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Newsletter

ADIRONDACK
ARCHITECTURAL
HERITAGE

John Bird Burnham's Crater Club

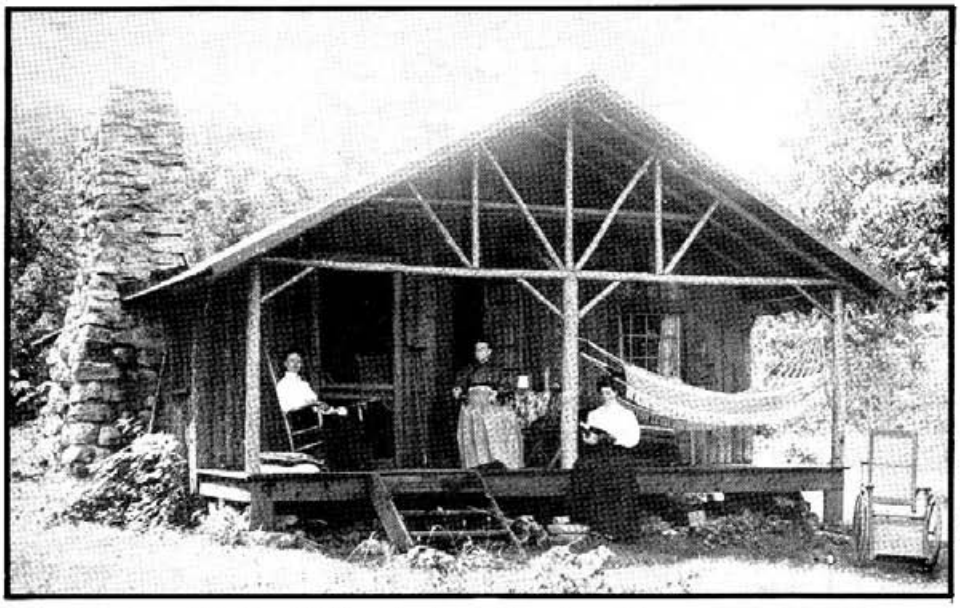

Photo: Morris Glenn

Camp Raspberry Knoll, *c. 1903, with a typical Burnham chimney, vertical slab siding and saplings for porch posts, from the Crater Club Album, Vol. 1, 1899-1935.*

CELEBRATING ITS CENTENNIAL THIS YEAR, the Crater Club in Essex, New York, is one of only a handful of grand 19th century arrangements which still carry on in the Adirondacks, held together by love for the place and the out-of-doors, nostalgia for summers past, and a modern form of stewardship. Adirondack architecture comes in many forms, and the original buildings of the Crater Club exemplify one of the simplest. Even today, the club exudes a certain feeling — like a children's summer camp of the past, with drafty wooden buildings, sagging cots, cold-water swimming and towels perpetually drying on the clothesline, but also long, leisurely days, birds singing and the warm fragrance of sunshine on growing things.

In its most built-out state, the club consisted of about 68 cottages, with roughly half owned by club members and half rented to others, plus club buildings used in common. Built on the side of a hill, many of the cottages are oriented toward the lovely, expansive view over Whallons Bay of Lake Champlain. Unlike the encircled feeling at camps on even the largest lakes in the center of the region, there's a linear sense here — that the great lake's shoreline is too long and too "public" to know, and its denizens too many, and not all Adirondackers, and one had best cling to one's own bit of

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From the President

Readers of this issue of the *AARCH Newsletter* will gain an appreciation for what is meant by the title of Steven Engelhart's slide presentation: There's More to Adirondack Architecture Than Great Camps. The 1999 Tour and Workshop Schedule on pages 5-8, for example, reveals the incredible variety of Adirondack architecture from mining communities to formal gardens to historic villages to a foreboding prison, plus Great Camps and more modest summer retreats reflecting rustic simplicity.

This wide variety of architectural resources is complemented by the variety of activities in which AARCH has been involved (and will be involved) this spring and summer. These include the numerous activities centered on Camp Santanoni (the book, a new exhibit, stabilization and restoration projects); fire tower preservation and support of local fire tower "friends" groups, and preparation of a National Register nomination for fire towers; assistance to the Town of Willsboro in organizing and funding a Reconnaissance Survey and much, much more.

On recent visits to eastern Massachusetts and Cape Cod, it became evident to me that these areas, too, are working hard at preserving and interpreting their history and historic resources. Their architectural resources are represented in early industrial and maritime communities replete with the houses, churches, commercial and public buildings which were products of the wealth generated by their thriving economies. The comparison ends when one realizes the extent to which an on-going infusion of public funding, especially federal and state funding, is supporting the heritage programs I saw. AARCH's programs and projects have been supported largely by private and local government resources. These more modest sources of support, nevertheless, have launched and sustain AARCH's development of an incredible variety of activities related to preservation and interpretation of the Adirondacks' architectural heritage. The members of AARCH have earned a pat-on-the-back for their support. However, just as AARCH has been able to develop private support, it must continue to advocate the needs of architectural preservation in the Adiorndacks to the state and federal governments. The need for preservation, restoration and interpretation at Camp Santanoni, not to mention numerous other projects, could well benefit from substantially expanded support from state and federal sources.

BILL JOHNSTON

MEET OUR CAMP SANTANONI SUMMER STAFF

We are most fortunate to have three very talented and energetic people working at Camp Santanoni this summer.

Michael Frenette, an accomplished and well-known builder from Tupper Lake, will return again to Santanoni this summer to continue the restoration work on the Main Lodge porches, using traditional timber framing and log construction techniques. He brings with him several decades of experience as a builder and a great enthusiasm for Santanoni and the work at hand. He will also be teaching a one-day workshop, *FUNDAMENTALS OF RESTORING LOG STRUCTURES*, at Santanoni on August 28th. See the AARCH calendar of events for more information.

Amanda Mason has a B.A. in Anthropology from SUNY Brockport and is currently in a graduate program in Applied Anthropology at the University of Maryland. She has also done archeological fieldwork in the Ukraine, been a teaching assistant and worked at a horse stable. Amanda will be our interpreter at the Gate Lodge and will undertake several special projects important to the future of Santanoni as well.

Renee Norris has just received her B.A. degree from Mary Washington College with a double major in historic preservation and theater. She has been a curatorial assistant and has lots of interpretive experience, including playing the part of historical figures at the Virginia Renaissance Faire. Renee will be our interpreter at the Main Lodge and will help Michael, as time allows, with the ongoing restoration there.

