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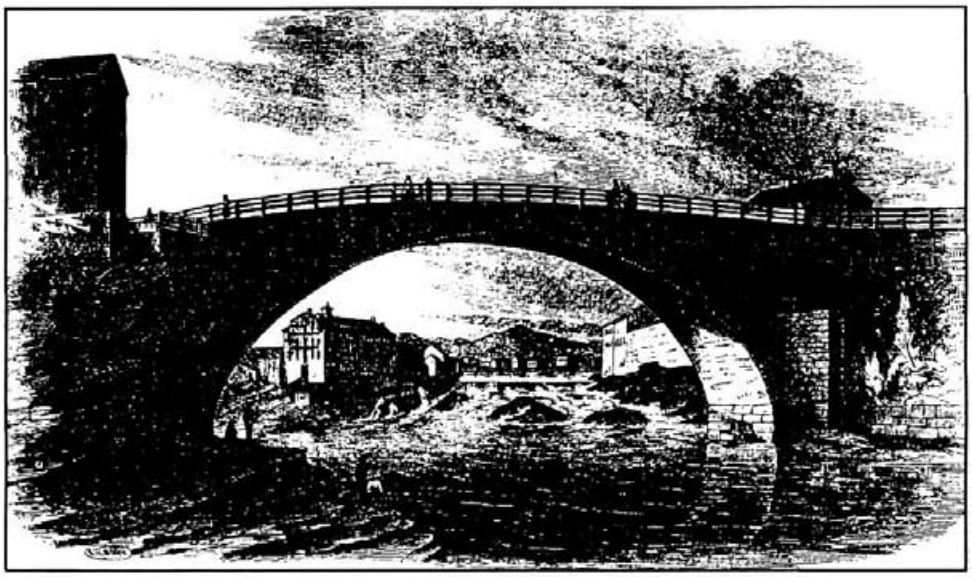
Newsletter

ADIRONDACK
ARCHITECTURAL
HERITAGE

The AuSable River Bridges



Allen Collection

The Stone Arch Bridge in Keeseville, shown in an 1857 drawing.

THE AUSABLE RIVER is remarkable for the incredible variety of bridges which cross it. The eminent bridge historian, Richard Sanders Allen, described it well when he wrote: "There are few watercourses in America, comparable in length to the AuSable, over which so many different early bridge types remain. Crossing the AuSable are bridges that represent one hundred and forty-nine years of engineering history. The river system is spanned by a stone arch, a covered timber truss, a wire suspension footbridge and metal trusses fabricated by at least five different companies from four states."

Among the river's 70 bridges, there is also "the spectacular steel arch bridge over AuSable Chasm, several stone-faced, concrete-arched bridges and a variety of steel beam and concrete spans," adds Steven Engelhart, the bridges' longtime advocate.

Collectively, sixteen of the historic bridges of the AuSable River valley have recently been recognized as significant historic engineering resources in New York by their listing on the State and National Registers of Historic Places. (Locally, of course, they are perhaps more important for the way in which they have woven together the

continued on page 3

From the President

Looking back, 1999 has been a great year for AARCH. The growth of the "Friends of Camp Santanoni" to over 1,400 members and the fall 1999 release of the Draft Unit Management Plan for Camp Santanoni are major milestones. The Draft UMP, generally speaking, is a plan that we can be very pleased with, although there are a few ideas which AARCH intends to put forth which would make it even better.

AARCH's journey began 10 years ago when the apparent future of Camp Santanoni looked dim. It was that poor outlook, as well as a broadly perceived need for a regional organization to champion the architectural heritage of the Adirondacks, which stimulated AARCH's formation. While Santanoni has been a major element of AARCH's activities, it is not the single focus of the organization. Through the extensive offering of tours of historic places, outreach through slide shows and technical assistance, the awards program and newsletter, AARCH has developed into a comprehensive, regional, architectural heritage preservation organization.

The Adirondacks' architectural heritage is the legacy of the economic forces which drove the settlement and development of the Adirondacks — the mining and mill towns, the commercial-port communities, farmsteads and farm towns, the forest outposts, the vacation and recreational retreats of visitors of wide-ranging economic means, examples of the earliest theme parks in the country, fire towers, and cure cottages. Not only does this legacy give Adirondackers and their communities something to be proud of, it is a resource which itself can contribute to new economic activity through restoration, interpretation and visitation.

