of several of these towers already has significant support. We are convinced that there is sufficient interest in preserving and maintaining these structures and in using them for public educational purposes, that their preservation is both feasible and practical.

To show your support for the preservation of these towers, contact Tom Martin at the Department of Environmental Conservation, P.O. Box 296, Ray Brook, NY 12977 or reach him at (518) 897-1276 or via email at tdmartin@gw.dec.state.ny.us

There are informal "friends" organizations for the towers on St. Regis Mountain and Mt. Adams. To support their efforts, contact :



This Rockwell Kent drawing of a fire tower appeared in a ca. 1943 beer advertisement. Courtesy of the Adirondack Museum.

- David Petrelli (St. Regis Mountain)
  1008 County Route 25
  Malone, NY 12953
  (518) 483-3767

- Joanna Donk (Mt. Adams)
  P.O. Box 11
  Newcomb, NY 12952
  (518) 582-4601

AARCH's Seventh Annual Raffle a Huge Success

On October 15th, the winning tickets were drawn for the seventh annual AARCH raffle. The winners were:

John McLaughlin, Clifton Park
A week at a lakeside cabin at Camp Uncas
Anthony Brankman, Albany
A spring weekend at White Pine Camp
Lucile Lucas, Saratoga Springs
A weekend at Greystone Mansion in Essex
Janet Williams, Crosswicks, New Jersey
A weekend at Silver Bay on Lake George
Christin Frombgen Carrera, Albany
An overnight at Van Auken's Inne in Thendara
Edith McCormick, Saranac
Four passes to Fort Ticonderoga and The King's Garden
Arthur Savage, Pelham
A year's family membership to the Adirondack Museum
Scott McDonald, Jay
Picnic & Paddle for two at The Wawbeek
Marilyn Smith, Plattsburgh
Two passes to Camp Sagamore
Jim and Nancy McAllister, Port Kent
A season's pass for two to all AARCH tours

The raffle raised more than $7,000 and drew additional attention to our important work. Many thanks to those who donated prizes, including: Adirondack Museum, Camp Sagamore, Fort Ticonderoga, David Hislop, Howie Kirschenbaum, Silver Bay Association, Kathy and Paul Rivet of Van Auken's Inne, and Nancy and Norman Howard at The Wawbeek.

AARCH *Awards*

Eighth Annual Awards Presented at The Wawbeek

Each year we recognize exemplary preservation and stewardship work throughout the region through our awards program. In 2003, at a special awards luncheon on September 27th at The Wawbeek on Upper Saranac Lake, AARCH honored a diverse range of preservation activities in the region. We salute this dedicated group of people and hope that their work will inspire others.

Some of the winners of AARCH's 2003 Awards gather outside The Wawbeek. From left to right are: Gregory Jeffers, Marion Evans; Mary Frasier, Timberlock; Sylvia Norton, Wells Memorial Library; Rev. Roger Martin, Warrensburg First Presbyterian Church; and Bruce Jennings, Custard's Last Stand.

The Birch Store in Keene Valley

Marion Evans, Gregory Jeffers, Christine Evans, and William Evans

For stewardship of an historic Main Street building

The original structure on this site, built circa 1890, served as an annex to the adjacent dry goods store. Cora McFarland purchased the property in 1903, remodeling the existing structure from a one-story, gable roof form into its Italianate storefront still present today. The current owners, the Evans family, purchased the property in 1988 and have retained both its historic function as a commercial Main Street store and its architectural integrity. With an eclectic mix of antiques, boutique merchandise, and works from regional artists, the Evanses have used the store's historic appearance as a marketing asset. Subtle stylistic features from its early renovation are still evident including its street-level porch entrances, storefront windows, and interior amenities. The Evans family was also one of the first to start a renovation trend of storefronts and houses on Main Street. It is a fine example of how regular maintenance of an existing building can continue to serve the community as originally designed.

The Corner Hardware in Pottersville

Georgette and Seth David

For sensitive adaptive reuse of an historic farmstead

In 1982, Seth and Georgette David moved to the Adirondacks and opened the Corner Hardware in a mid-19th century former farmstead. The main house, built around 1865, had been little altered over time. The property had been used as a watch repair shop in the 1940s and as a pottery and gift shop called the Mountain Kiln. When the Davids first acquired the property, they removed two interior, non-structural walls, did substantial roofing, painting, and glazing work, and made minor repairs to the foundation. All of this soon brought the buildings, complete with privy, back to life. The Davids have maintained the now manicured grounds, mature hardwood trees, and hydrangea bushes. Located at a major intersection, near the access to the interstate, many farmsteads of this era would be overlooked or discarded for commercial use. The Davids, however, have created a viable commercial business while respecting the property's historic fabric, thus setting a fine example of adaptive reuse.