John Bird Burnham's Crater Club . . . *continued*

shore in the face of Champlain's massive waters.

This unusual situation began to come about in 1899, on former farm land, as the brainchild of John Bird Burnham. Burnham had been introduced to the

Photo: Morris Glenn

John Bird Burnham, 1938

Adirondacks when he visited his future wife, Henrietta Du Bois at "Felsenheim," her family's summer home in Keene Valley. After their marriage, he worked in New York for six years as editor of *Forest and Stream*. When he left the city and publishing to spend seven months in the Alaskan gold-fields in 1897, Henrietta and their three children moved to a farm her father owned overlooking Lake Champlain. On his return, Burnham looked for a way to make a living in a less-stressful, country setting, and he recognized early on that the highest and best use for the Champlain shoreline was recreation, rather than agriculture. Burnham began to build even before he owned the land, not an unusual situation in the Adirondacks. His plan was to create a colony of rental cabins, and with the successful rental of the first, called Yarrow and still in use, he quickly built a second, and the project mushroomed from there, with land acquisition and building activities substantially completed in 1903.

As explained by indefatigable guide and advocate Morris Glenn, who is writing a history of the Crater Club, the controlling idea of the club was "rustic simplicity." Untrained as either architect or builder, Burnham's work was largely intuitive. He designed and produced up to 70 cabins and cottages, as well as the common club buildings. Characteristic of his club cottages is their light, open, frame construction, which also forms the inside wall finish. He made use of these unsheathed interiors by creating built-in shelves, desks, benches and storage. Rustic porch structures include log posts with stubs of branches to be used as pegs for sporting equipment. His distinctive, squat, stone chimneys were designed, says Glenn, so that a cook could toss a flapjack up inside the fireplace, run outside and catch it! Burnham also produced hundreds of pieces of simply-made furniture with which to equip the cottages. The club cottages that still stand unchanged are modest, unpre-tentious structures of no consistent pattern, now interspersed with new, larger homes and old ones that have been modified and added to. The clubhouse occupies — and rather obscures — the most dramatic high point of the "crater," a land form thought to resemble a long-extinct volcano.

The club's membership seems to have come from the same group that Melvil Dewey initially targeted for the contemporary Lake Placid Club - educated, middle-class professionals, including clergymen. (Dewey visited Burnham at Essex and occasionally raided his work-force for skilled carpenters from the New Russia-Euba Mills- Elizabethtown area.) Not incidentally, the clientele for both clubs was also white, Anglo-Saxon and Protestant, a situation enforced by restrictive rules as late as 1987. Glenn counts over 150 authors who stayed at the club in its heyday, finding the quiet conducive to their work; Christopher Morley was perhaps the best known.

The Crater Club was only one of Burnham's successful business enterprises. After the club was built, he searched for a way to use the young evergreen trees he was thinning from his managed forest-lands. The solution was the "Burnham-Built REALOG CABIN," a series of log house kits of his own design, many of which may still be standing – unrecognized – in other parts of the Adirondacks. They came in at least three versions: the Mohawk at a cost of $2000 for two bedrooms, the three-bedroom Algonquin at $2500, and the two-story Iroquois with five bedrooms for $3000, in addition to the cost of the site. Burnham advertised that "for every tree logged two more are planted." Each kit included a fireplace of pre-cast "asbestos-fire brick compound." In his 1978 biography, based on an unfinished autobiography, Maitland DeSormo credited Burnham as "the nation's first mass-producer of pre-cut log cabins." Burnham employed six crews of ten men each, building from Maine to South Carolina. Organizations such as the Boy Scouts, Isaac Walton Leagues and Campfire Clubs, and their individual members, were his best customers.

Aside from his businesses, Burnham was an eminent and life-long advocate for the conservation of wildlife. The Crater Club Nature Trail System serves as a local reminder of these conservationist activities, which took place all over the country.

Throughout Burnham's life and beyond, the Crater Club operated with roughly half camp owners and half renters. When it became clear (through several reorganizations) that the rental camps and recreation facilities could no longer be run as a profit-making venture, all of the rental camps were offered for sale and the club became a property owners association. Despite changing forms of owner ship, the Crater Club still retains the family feeling of shared values, as well as shared property. If Burnham returned today, he would still recognize the place.

MARY B. HOTALING

Max Westhoff, Revival-Style Architect

Beginning in 1902, Max Harold Westhoff resided and practiced architecture in the Adirondacks for 18 years, as the employee, associate, partner and finally the successor of W. L. Coulter of Saranac Lake. The work of the firm was largely camps, and cottages in Saranac Lake and Lake Placid. In about 1920, he moved to Springfield, Massachusetts, where he conducted a distinguished solo practice and designed many fine revival style buildings, some still landmarks in that community today. But he had not completed his contribution to Adirondack architecture: it is the paradox of his career that his two most important projects in our region were undertaken after he left the area.

Little is known with certainty about Westhoff's personal life. He apparently was born in 1870 in Brooklyn, and was professionally educated as a member of the original class at Pratt Institute. Before coming to the Adirondacks, he was employed in the New York office of Eidlitz & McKenzie, a well-known firm since Leopold Eidlitz had worked on the New York State Capitol in Albany and the Tweed Courthouse in New York. It is likely that Westhoff first came to the mountains as a tuberculosis patient, and then sought employment in W. L. Coulter's architectural firm.

In September 1902, Violet Coulter wrote a friend that her husband was "very busy, he has a man to run his business, draughtsman etc." Almost certainly, the man to whom she referred was Max Westhoff, 32 years old, who seems to have begun working for Coulter that year; and the "draughtsman" was young William G. Distin. Coulter had two, big new camps to build in 1902 — Prospect Point and Eagle Island on Upper Saranac Lake, and Coulter could only have accomplished them with a good deal of help. Westhoff remained an associate through the end of 1904.

Expert in many revival styles, Westhoff probably introduced the Swiss motif, which first appeared around 1902 in the firm's repertoire. In Lake Placid, the firm designed St. Hubert's Episcopal Church — now Pilgrim Holiness Church, rebuilt after a fire — as well as chalet-style Camp Joyland for composer Victor Herbert.