Looking ahead, AARCH has reached the point in its development where it is poised to step up to a higher level of influence and activity. Since staff is a resource enabling AARCH to develop and carry out various programs, one measure of AARCH's development as an organization over the years is reflected in its staffing. Initially, AARCH had no staff. The founding board members truly were a working board. However, the limitations of this were obvious from the start, and AARCH soon hired a part-time employee to coordinate tours and other programs. In 1994, a full-time executive director was hired. Summer interns and seasonal employees enabled preservation projects and interpretation to begin at Camp Santanoni. Most recently a part-time, office support position was created. Our staff is stretched thin, yet there is no end in sight to what AARCH could do. To help the board focus on this issue, apart from the normal business of its regular board meetings, the board took part in a strategic planning retreat on December 8 and 9th. Thanks to board member Ted Comstock, we were able to use the Winter House at the Adirondack League Club for this purpose. And thanks to a Technical Assistance Grant from the Architecture, Planning and Design Program of the New York State Council on the Arts, we were aided in the process by Burt Woolf of QL Consulting. We all felt that the retreat gave us the opportunity to lay the groundwork for the next step in AARCH's organizational development. The next newsletter will report on the results of the retreat.

To all AARCH members: Thank you for your support and best wishes for the New Year, Century, Millennium.

BILL JOHNSTON

SKI TOUR OF CAMP SANTANONI OFFERED

On Sunday, February 13th, Adirondack Architectural Heritage (AARCH) will sponsor a guided cross-country ski tour of Camp Santanoni, in the Town of Newcomb. This "Great Camp" was originally established in 1892 by Albany banker Robert C. Pruyn and eventually included more than 30 buildings on 12,900 acres. It has been owned by New York State since 1972. The tour will highlight the camp's fascinating history, explore its architectural significance and discuss the restoration now in process. All three building complexes at the camp (the Gatelodge, the Farm and the Main Camp) will be seen on the tour.

The tour will be led by John Friauf, an AARCH Board member and a licensed NYS guide and Steven Engelhart, Executive Director of AARCH. The round-trip ski is about 9.8 miles on a gently sloping 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 parking lot of the Santanoni Preserve, off Route 28N in the hamlet of Newcomb. The group will return about 4 PM. Suggested optional donation is $10 ($5 for AARCH members). Advance registration required by calling 834-9328.

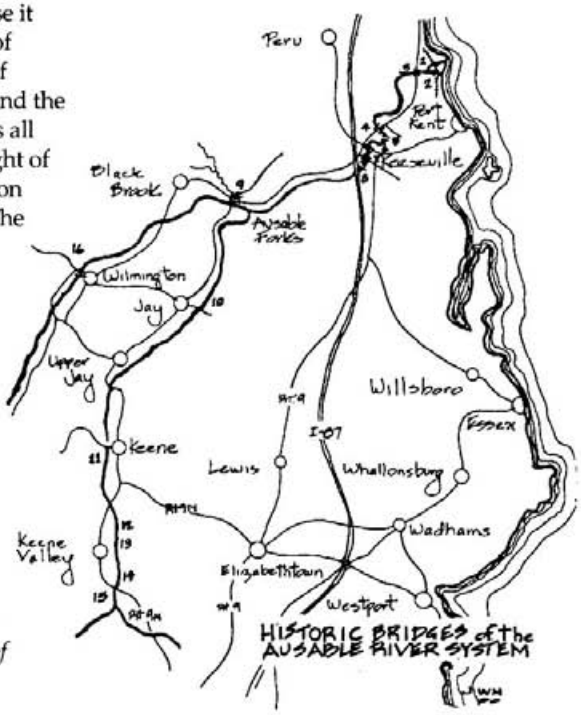
Steve Engelhart illustrates Santanoni's history on our January 1999 ski tour.

The Ausable River Bridges ... *continued*

social and economic life of this valley for generations.) "This is the first thematic study of its type in our state," said Lynn Garofalini of the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. "The document provides good basic research on a variety of bridge types that anyone else in the state can build upon." The geographical scope of the nomination is based on its unifying natural feature, the AuSable River, including its Main, East and West Branches. Because it encompasses resources in the Towns of Keene, Wilmington, Jay, the hamlets of AuSable Forks and AuSable Chasm, and the Village of Keeseville, the study crosses all kinds of local political boundaries. Eight of the recently-listed bridges are in Clinton County and six are in Essex County. The documentation involved in listing is a key step in public and government recognition of the significance of the bridges; only with that recognition will the appreciation develop which makes their preservation possible.

Preservation of these bridges has been the long-time avocation of AARCH Executive Director Steven Engelhart. While working for the Friends of the North Country in the 980s, he conducted a survey of all 70 bridges in the valley. From this survey, he wrote the book – literally – *Crossing the River: Historic Bridges of the AuSable River,* which the Friends published in 1991 (available from the Friends at about $5). Most recently, Engelhart authored the NR nomination, also for the Friends.