Custard's Last Stand in Long Lake

Bruce Jennings and family

For stewardship of American roadside architecture

In the spring of 1958, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Jennings envisioned building an ice cream stand as a summer business to help pay for their children's college education. They admired The Mountain Mist, the recently completed drive-up ice cream stand in Saranac Lake. They obtained the building plans and with a few minor modifications completed construction of their own stand in Long Lake and operated it for 26 summers.

The design of Custard's Last Stand was part of a mid-20th century architecture that grew out of America's love affair with the automobile. The drive-in, with carhops and quick service, catered to an American public on the move. At Custard's Last Stand, this scene was complemented by mountain and lakeside views. Fifty years later, much of this roadside architecture no longer survives. Altered, demolished, or slowly reclaimed by nature, these mom-and-pop roadside ventures were circumvented by superhighways or put out of business by national chains. Of the three or four known "period" ice cream stands still surviving in the park, most have been altered and have lost their original appearance. At Custard's Last Stand, the original form still survives complete with its original 1950s features.

First Presbyterian Church in Warrensburg

For long-term stewardship

Originally constructed in 1836 in the Greek Revival style, this church was extensively altered in 1887–1888, when the tower, a rear extension, and period decorative elements were added. Since the renovation to its present Queen Anne style, a high level of integrity has been maintained in form, materials, and context. The congregation's stewardship of the church and manse has been consistent over more than 100 years and its good oversight continues today. In the past several years, repairs have been made to the foundation, basement, and building exterior. In 2002, evidence of deterioration of the church tower led to the congregation undertaking a large and expensive conservation project. The church received a bequest that funded the tower repair and the other ongoing work. At the main roof juncture, shingles on the walls and roof were replaced, new copper flashing was installed, and one of the four balconies was replaced. Material was replaced in-kind and screening installed to keep birds out. Great care was taken with the quality of the materials and workmanship. The tower and tracery remain original.

Timberlock in Sabael

Richard, Barbara, Bruce, and Holly Catlin

For stewardship of an early Adirondack resort

At Timberlock, an early Adirondack summer resort, the owners have made an effort to maintain an unprogramed camping experience. Timberlock may be the only commercial resort in the Adirondack Park that has not been electrified. The original log cabin was built in 1887 by David Farrington and serves today as the office. Loggers used the cabin as living quarters until 1899, when Farrington began to take paying guests. After building tent platforms, he operated his camp until 1922, when it was purchased by Fred Garrett. Garrett added many log structures, while maintaining the original. In 1964, his heirs sold to the Catlin family who operates Timberlock today. Much effort has been made by the family to maintain the original structures. Wood is still used for heating and lighting is provided by gas and kerosene.

Today there are 53 buildings of which 25 were constructed on the original tent platform sites. Dick Catlin says "We make an effort in changes and repairs to make the work less obvious, to temper anything that stands out, and we try to make Timberlock blend into the hillside where it is located." Dick and Barb operated the business for many years and it is now run by their son Bruce, his wife Holly, and their children.

Wells Memorial Library in Upper Jay

For an architecturally sensitive addition

The Wells Memorial Library was built in 1906, with the construction and initial operating expenses donated by Jean Wadhams Wells. It is fine example of an intact, one-story, Tudor Revival structure, with Arts and Crafts features.

Following yet another flooding of the Ausable River in 1998, an addition was planned to lessen repeated damage to the basement. With the assistance of the Essex County Planning Department, funding was obtained through FEMA to hire Argus Architecture & Preservation to relocate the heating plant, activities room, and storage functions above grade. Because of the structure's architectural integrity and community significance, a sensitive design approach was necessary. The resulting addition completed in 2001, is a fine example of contextual new design. It is comprised of a large room connected discreetly to the historic core structure. All proportions, windows, details, and finishes subtlety mirror the features of the original structure.

The Birch Store, Keene Valley

Wells Memorial Library, Upper Jay

Custard's Last Stand, Long Lake

The AARCH Awards program annually recognizes exemplary historic preservation work throughout the region. We are looking for examples of sensitive restoration, rehabilitation, and good long-term stewardship. From houses to libraries, motels to commercial buildings, log cabins to gas stations, we're asking AARCH members and the general public to look around their communities and to let us know about the good work being done there. In 2004, we are especially interested in hearing about religious properties. We welcome nominations throughout the year.