In the fall of 1904, Coulter first changed the way in which he styled his practice, naming M. H. Westhoff as associate, in what would be a short-lived arrangement. By April of 1905, when the first contract of the year was written, Westhoff had become a full partner in Coulter & Westhoff, Architects. Partnership letterhead dated June of 1905 indicates that their "Saranac Lake Office" in the Adirondack National Bank Building had local and long distance telephone. By then Coulter, who had built himself a winter home in Camden, South Carolina, seems to have been looking for a change. Perhaps he was finally willing to take on a partner, a colleague with whom he had worked for three years, because he was trying to establish himself elsewhere, in New York or in South Carolina.

In the files of architectural contracts, there are so few jobs that the years 1904 and 1905 are combined, with only about the same amount of work as another single year. In most cases, in the absence of signed drawings, it is impossible to know for certain which of the principals designed which buildings. One notable exception was the chalet-style D. Henry Smith camp on Lower Saranac Lake, which Max Westhoff likely designed. At $7,517.92 for construction, plus $954 for plumbing and sewerage, it was the firm's biggest job of the year 1904. "Burrowes screens" were new-enough technology to be specified by name in the brief contract language.

No photographs of Westhoff have been positively identified, and only the name of his wife, Anna, and the locations of property he owned (Franklin Avenue in 1905 and 167 Park Avenue in 1907-15) are known of his personal life in Saranac Lake.

Their nearly three years of partnership were productive ones: Adolf Lewisohn, for whom they had built Prospect Point camp, hired the firm again to create a mammoth stone country house for him at Ardsley on Hudson. Four sub-contacts were drafted, one each for steam heating and for plumbing, drainage and fixtures in March; one for electrical work in July; and an undated contract for tile work. The firm (Coulter was particularly involved) planned a company town for miners at Keokee, Virginia, and likely designed many of its buildings. Closer to home were camps Gull Rock and Red Fox - still recognizable today by its distinctive, Japanese-influenced chigi — on the west shore of Lake Placid, several houses in the village of Saranac Lake, and the particularly fine Ice Palace of 1907. There was a camp on Lower Saranac Lake for W. C. Floyd-Jones, a substantial ($5,624.50) cottage at Saranac Inn for the Upper Saranac Lake Association, and a town hall (later demolished) for Santa Clara.

Their long-time draftsman, Bill Distin, left in 1907 to enroll in the architecture program at Columbia University. Perhaps his presence there had something to do with the "New York Office, Room 1613, 31 Union Square," that appeared on Coulter & Westhoff letterhead around that time.

After his partner's death in October 1907, Max Westhoff practiced as Coulter & Westhoff for five years, then changed the shingle to his own name. Working alone, Westhoff produced an impressive list of projects. In Saranac Lake, he built the St. Regis Hotel (later burned); the Adirondack National Bank (its impressive, two-story central arched window was later hidden behind Marine Midland's blank brick

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AARCH *Events*

1999 TOURS & WORKSHOPS

AARCH's tours, led by knowledgeable volunteer guides, are enjoyable learning experiences and raise funds to support our activities. Participants should wear comfortable walking shoes and dress for the variable weather conditions of the Adirondacks. Bring your own lunch and beverages, unless otherwise noted. Attendance is limited on all tours, and all tours require preregistration and prepayment. To register, send full fee to AARCH, Civic Center, Suite 312, 1790 Main Street, Keeseville, NY 12944, or call 518-834-9328 for more information. Refunds will be given to those not able to attend a tour if we are notified in advance of the cancellation. NOTE: Tours fill up very quickly, so register early!

Saturday, June 19
AARCH ANNUAL MEETING
AT THE AUSABLE CLUB IN KEENE VALLEY

AARCH's 1999 Annual Meeting will be held at the Ausable Club in Keene Valley, one of the oldest, largest and grandest private clubs in the region. The meeting will begin at 1 PM and will feature an address by Pat Tiller from the National Park Service about innovative heritage tourism initiatives in France. We will also present our 1999 Adirondack Architectural Heritage Awards. The meeting itself will end around 3 PM and be followed by a guided tour of the clubhouse and other parts of the club property and buildings. The meeting is a benefit of AARCH membership; guest fee is $10. Advance registration is required. You are welcome to bring your own lunch and picnic on the grounds, arriving at noon.

Saturday, June 26
CAMP SANTANONI

Explore one of the most magnificent Great Camps in the Adirondacks with Rob Engel, a former AARCH interpreter at Camp Santanoni. This Great Camp was built for Robert C. Pruyn of Albany beginning in 1892 and included 12,900 acres of land, known as the Santanoni Preserve. This tour will include stops at the camp's Gate Lodge, the remains of its 200-acre gentleman's farm, and the Main Camp on Newcomb Lake. Participants will see restoration work in progress and be able to view some of the camp's interiors. The round-trip walk is 9.8 miles on a gently sloping dirt road. Meet at 10 AM at the parking lot of the Santanoni Preserve, off Route 28N in the hamlet of Newcomb. We'll return about 4 PM. Suggested optional donation is $10 ($5 for AARCH members). A limited number of seats are available on a horse-drawn wagon, for an additional $12 fee, by advance reservation.

Wednesday, July 7
TWO GREAT CAMPS ON OSGOOD POND

Howard Kirschenbaum, AARCH founder and director of White Pine Camp, will lead this tour of two impressive turn-of-the-century camps near Paul Smiths. White Pine Camp is an incredible group of early 20th-century buildings in a very beautiful setting. It was also the "summer White House" of Calvin Coolidge in 1926. Northbrook Lodge was originally built for a Canadian member of Parliament as a private estate and is now an inn. Both were built by Ben Muncil, who also built Topridge for Marjorie Merriweather Post on nearby Upper St. Regis Lake. This is an in-depth look at two of the finest camps in the northern Adirondacks. 10:30 AM to 3:30 PM. Fee is $30 ($20 for AARCH members). Advance registration is required.

Photo: Courtesy of Clinton County Historical Society

Valcour Island Lighthouse

Saturday, July 10
HISTORIC VALCOUR ISLAND

The waters around Valcour Island in Lake Champlain were the scene of the Battle of Valcour, an important naval battle during the Revolutionary War. Here, in October 1776, a small American colonial fleet under the command of Benedict Arnold engaged the British fleet.