Several of the AuSable River bridges had already been recognized for their engineering and historic significance. Three Keeseville bridges – the 1842 Stone Arch Bridge, the 1878 Pratt Truss Upper Bridge and the 1888 Swing Bridge – were all part of a 1984 comprehensive Keeseville NR nomination.



Their importance was underscored by the 1987 designation as a National Historic Civil Engineering Landmark, a designation they share with the Brooklyn Bridge and the Erie Canal.

The Jay Covered Bridge, an 1857 Howe truss, was also part of the 1999 nomination; it is currently stored on dry land while the Town of Jay and Essex County make a decision about the site of a new bridge. Listed on the State Register, the Covered Bridge will likely be placed on the National Register after restoration.

Since Allen wrote his glowing comments in 1988, three 19th century iron bridges on the AuSable have been demolished and replaced, two have been washed away and two others remain threatened. Bridges are perhaps the most difficult historic structures to preserve. They are subject to constant exposure to weather, were often designed for different types of traffic and loads than they now carry, and almost always must continue to have a current use, if they are to receive maintenance and survive. The best use for any historic structure is ordinarily its original use, and a common way to adapt historic bridges is to reduce the load. The political challenge that remains for those who care about the AuSable River bridges is to help secure lighter uses and to insist on good routine maintenance, in order to ensure their continued preservation.

MARY B. HOTALING

Historic Bridges of the AuSable River

Unless otherwise noted, all bridges cross one of the three main branches of the AuSable River proper, and all were listed on the National Register of Historic Places November 12, 1999.

MAIN BRANCH AND TRIBUTARIES

1. & 2. **Delaware & Hudson Railroad Bridges**, northeast of Lakeside Road, Port Kent, 1913 Warren through trusses, built by the American Bridge Co.
3. **Carpenter's Flats Bridge**, NY Route 9, Keeseville, 1941 Warren through truss, built by the American Bridge Co.
4. **AuSable Chasm Bridge**, NY Route 9, 1932-35, built by Burr M. Stark of Hadley, NY.
5. **Old State Road Bridge**, Co. Route 17B, AuSable Chasm, c. 1900 Pratt pony truss.
6. **Stone Arch Bridge**, Main Street, Keeseville, 1842, built by Solomon Townsend of Keeseville.
7. **Swing Bridge**, between Clinton and South AuSable Streets, Keeseville, 1888, a suspension pedestrian bridge (iron) of 237 feet, built by the Berlin Iron Bridge Co. The Swing Bridge is one of only about 10 ever built and 1 of 2 surviving.
8. **Pratt Truss Upper Bridge**, Keeseville, 1878 Pratt through truss built by Murray, Dougal and Co. Individually listed on NRHP in 1984.
9. **Palmer Brook Bridge**, Golf Course Road over Palmer Brook, AuSable Forks, 1938 stone-faced concrete arch of 20 feet, built by the Town of Black Brook with the assistance of the federal Works Progress Administration.

EAST BRANCH AND TRIBUTARIES

10. **Jay Covered Bridge**, 1857 Howe hand-hewn timber truss of 160 feet, built by George M. Burt of AuSable Forks. Part of the AuSable River Bridges nomination, the Jay bridge is listed only on the State Register and will likely be NR-listed after restoration.
11. **Walton Bridge**, Dr. Ray Road access, Keene, c. 1890 lenticular through truss, originally erected by the Berlin Iron Bridge Co. for the Western Plank Road in the Town of Black Brook, Clinton County, and moved to the Keene site in 1925. Now closed.
12. **Notman Bridge**, Country Club Road, Keene Valley, 1913 stone-faced concrete arch of 63 feet. Private.
13. **Ranney Bridge**, private road off NY 73, Keene Valley, 1902 Pratt pony truss, built by the Canton Bridge Co. Private.
14. **Beer's Bridge**, private road off NY 73, Keene Valley, c. 1900 Pratt pony truss. Private.
15. **Slater Bridge**, off St. Hubert's Road, St. Hubert's, c. 1900 Warren pony truss. Private.

WEST BRANCH

16. **Wilmington Bridge**, NY 86, Wilmington, 1934-35 double stone-faced concrete arches of 70 feet each, built by C. L. Smith.

Fourth Annual Honors Awarded at Ausable Club Meeting

AARCH Photo

AARCH Awardees, 1999: Mary Hotaling for Historic Saranac Lake; Paul Herrmann for the Village of Saranac Lake; Linda Markey for Homecoming; Jeanne Reynolds for the Town of Clifton; and Tina Bradt also for Homecoming

The Adirondack Architectural Heritage Awards program annually recognizes exemplary historic preservation work throughout the region. We welcome nominations from members and the general public. Nominations are due each year by February 15th. This year's AARCH Awards Committee was Mary Hotaling, Barbara Parnass, Carl Stearns and Steven Engelhart. The following awards were made at the 1999 Annual Meeting at the AuSable Club.