From time to time, the AARCH *Newsletter* plans to reprint articles and commentary from late 19th- and early 20th- century journals, magazines, and other publications, items that should be of interest to our readers. Each will pertain to some aspect of the built environment of the Adirondacks.

Reprinted here is an article that highlights a concern of William H. Boardman, an early president of the Adirondack League Club. Regional book lovers know him as the author of *The Lovers of the Woods*, which appeared to favorable reviews in 1901. One admirer was Harry V. Radford, publisher of the magazine *Woods and Waters*, where this article appeared in the Winter 1903–1904 issue. With the dramatic increase in the number and size of rustic camps currently being built in the region, we thought the century-old observations of this observer have some relevance today.

The Destruction of Young Spruce for Rustic Architecture

By "Adirondack" (1904)

At a recent meeting of the trustees of the Association for the Protection of the Adirondacks, held in New York City, Mr. William H. Boardman, one of the trustees, made some interesting remarks about the havoc wrought in the woods by the destruction of young spruce trees, for the purpose of providing rustic architecture for Adirondack Camps.

Mr. Boardman, who is a graduate of Michigan University and editor of *The Railroad Gazette*, the principal railroad engineering publication in the world, has had an extensive out door life as a civil engineer in the United States Coast Survey and student of wood-craft, and his experience has sharpened his powers of observation above those of the less frequent visitor to the forests. He is the author of many stories of open-air life, articles on fish culture, etc., and of the book entitled "Lovers of the Woods."

When wandering through the North Woods, years ago, he noticed the increased absence of straight young spruce trees in the vicinity of the settled lakes. There was plenty of crooked young spruce trees—trees which had bent off sideways to get away from their too close neighbors (for the spruce is an unsociable, or "intolerant" tree, and doesn't like to be crowded up against its fellows like a man in an elevated railroad train in New York)—crooked young trees that might be used perhaps for sled runners; but he noticed a remarkable scarcity of the straight youngsters.

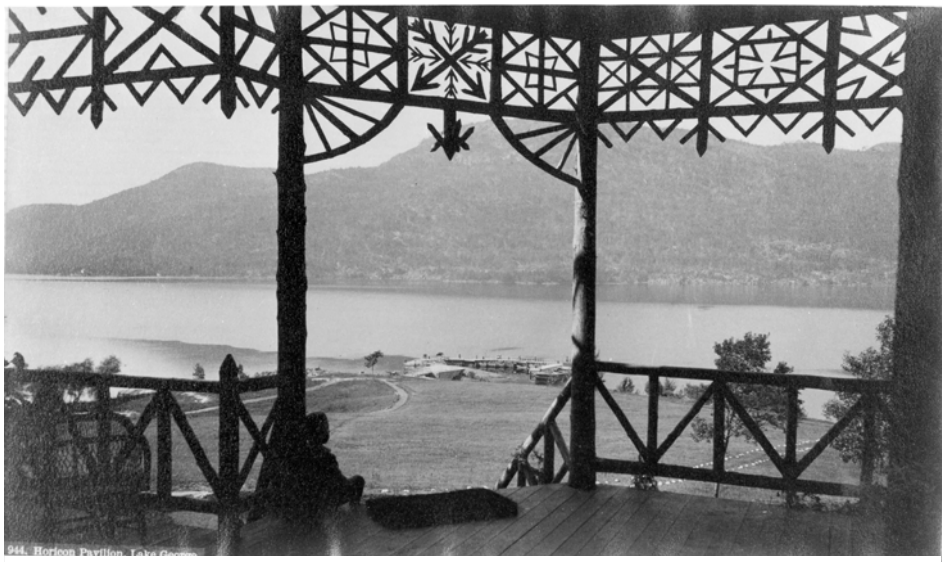
This set him to thinking and studying for the cause. One day, while tramping some distance from one of the prettiest lakes in the Adirondacks, he met a woodchopper going toward the lake with a load of beautiful young spruces, as straight as yacht's masts, and he asked the woodsman what they were for. His inquiry elicited the fact that they were to be used for the rustic embellishment of a neighboring camp. The secret of the disappearance of the young spruce was solved.