1999 TOURS & WORKSHOPS ... *continued*

Although most of the American fleet was sunk or scuttled, the effort succeeded in holding off the British southern advance until the following year, thereby buying the Americans much needed time. During the 19th century, the island was briefly home to a fledgling "free love" colony. More importantly, a substantial lighthouse was built there in 1871 to guide the steamboat and sailing ship traffic up and down the lake. Valcour Island is now part of the Adirondack Forest Preserve and its lighthouse, one of the few remaining buildings on the island, has been restored by the Clinton County Historical Association. This tour will include a boat ride around Valcour Island and nearby Crab Island, on which are buried American and British casualties from the Battle of Plattsburgh (1814); a walk of about two miles around parts of Valcour; and a visit to the Valcour Island lighthouse, which will be opened for our visit. Tour will depart from the DEC Boat Launch in Peru at 10 AM and will return about 3:30 PM. Tour fee is $30. Advance registration is required.

Photo: Steven Engelhart

#7 Mill

Saturday, July 17
HISTORIC MORIAH

This is a fascinating tour of an Adirondack town with a long and rich iron-mining history and a remarkable architectural legacy that embodies that history. The tour will start with a brief slide presentation by Jack Brennan, who worked in the iron mines of Moriah for 35 years. We will then take a close look at the iron company buildings, workers' housing, church, memorial hall, jail and #7 Mill in the mining communities of Witherbee and Mineville. In Port Henry we'll take a walking tour which will include the grand French Second Empire-style Town Hall, the railroad depot, Sherman Free Library, bank, churches, Lee House and other interesting architecture. We'll also visit the newly-opened Iron Center museum, which explores the town's rich industrial heritage. Tour begins at 10 AM and ends at 4 PM. The tour is co-sponsored by the Moriah Historical Society and the Port Henry/Moriah Economic Development Zone. Fee is $20 ($15 for AARCH and MHS members). Advance registration is required.

Tuesday, July 20
CAMP PINE KNOT, ECHO CAMP & ST. WILLIAM'S ON RAQUETTE LAKE'S LONG POINT

AARCH will offer a very special tour this year of Camp Pine Knot, Echo Camp and St. William's on Long Point in Raquette Lake. Pine Knot was built, beginning in the late 1870s, under the supervision of William West Durant, who later built Sagamore, Uncas and Kamp Kill Kare. Widely recognized as the pioneer of Adirondack rustic architecture and the camps we now call Great Camps, Durant first developed the features and details we now associate with this genre at Pine Knot. In his *History of the Adirondacks,* Alfred L. Donaldson wrote about Pine Knot, "Before it was built there was nothing like it; since then, despite infinite variations, there has been nothing essentially different from it." Pine Knot is now owned by the State University of New York at Cortland and operated as the Collis P. Huntington Outdoor Education Center. Nearby Echo Camp, built by Durant in 1883 for Connecticut Governor Phineas Lounsbury, features an unusual twin log tower design. We will also visit St. William's, the Catholic Church built by Durant in 1890. All three places are on Long Point but about one mile of walking is involved. The tour will begin at 1 PM at the Raquette Lake town dock, where we'll be picked up by boat, and will finish around 4:30 PM. Fee is $35 ($30 for AARCH members). Advance registration is required.

Friday, July 23
UPPER ST. REGIS LAKE

For the first time, we are offering a very special tour of Upper St. Regis and Spitfire Lakes. Initially drawn to this part of the Adirondacks by the recreational opportunities and amenities at Paul Smith's hotel, many summer visitors eventually built camps along the shores of Upper and Lower St. Regis and Spitfire Lakes beginning in the late 1870s. Many of these camps are among the finest anywhere in the region. During the day, we will visit both Camp Wild Air and Pine Point. Wild Air was one of the earliest "artistic" camps on the lake, begun in 1882 for Whitelaw Reid, the publisher of the *New York Herald-*

Tribune. Some later buildings were designed by architects McKim, Mead and White. We will get around the lakes on this tour in two huge "war canoes" under the guidance of Joe Hackett. Some canoeing experience is preferred and those attending should be able to sit for long periods in a canoe. Tour begins at 10 AM and will end around 4 PM. Fee is $40 ($35 for AARCH members). Advance registration is required and space is limited to 28 people.

Saturday, July 24
CAMP SANTANONI

Led by our summer staff members Renee Norris and Amanda Mason. See June 26 tour for details.

Wednesday, July 28
HISTORIC LOON LAKE

Take a real step back in time by exploring Loon Lake, an early 20th century resort community which is remarkably unchanged more than 100 years after it was first developed by Ferd and Mary Chase. This day-long tour will be led by Karl Smith III and others and will include the Inn at Loon Lake, the 1895 Loon Lake Golf Course, Clubhouse and "Caddy House," and several private camps, cottages and boathouses. This is a wonderful opportunity to see one of the region's most special places. Fee is $30 ($25 for AARCH members). 10 AM to 4 PM. Advance registration is required.

Friday, July 30
THE CRATER CLUB IN ESSEX

John Bird Burnham had a long career as an author, conservationist and entrepreneur. Beginning in 1899, he founded what would eventually be known as the Crater Club, a small private club on Lake Champlain, devoted to the then-popular notion of the "Simple Life." Within this philosophical framework, a distinct summer community evolved, and Burnham built cottages, camps and a clubhouse out of stone and wood in a manner which reflected his ideal of "rustic simplicity." Led by Morris Glenn, the unofficial historian of the Crater Club, this tour will include a brief slide show about the club's history and will take us around and through many of the club's 45 buildings. Tour begins at 10 AM and will end around 3:30 PM. Fee is $30 ($25 for AARCH members). Advance registration is required.

Saturday, August 7
HISTORIC TAHAWUS & ADIRONDAC

Town Supervisor George Canon will lead this tour, which looks at over a century of mining in the Town of Newcomb. We will see the McIntyre Furnace, the remains of the village of Adirondac, other remains of the Adirondack Iron and Steel Company operations and the 20th century mining operation at Tahawus. The McIntyre Furnace, in particular, is a very important early American industrial site, one that has been documented by the Historic American Engineering Record. Meet at the Newcomb Town Hall at 10 AM and we'll go by bus to Tahawus. The tour will end about 1:30 PM. Fee is $15 ($10 for AARCH members). Advance registration is required.

Friday, August 13
FOUR RUSTIC CAMPS OF WILLIAM COULTER

AARCH's Mary Hotaling will again lead one of our most popular tours of four turn-of-the-century "Great Camps" on Upper Saranac Lake, all designed by the prominent Saranac Lake architect William Coulter. These include Eagle Island (built for Vice-Pres. Levi Morton), Moss Ledge (for Isabel Ballantine), the Wawbeek (for Moritz Walter) and Prospect Point (for Adolph Lewisohn). A rare opportunity to see some of the best rustic architecture in the region. Fee is $35 ($30 for AARCH members) and includes a boat ride to Eagle Island. 10 AM to 4 PM. Advance registration is required.