The consumption for this purpose he found to be larger than he first imagined. Upon inquiry, he learned that six wagon loads of poles were needed for one cottage, and five hundred and forty poles for another. The draft upon the young spruce growth for rustic work is not confined to the primary demand for first construction. The bark of the spruce pole lasts from three to seven years, according to circumstances, after which the rustic work becomes shabby and needs renewal, so that more poles must be cut for the purpose of replacing the original work.

The demand for spruce poles for this purpose has grown so large since their cutting began in 1879, that Mr. Boardman declares it to be impossible to find a straight, clean spruce pole within carrying distance of any settled lake in the Adirondacks.

The effect of this tree-slaughter upon the propagation of the spruce forests he likens to the killing of infants by order of King Herod. It is the destruction of the rising generation, from which the future forests are to be expected.

The spruce does not re-seed itself as readily as less valuable trees. The seed of the black cherry and birch, for instance, will last in the ground from 500 to 1000 years, and reproduce their kind, but with the spruce, new seed is necessary for reproduction. That is one reason why, when land is denuded of spruce, it is recovered not by spruce, but by cherry or some other growth.



The porch at the Horicon Pavilion overlooking Lake George, ca. 1885. Note the elaborate rustic work, so popular at the time, the likes of which led to widespread diminution of the region's young spruce stands. Photograph by S.R. Stoddard. Courtesy of Edward Comstock, Jr.

The elimination of the perfect and leaving of the imperfect trees also encourages the survival of the unfittest. Trees transmit good and bad qualities by heredity, like human beings, as is observed by Professor John Gifford in his treatise on "Practical Forestry" and he advises the avoidance of seeds from stunted tree and trees with twisted fibre in the propagation of forests.

The cutting of spruce poles unfortunately is not confined to private lands, according to Mr. Boardman's observations. He says that oftentimes the architect's specifications for a cottage or camp requiring rustic work will provide that the builder may "go outside" for his spruce poles, if necessary; and "going outside" really means going upon State lands, in violation of the law.

He considers that the best and most practical method for correcting the evil, which has left not a straight spruce tree within a mile and a half of any residence lake, is not by prohibitive legislation, but by the cultivation of a proper public sentiment on the subject. The architects who design camps and cottages for those who sigh "for a lodge in some vast wilderness" are very partial to rustic adornment, and probably would not favor interference with their artistic conceptions, but if public opinion regarded the cutting of spruce poles with disapproval, in view of the practical consequences, the demand for rustic architectural designs would be greatly diminished. His confidence in the deterrent effect of public sentiment is based upon observation of its operation in other directions. He cites, for instance, the work of the Agassiz Association, and says that the number of well informed women who wear birds in their hats is growing smaller yearly. The Association for the Protection of the Adirondacks has appointed the following committee, representing the different sections of the Adirondack Park, to inquire further into the subject and make recommendations: Mr. William H. Boardman, Colonel A.G. Mills, Mr. Peter F. Schofield, Mr. James MacNaughton, Mr. William G. Verplanck, and Mr. Ernest T. Carter.

About Adirondack Architectural Heritage

Adirondack Architectural Heritage is the non-profit, historic preservation organization for the Adirondack Park with an educational mission to promote better public understanding, appreciation, and stewardship of the region's architecture and communities. We fulfill this mission by sponsoring tours and workshops, giving public slide presentations, offering technical assistance, and supporting local governments, organizations, and individuals in their preservation efforts. AARCH is a membership organization with 1000 members. Members receive a biannual newsletter, discounts on AARCH sponsored events and publications, and may attend our annual meeting.

Join AARCH!

I want to help preserve the Adirondack Park's historical and architectural legacy. Enclosed is my tax-deductible membership contribution.

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___ $40 Family
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Please make checks payable to "Adirondack Architectural Heritage" and mail to: AARCH, Civic Center, Suite 37, 1790 Main Street, Keeseville, NY 12944

News & Notes

EAGLE ISLAND: Camp Eagle Island on Upper Saranac Lake is soon to be designated a National Historic Landmark, the highest federal recognition for an historic site. Eagle Island and Camp Pine Knot on Raquette Lake (see related piece below) were both approved by the federal review committee in September and are now awaiting final approval by the Secretary of the Interior. Camp Eagle Island was designed by the prolific Saranac Lake architect, William L. Coulter, in 1903 for former Vice President Levi P. Morton. It has been operated as a Girl Scout camp since 1937 by the Girl Scout Council of Greater Essex and Hudson Counties, New Jersey.

Friends of Lyon Mountain Board of Directors members (from left) Lloyd Bailey, Joseph Ducharme, Norman LaMare, and James Humiston, outside the recently restored exterior of the former Lyon Mountain railroad station. Photograph by Dan Heath and courtesy of the Plattsburgh Press-Republican.

FIRE TOWERS: Purple Mountain Press has recently published *Adirondack Fire Towers: Their History and Lore, the Southern Districts* by Martin Podskoch. The book tells the story of the fire towers in the southern Adirondacks through the words of the observers who staffed them, their spouses, children, and friends. It is a must-read for enthusiasts of fire towers and regional history. The 256-page book has 325 illustrations and 29 maps, and retails for $20. Available through most local booksellers or by calling (800) 325-2665 or via www.catskill.net/purple.

JAY: After years of controversy and delay, the restoration of the historic 1857 Jay Covered Bridge has finally commenced. In November, Essex County awarded the contract for the project to Alpine Construction for $652,184. The bridge will be rehabilitated in its present temporary location, on one bank of the Ausable River, and will be returned to its original site after a new bridge is built about 400 yards downstream. Both projects should be completed by 2006.

LYON MOUNTAIN: The restoration of the 1903 Lyon Mountain railroad station continues to move forward. The Friends of Lyon Mountain, 250 members strong, has raised more than $100,000 in private funds since purchasing the station in 2000. The station will eventually become the Lyon Mountain Mining and Railroad Museum. With guidance from Argus Architecture & Preservation, the exterior of the station has been restored, employing its original ochre, dark brown, and cranberry color scheme. The group will now turn its attention to the restoration of the station's interior, with its ticket and telegraph offices, two waiting rooms, and a freight storage area. For more information or to make a donation, call Jim Humiston at (518) 497-6685.

MALONE: The North Country Community College Foundation was recently awarded both the H.H. Richardson Community Landmark Award and Grand Prize honors at the Niagara Mohawk Community Renaissance Awards. The awards recognized the Foundation's adaptive reuse of the Ballard Mill complex in Malone as the new North Country Community College campus. The complex was purchased in 1999 and has been rehabilitated for classrooms, offices, and a student center. The Grand Prize came with a $5000 award, that will be used to create a public park along the Salmon River. The campus is now known as the Dr. and Mrs. Kenneth A. Tulloch Campus, North Country Community College.

OLD FORGE: The Hemmer Cottage Preservation Team, with help from hundreds of friends, continued to make great progress last year. This rustic, European-inspired cottage was built in 1931 by Bernard Hemmer, a local artist, and had been threatened with demolition. In 2003, work included parking and landscaping, roof painting and

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chimney repair, and the installation of new utilities. This work was largely made possible through a $25,000 grant from the Adirondack North Country Community Enhancement Program (ANCCEP). For more information or to make a donation, call (315) 369-3353.

PAUL SMITHS: Because of the decommissioning of St. Gabriel the Archangel Church (1896) to oratory status in 2002, a group of concerned citizens — parishioners, community members, and AARCH staff — recently met to discuss the future of this architectural gem. The group has decided to work collectively to retain the church's high level of architectural integrity and to explore all options to ensure its preservation and continued use. The congregation received an AARCH Award in 1997 (see AARCH *Newsletter*, Winter 1997–1998). If you would like to help, contact the Friends of St. Gabriel's, P.O. Box 255, Paul Smiths, NY 12970.

RAQUETTE LAKE: Camp Pine Knot, William West Durant's first large Adirondack camp, is soon to be designated as a National Historic Landmark, the highest federal historic site recognition. Owned by State University of New York at Cortland since 1949 and operated as their Center for Environmental Outdoor Education, the camp was built beginning in 1876.

ST. REGIS FALLS: In September, the Azure Mountain Friends capped off a very successful year by rededicating and reopening the fire observation tower on Azure Mountain (Franklin County).

SARATOGA SPRINGS: The Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation will hold its annual historic preservation forum, PRESERVATION 2004, on March 12th and 13th. "Creating Livable Communities and Fostering Historic Preservation" will feature 30 seminars and workshops, a keynote address by Roberta Brandes Gratz (author and consultant on urban development issues), continuing education courses, and an awards banquet. For more information call (518) 587-5030 or visit www.saratogapreservation.org.

Mike Richards, the last observer on Azure Mountain in 1978, cuts the ribbon to reopen the restored fire tower. Courtesy of the Azure Mountain Friends.