Saturday, August 14
CAMP SANTANONI

Led by our summer staff. See June 26 tour for details.

Photo: Steven Engelhart

Roger Pratt addresses an AARCH tour at The Waldheim

Friday, August 20
RUSTIC ARCHITECTURE OF BIG MOOSE

This tour will look at a variety of distinctive rustic architecture in Big Moose, including the work of Henry Covey, Earl Covey and the Martin family. The tour will be led by John Barrows, who has written about the

1999 TOURS & WORKSHOPS ... *continued*

Coveys in *Fine Homebuilding* magazine. The tour will include visits to the Big Moose Chapel, Covewood Lodge, The Waldheim and several other camps on Crag Point. The tour begins at 10 AM and will end about 4 PM. Fee is $30 ($25 for AARCH members). Advance registration is required.

Saturday, August 21
ESSEX: WHAT STYLE IS IT?

This unique workshop/tour will use the historic village of Essex as an open classroom for learning about architectural styles and the language of architecture. Beginning at 10 AM, the morning will be spent in the classroom setting of Greystone Mansion, an incredible limestone Greek Revival style home, where the group will learn about identifying architectural styles from Steven Engelhart, AARCH's Executive Director. Following lunch, the group will walk around the village and look at several dozen historic buildings which exemplify a whole range of architectural styles from the 19th and 20th centuries. The walking tour will end around 4 PM. Fee is $25 ($20 for AARCH members). Advance registration is required.

Monday, August 23
CLINTON PRISON AT DANNEMORA

The Clinton Correctional Facility in Dannemora, built in 1845, is the third oldest prison in New York State and is the state's largest. This unique opportunity will take us inside this maximum security prison where we will visit a cell block modeled on the "Auburn System"; the Church of the Good Thief, a chapel built entirely by inmates; the North Yard; and the former Dannemora State Hospital. The history of the prison is fascinating and its architecture is most dramatic. The tour will begin at 9:30 AM and end at 3 PM. Suggested optional donation is $25 ($20 for AARCH members). Advance registration is required.

Friday, August 27
THE KING'S GARDENS & ENVIRONS AT FORT TICONDEROGA

Long before Fort Ticonderoga was built, its fertile peninsular site was used by Native Americans for agriculture and hunting. It was here, in 1609, that Samuel de Champlain and his party of Huron and Algonquin Indians battled the Iroquois. Since that time, this landscape was shaped for defense and cultivated to provide sustenance for French, British and American soldiers. In the 19th century, the site was purchased by William Ferris Pell, who then built the Pavilion, a Greek Revival-style summer home in front of the picturesque ruins of the fort. In 1908 the restoration of the fort began, and the Pells built a walled garden adjoining the Pavilion. The designer of the gardens was Marian Cruger Coffin, who was one of the first women to hold a degree in landscape architecture in America. This tour will explore the extensive Pell family gardens, now under restoration; the Pavilion; and other military, Native American and early 18th and 19th century sites around the fort. The tour will be led by Fort Ticonderoga staff. Tour will begin at 10 AM and end around 4 PM. Fee is $30 per person. Advance registration is required.

Saturday, August 28
FUNDAMENTALS OF RESTORING LOG STRUCTURES

Led by Michael Frenette, an accomplished builder and our "builder-in-residence" at Camp Santanoni this summer, this day-long workshop will provide hands on instruction at Camp Santanoni in a variety of important areas, including hand tool use, tool sharpening, basic timber framing and log work. Participants will help do actual restoration work on the porches at the Main Camp. This is a great opportunity to learn some new skills and help with some important restoration work. Some skills and experience are required. Workshop begins at 9 AM, meeting in the parking area for the Santanoni Preserve, and will end around 5 PM. Fee is an optional donation of $30 ($25 for AARCH members). Horse-drawn wagon transportation into Santanoni is included.

Friday, September 10
HISTORIC BLUE MOUNTAIN LAKE

For the first time, AARCH has organized a tour of some very interesting historic architecture and places in Blue Mountain Lake. We'll spend the morning at The Adirondack Museum, taking a close look at some of the fine buildings there, including the 1876 Log Hotel, the cottage and studio of landscape painter Gustave Wiegand, Sunset Cottage from Frederick Durant's Camp Cedars on Forked Lake, the Ned Buntline Cabin, Rising Schoolhouse and the Virkler hunting camp. After lunch on the grounds of the museum, we'll visit several other historic places, including the steamboat *Tuscarora*, now a summer camp; Camp Minnowbrook; the Church of the Transfiguration; and The Hedges. Tour begins at 10 AM and will end around 4 PM. Fee is $25 ($20 for AARCH members). Advance registration is required.

Saturday, September 11
CAMP SANTANONI

Led by Steven Engelhart. See June 26 tour for details. This tour of Camp Santanoni will take place during Newcomb's annual Teddy Roosevelt Days weekend and there will be lots of other activities to take part in..

Monday, September 20
HISTORIC PLACID LAKE

Led by Mary Hotaling, this very special tour of Lake Placid will visit several of the lake's finest camps, including Gull Rock — designed by Saranac Lake architects Coulter & Westhoff — and Camp Carolina — by Max Westhoff, and explore the beautiful lakeshore aboard the Lady of the Lake. Tour starts at 11:30 AM at the Lake Placid Marina and ends around 3:30 PM. Fee is $35 ($30 for AARCH members). Advance registration is required, and space will be limited to 32 people.

Photo: Steven Engelhart

Three Brothers Island

Saturday, September 25
BOLTON LANDING & ENVIRONS

For the third time, AARCH has put together a most special tour in and around Bolton Landing on Lake George. Led by Ted Caldwell, the tour will begin at 12 noon when we'll board the *de Champlain* to see the magnificent Lake George landscape, hear about the lake's fascinating history and visit a very special island camp. Have your lunch on board. Then we'll disembark and go on to visit Mohican Point, the W. H. Bixby home, the Sembrich Opera Museum and museum of the Historical Society of the Town of Bolton. The tour will end around 4:30 PM. Fee is $35 ($30 for AARCH members). Advance registration is required.

Saturday, October 2
NORTHVILLE: WHAT STYLE IS IT?

This unique workshop/tour will use the historic village of Northville as an open classroom for learning about architectural styles and the language of architecture. Beginning at 10 AM, the morning will be spent in the classroom setting of the Methodist Church, where the group will learn about identifying architectural styles from Steven Engelhart, AARCH's Executive Director. Following lunch, the group will walk around the village and look at several dozen historic buildings which exemplify a whole range of architectural styles from the 19th and 20th centuries. The walking tour will end around 4 PM. Fee is $20. Advance registration is required.

Saturday, October 16
KEESEVILLE: CARING FOR THE HOUSE OF WORSHIP

This workshop is designed primarily for those people who are responsible for taking care of church buildings, but will also be of interest to anyone who cares for historic structures. Led by Wes Haynes, it will explore a whole range of exterior preservation and conservation problems including painting, masonry repairs, wood repair and replacement, roofing, windows and doors, moisture control and energy conservation. The morning will be spent in the classroom setting of the Anderson Falls Heritage Society museum in Keeseville, where we'll learn about basic preservation practices. In the afternoon, the group will look at both exemplary and not-so- exemplary work as we walk around this historic village. The workshop begins at 10 AM and will finish around 4 PM. This workshop is co-sponsored by the New York Landmarks Conservancy, Sacred Sites Program, and is funded, in part, by a grant from the Lake Champlain Basin, Technical Assistance Program. Fee is $20 ($15 for AARCH members). Advance registration is required.

Have you heard of any interesting places that might be suitable for an AARCH tour? Please call the office with your suggestions!

AARCH Slide Programs

AARCH Executive Director Steven Engelhart will resume his series of public slide presentations this summer, including the ever-popular "There's More to Adirondack Architecture Than Great Camps" and "Camp Santanoni: Past, Present and Future." New this year is a program entitled "Historic Preservation: What's It All About?," which explores many aspects of historic preservation with examples from all over the eastern seaboard and Adirondack region. AARCH's public lecture series is supported, in part, by a grant from the NYS Council on the Humanities. For more information, call AARCH at (518) 834-9328.

There's More to Adirondack Architecture Than Great Camps

- Wednesday, July 14, at 7:30 PM
  Piseco Historical Society
  Piseco
- Tuesday, July 20, at 7:30 PM
  Edinburg Historical Society
  Edinburg Town Hall
- Saturday, October 9, at 8:00 PM
  Adirondak Loj
  near Lake Placid

Camp Santanoni: Past, Present and Future

- Tuesday, July 27, at 8:00 PM
  Silver Bay Conference Center
  Silver Bay
- Wednesday, August 25, at 7:30 PM
  Adirondack Ecological Center
  Newcomb

Historic Preservation: What's It All About?

- Friday, August 20, at 7:00 PM
  Ticonderoga Historical Society
  Ticonderoga
- Thursday, September 9, at 8:00 PM
  Old Forge Arts Center
  Old Forge

Historic Saranac Lake Acquires Saranac Laboratory

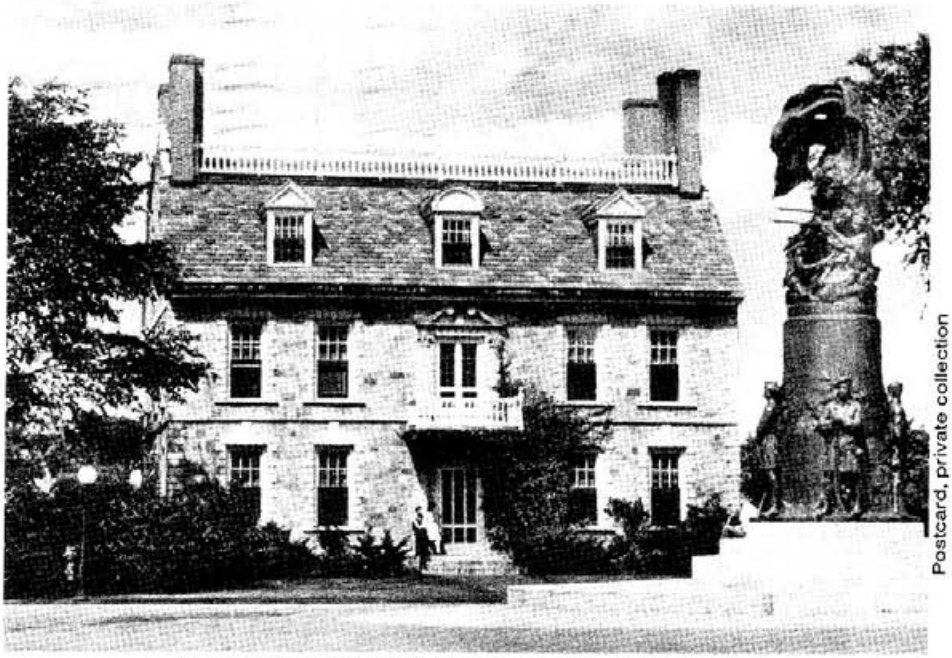
The Saranac Laboratory, featured on the cover of AARCH's first Newsletter in 1992 and on our list of endangered historic buildings, has been donated to Historic Saranac Lake. The local organization acquired the former laboratory at 7 Church Street in Saranac Lake at the end of 1998, and immediately began a campaign to restore the building to the prominent position in the community that it once enjoyed. The building was the gift of an anonymous donor. "We're pleased and proud, excited and grateful for this wonderful opportunity," remarked Mary Hotaling, HSL's director. Fund-raising and restoration are expected to take three to five years.

Built in 1894, the Saranac Laboratory was given to Dr. E. L. Trudeau, independent of any institution, by his patient George Cooper, and designed by J. Lawrence Aspinwall of the New York City firm of Renwick, Aspinwall & Renwick. This was the first laboratory building in the United States established for the study of tuberculosis, only a few years after T.B. was first proved to be a communicable disease caused by an identifiable bacillus.

The building is located in the Church Street Historic District, in the active center of the village, with lodging, commercial uses, library and restaurants nearby. HSL plans to use the main floor of the original laboratory building to welcome visitors and house exhibits interpreting Saranac Lake's unique medical history. This development is being designed to complement the exhibit and activities being prepared for the Union Depot. The two floors added later to the south side of the laboratory will be rented to support the building's operating costs. Saranac Lake's medical society once met in the first-floor John Black Memorial Room and it is anticipated that the space will again be available for meetings of community groups.