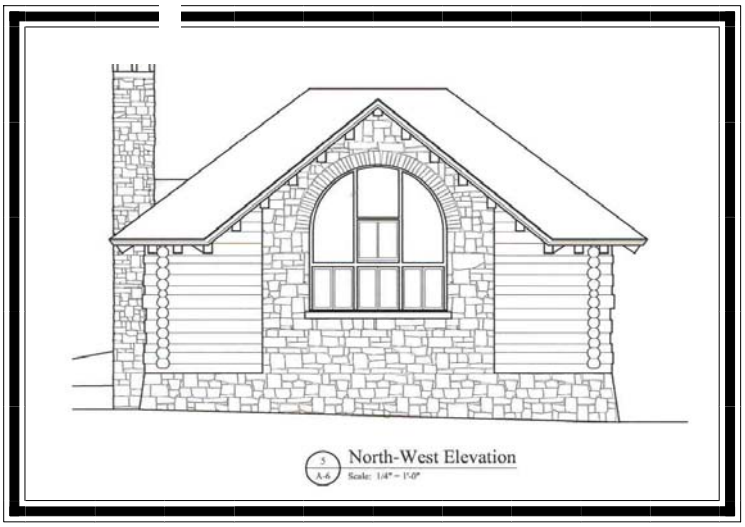
TICONDEROGA: In 2003, Fort Ticonderoga was awarded an Excellence in Historic Preservation Award from the Preservation League of New York State for its restoration of The King's Garden. The award cited this as an exemplary project for the extensive research and meticulous restoration that have made these early 20th-century gardens come alive again.

UPPER JAY: Arto Monaco, creator of the Land of Makebelieve and designer of Santa's Workshop, died on November 21st at Adirondack Medical Center in Saranac Lake. Monaco had just celebrated his 90th birthday five days before at the Wells Memorial Library. That afternoon, a packed roomful of friends honored the community's beloved "Uncle Arto." Monaco opened the Land of Makebelieve in 1954 and it was the crowning jewel the many imaginative fantasy parks he designed. It was forced to close in 1979 after one too many Ausable River floods washed through the property. Monaco was also a prolific toy designer and illustrator. To learn more about his work, visit www.artomonaco.org

VALCOUR ISLAND: The Lake Champlain Maritime Museum recently received a $25,000 grant from the American Battlefield Protection Program to continue its underwater archeological survey of the site of the Battle of Valcour (1776). This survey is part of a much larger effort by the museum to document shipwrecks and other underwater sites in the lake. For more information, visit the museum at www.lcmm.org.

We welcome items about architecture, historic preservation, local history, and related subjects for *News & Notes*. Please let us know what's going on in your area.

Camp Sar tanoni Architectural Conserva ion Plan Completed



Drawings like this of the Santanoni Artist's Studio record the conditions at the camp's buildings and provide the basis for future conservation projects. Crawford & Stearns, Architects

Late in 2003, a major architectural conservation planning study for Camp Santanoni was completed. The study was commissioned by AARCH with financial support from the Getty Grant Program, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, the Town of Newcomb, and the Friends of Camp Santanoni. The study was done by Janet Null of Argus Architecture & Preservation (Troy) and Carl Stearns of Crawford & Stearns, Architects (Syracuse). The completion of the plan is a major milestone in our collective efforts to move ahead with the conservation of this National Historic Landmark site.

For the first time, all of the historic buildings at Santanoni have been measured and recorded in drawings. Also for the first time, an inventory of all known buildings, structures, ruins, and sites of lost buildings has been made and an identification system established. Detailed physical inspections have been made of the historic buildings, ruins, and other structures, and an assessment of condition prepared for each. A policy for guiding the preservation of Santanoni for the long term has been formulated, a program for regular maintenance has been defined, and a Protocol for Action has been developed, which provides an initial framework for implementation of the plan. If there is any bad news, it is that the extent of conservation work needed to restore the camp's buildings is far greater than previously estimated. The architect's budget for the highest priority work outlined in the conservation plan is about $3.5 million.

Completing the conservation plan brings the preservation of Santanoni to a new plateau — a place of great opportunity. The tasks ahead are now to garner greater levels of public and private financial support, to dramatically pick up the pace of conservation work, to increase staffing and on-site management, and to make the visitor's experience even more compelling.

Adirondack Architectural Heritage

CIVIC CENTER, SUITE 37
1790 MAIN STREET
KEESEVILLE, NY 12944
(518) 834-9328
(518) 834-9225 (FAX)
aarch1@aol.com
www.aarch.org

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