"Both the building and its location are perfectly suited to present to the public Dr. Trudeau's 'rare romance in medicine' — the struggle against tuberculosis — and how it impacted Saranac Lake," Hotaling said.

Max Westhoff, Revival-Style Architect . . . *continued from page 4*



Postcard, private collection

Hancock House, Ticonderoga, designed by Max Westhoff

wall); and several cottages. In Lake Placid he designed Northwood School, as well as several camps and boathouses. There were alterations at Lewisohn's estate in Ardsley, a camp on Big Moose Lake and one in Sunapee, New Hampshire; and an addition, with a jail, to the Essex County Courthouse in Elizabethtown.

From 1910 on, Westhoff was aided by senior draftsman William G. Distin, who returned home after graduation. One of their first projects together was a replacement in stone for St. Bernard's Roman Catholic Church in Saranac Lake, which had burned. Monsignor Noel Zimmerman, the client, described their working arrangement: "Mr. Westhoff worked on a plan with his young assistant, Mr. William G. Distin, and soon after sailed off to Europe, leaving his new junior partner in charge of construction." Camp Carolina (c. 1913), one of the grandest and most visible places on Lake Placid, is also credited to Max Westhoff.

In 1915 Adolph Lewisohn's Heather Dell Farm was pictured in both The Sun and Architectural Record, still credited to the firm of Coulter & Westhoff, a sign of Westhoff's integrity and his esteem for his late partner.

In 1916 the firm produced a landmark chalet for operatic tenor George Hamlin on Signal Hill in the village. In its heavy surface decoration of flat cut-out boards, the chalet most closely resembled "the Swiss church" which came from Coulter's office the year that Westhoff arrived. Around this time, the firm also produced plans for the Agora Theatre, a soaring space without interior obstructions at the Lake Placid Club, but it was not to be built until after the war.

At some point Bill Distin became a partner; in 1918 the offices of Westhoff & Distin were on the third floor of the Coulter office building, and blueprints kept both names until 1920. But in 1917 Westhoff moved his practice to Springfield, Massachusetts. In 1919 he altered an old colonial home in nearby Enfield, Connecticut, for himself and his wife. After a brief period in the Construction Division of the Army during World War I, Distin continued as a single practitioner in Saranac Lake. In Massachusetts, Westhoff also practiced alone, designing a number of distinguished buildings, including the central Connecticut Valley Historical Museum, still a landmark in Springfield. He was characterized as "a quite successful early twentieth century revival architect who is responsible for the designs of many Springfield houses."

Paradoxically, commissions for two of the largest and most prominent buildings that Max Westhoff built in the Adirondacks came after he had relocated. These projects were the 1925-26 Hancock House and the 1927 Community Building, both in Ticonderoga, prominently sited at the top and bottom of Montcalm Street, respectively. A replica of Thomas Hancock's Boston residence, demolished in 1863, the Hancock House was built for the New York State Historical Association (later removed to Cooperstown) and is now occupied by the Ticonderoga Historical Society. The Community Building was built in 1927 for town and village offices. Both were among the philanthropies of Horace Moses, a generous benefactor to his home town. Since Moses also lived in Springfield, Massachusetts, it seems almost certain that he himself chose Westhoff, to prepare the designs.

Summing up his practice in 1928, Westhoff published an "Architectural Catalog," listing many commissions in the new location, but including only the Smith camp from his years in Saranac Lake. A revival-style architect and early preservationist, Max Harold Westhoff retired in 1935, "a versatile man who during his 18 years in Springfield made a definite imprint on the architecture of the community." He retired to Florida, and died in Passe Grill in the early 1950s.

MARY B. HOTALING

State of the Arts

NYSCA

This publication is made possible with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts, a State agency.

News & Notes

Essex: ECHO is asking members of the public to express their opinions in the permitting process for a mining operation in the Town of Essex. Resident Salim B. Lewis, who has purchased and is consolidating a number of farms in the area, plans to mine a five-acre tree-covered knoll in order to use the gravel as paving material for his extensive farm roads. The APA has suspended review of the permit application pending resolution of an on-going enforcement investigation involving an alleged violation on Mr. Lewis' property.

Essex: The *Forum News* of the National Trust for Historic Preservation noted recently that a vintage Texaco station is operating in Essex village - a good place to fill up if you are in the area. Barry Hamilton and Donna Sonnet, owners of an adjacent marina, restored the station. Its presence, writes the *News*, makes a minimart in the hamlet unlikely.

Hutchins Pond near Tupper Lake: Despite the lack of an accepted Unit Management Plan, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation recently removed the A. A. Low buildings. The AARCH tour scheduled to visit them this summer has been canceled.

Jay: Wellscroft Lodge, on our "Endangered list last year, has been purchased by the Stanley family of Saranac Lake. After an extensive search, they chose this property to restore as a bed and breakfast.

Jay: Reconstruction of the Jay Covered Bridge (c. 1856) is to begin this spring, with $750,000 in federal funds plus $200,000 from Essex County. Since it was cut into sections and removed to a nearby park in the summer of 1997, the bridge has suffered more vandalism. It should be placed back in its original position after October 2002.

The only covered bridge in the Adirondacks other than the Jay Bridge is the Copeland Bridge, built on private land to get cows to pasture and now owned by Edinburg Historical Society.

North Elba: Ceremonies on May 1 at the John Brown Farm and the Old White Church just outside of Lake Placid marked the birthday (May 9, 1800) of the abolitionist, and reinvigorated the tradition of visiting his grave. In the past it had been a place of pilgrimage for black Americans in the John Brown Memorial Association, who, during the Depression, paid for the statue and other plaques marking the NYS-owned site, a National Historic Landmark since last year. Author Russell Banks of Keene read Brown's address to the court. The event, which attracted about 300 attendees from across the country, is expected to be even larger next year.

Riparius: The NYS Route 8 bridge over the Hudson River, a 1920 "Camel-Back" Pennsylvania through-truss steel bridge, is being considered for rehabilitation or replacement. The number PIN 1056.17 or Route 8 / Hudson identifies this bridge to the DOT. Bridge authority Steven Engelhart has written that "the length of its span, its remarkable height and its fine truss work make it a very elegant span, one which fits extremely well with the hamlet setting." Interested persons should contact NYS DOT at 518-473-6639.

Saranac Lake: NYS Department of Transportation is slightly rerouting and paving Depot Street, as well as creating parking for the newly restored Union Depot, as a part of its two-year program to re-pave state routes passing through the village. Substantial improvements to village infrastructure include new water and sewer lines. New plantings will re-landscape the Depot grounds and village streets, replacing a number of venerable shade trees removed for the project.

A special postal cancellation of new locomotive stamps will be held at the depot's Grand Opening on August 27.

Southold, Long Island: This "For Sale" notice in "Preservation Notes" from the Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities was quite a surprise. "Large historic waterfront mansion built of logs in 1925-27 for Alexander Williams. The contractor was a builder from Paul Smith's, named Munsil [sic], who had built Camp David, the presidential retreat. Skilled lumberjack workmen were brought from upstate. In a blacksmith shop set up on the property German iron workers made the 7-foot hinges and hand-crafted lighting fixtures. Italian stone cutters built the 8 huge fireplaces. With 6 acres, pool, dock, and 1600-foot sandy beach. Call broker 203-861-5803." Steven, who has followed up on this, believes that the author has confused presidential retreats, mistaking White Pine Camp for Camp David, which was built five years after Ben Muncil's death. Nevertheless, we're pleased to add a new house, client and location to the list of his work.

Ticonderoga: The Ticonderoga Community Church was dismantled this winter for a parking lot for the Sunshine Laundry and apartments. The beams were donated to the Hancock House Museum for display.

Santanoni Update . . .

IMPORTANT YEAR AHEAD

This will be a most important year for Camp Santanoni.

The NYS Department of Environmental Conservation expects to present a draft Unit Management Plan (UMP) and proposal for "Historic" classification for the Santanoni Historic Area under the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan for review and approval by the Adirondack Park Agency sometime this summer. The development of the UMP was guided by the Santanoni Citizens Advisory Committee, which included participants from Adirondack regional organizations, state agencies and local governments, and interested individuals. AARCH will work to ensure that the final UMP reflects the best interests of Camp Santanoni and AARCH, and our members will play a role in helping to get the UMP adopted. Adoption of the UMP is critical to being able to move ahead with more substantial preservation and interpretive work at the camp. We'll let you know how you can help!

Howie Kirschenbaum, Paul Malo and Rob Engel have been hard at work for the past year completing a new book about Camp Santanoni, entitled *Santanoni: from Japanese Temple to Adirondack Great Camp*. This book will be published by AARCH late this summer and will do much to further public understanding and appreciation for this special place. Order forms will be mailed to all AARCH members when the book is available.

This spring a group of five students from the Cooperstown Graduate Program in Museum Studies produced a wonderful exhibit, entitled "Camp Santanoni: Roughing it in Style." The five-panel exhibit uses historic and contemporary photographs, text and personal narratives to explore Santanoni's architecture, camp life, the farm and Santanoni's future. The exhibit will be at the Gate Lodge during the summer months and then will travel to other venues in the region during the rest of the year. Be sure to stop in and see this important new work.

DEC will commence work this summer on very critical stabilization work at the farm. The work will include major repairs to the Herdsman's Cottage and to one of the wings of the Main Barn. The work is funded, in part, by a grant from NYS's Environmental Protection Fund.

By the fall, Wes Haynes will have completed and submitted a nomination to list Camp Santanoni and Camp Sagamore as National Historic Landmarks. This nomination, Camps of the Adirondacks, will eventually include other "Great Camps" as well. National Historic Landmark (NHL) listing is this country's highest historic site designation and recognizes places of national significance. The other NHLs in the region include Fort Ticonderoga, the forts at Crown Point, the Elkanah Watson House in Port Kent and the *Land Tortoise*, a submerged vessel in Lake George.

SANTANONI WORK DAY

Want to help install some new porch flooring at the Main Lodge or help with other small projects? Join us on Thursday, July 15, for a volunteer work day at Camp Santanoni. Transportation will be provided. Call (518) 834-9328 to let us know you're coming.

About Adirondack Architectural Heritage

Adirondack Architectural Heritage is the regional, non-profit, historic preservation organization for the Adirondack Park. Our educational mission is to promote better public understanding, appreciation and stewardship of the built environment of the Adirondack Park. We fulfill this mission in a variety of ways, including by sponsoring tours and workshops, by giving public slide presentations, by offering technical assistance and by supporting local governments, organizations and individuals in their historic preservation activities. AARCH is a membership organization with over 800 members. AARCH members receive a biannual *Newsletter*, get 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.

(Check one)

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Contributions are tax-deductible. Please make checks payable to "Adirondack Architectural Heritage" and mail to: AARCH, Civic Center, Suite 312, 1790 Main Street, Keeseville, NY 12944.

Discover . . .
Robert Louis Stevenson Cottage

Photo: Mike Delehant

The Robert Louis Stevenson Cottage, Saranac Lake

The Robert Louis Stevenson Cottage, at 11 Stevenson Lane in Saranac Lake, has been a house museum since 1916, when the Stevenson Society – formed for the purpose – bought it from the estate of its builder, Andrew J. Baker, a guide and son of one of the pioneer settlers in the area. Adirondack historian Alfred Donaldson wrote of this cottage: "But so does fame become a thief. Your sturdy woodsman toils long and late to possess his little home, and a stranger, with long hair and a velvet coat, passing that way, steals it from him by lodging in it for the night!" In the winter of 1887-88, the Scots author of *Treasure Island, Kidnapped* and *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* and his household – wife, mother, stepson and maid – occupied the guest wing of Baker's house, now the museum. Stevenson wrote productively here, including 12 essays for *Scribner's Magazine* and part of *The Master of Ballantrae.* Voluble curator Mike Delahant and his wife Karla – the third generation of his family to care for the cottage – substitute for the Bakers in the family wing. Members of R.L.S.'s family were still alive when the society was founded, and they donated many personal artifacts to this fine collection.

The house is largely intact to the period of Stevenson's visit, though one major (and little-noted) change is the replacement of windows by the Bakers, so that the familiar North Country character of a vernacular, Greek Revival-period house is obscured by close-set pairs of tall narrow windows. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places as one of a group of "cure cottages," the Stevenson Cottage is one of the earliest extant examples of facilities used by patients in the fresh-air treatment of tuberculosis.

From July 1 to September 15, the cottage is open daily, except Monday, from 9:30 AM to12 noon and 1 to 4:30 PM, and year-round by appointment. Admission is $5 per person, with children under 12 free. Phone 518 891-1462.

MBH

Adirondack Architectural Heritage

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