1. CLINTON COUNTY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

During the 19th and early 20th centuries, Lake Champlain was an extremely important commercial waterway in the region. Via the Champlain and Richelieu Canals, raw materials and manufactured goods flowed out of the region to the rest of the world. In more than a dozen places along this "corridor of commerce," lighthouses were built to guide ships and their cargo. The Valcour Island lighthouse was built in 1871 and was manned until it was automated in the early 1930s. More than a decade ago, the future of the lighthouse was very much in jeopardy. The owners of the island wanted to sell the island to the state but knew that when it became part of the Adirondack Forest Preserve, the lighthouse might be torn down. To avoid this, they entered into a conservation agreement with the Clinton County Historical Association prior to the sale. The agreement gave the Association the right, in perpetuity, to preserve and interpret the lighthouse. Over the past decade, the CCHA has had the structure placed on the National Register of Historic Places, has done substantial exterior restoration work, and now opens the lighthouse to the public during summer weekends.

2. GRETNA & PETER JERDO

For almost two centuries, farming has been the lifeblood of the Champlain Valley and, today, dairy farms, apple orchards and produce farms are still important to the local economy and to our rural way of life. This long history of agriculture is reflected in a myriad of distinctive farm buildings and in the valley's beautiful landscape. As the number of farms has diminished and as the nature of farming has changed, there are fewer and fewer operating farms in the region which still retain their 19th century character. One of these is the Jerdo family farm near the hamlet of Boquet. The centerpiece of this remarkable group of buildings is its Greek Revival style house, originally built by Eli Hoskins circa 1840, with its very unusual chevron or zigzag pattern in its brickwork. The Jerdos have done a commendable job of caring for and maintaining the house, barns and other outbuildings at this most special farm.

3. LINDA MARKEY & TINA BRADT

The Main Street of Old Forge has greeted visitors and provided essential services for more than 120 years. Though many still find the heart of the village charming and nostalgic, one by one its older frame buildings are disappearing or being severely altered. One outstanding exception to this trend is the restoration and adaptive reuse of the former Brunet Tourist Home. In 1997, Linda Markey and Tina Bradt purchased the building with the intention of opening a clothing and home furnishings store. Linda had a background in interior design and retailing and Tina had done several preservation projects in Connecticut. Using a group of talented local tradesmen and craftspeople and with extreme care and sensitivity, they restored this simple and elegant building, inside and out. This project has both saved an important historical building and set a new example and standard for the community. It is now a showplace that truly reflects its new name - The Homecoming.

4. UNION DEPOT WORKING COMMITTEE

When it was built in 1904, the Union Depot was Saranac Lake's major transportation connection to the outside world. It brought tuberculosis patients to the village's sanatoria and visitors to enjoy the region's magical lakes and mountains. When passenger service to the village ceased in the 1960s, it was closed and its future seemed very uncertain. To save this important landmark, a remarkable partnership emerged. The Union Depot Working Committee — with representatives from the Village of Saranac Lake, the Adirondack North Country Association and Historic Saranac Lake — created a vision for the depot, built community support, raised more than a half million dollars for its restoration and saw the project through. The building will serve as a visitor information center, will be home to several small businesses, and will have an interpretive exhibit in the main waiting room. Trains will run again there in 2000. This project has set an extraordinary example of what is possible when people work together for a common purpose.

5. SAVE OUR BRIDGE COMMITTEE

Preserving historic bridges presents a tremendous challenge. Historic bridges were often designed to carry smaller vehicles traveling at slower speeds. Generally, historic bridges don't conform to modern bridge standards. They are also subject to the ravages of weather and flooding and, as the technology of bridge building has changed over time, they are often hard to repair and rehabilitate. Several years ago, a small early 20th century iron bridge in the town of Clifton, owned by St. Lawrence County, was closed for vehicular use and was threatened with demolition. Disturbed by this prospect, a small group of people, including the town historian, supervisor and board members, formed the Save Our Bridge committee. Together they convinced the authorities that the bridge had a future as a pedestrian crossing, raised money, had engineering work done, and rehabilitated the bridge. Officially re-opened in 1998, the bridge is now in Town ownership and has a bright new future.

6. ADIRONDACK LIFE

The adaptive reuse of vacant buildings is something Adirondack Life seems to have an affinity for. For many years the offices of the magazine were in the former ski lodge at Paleface between Jay and Wilmington. In 1989, the offices were moved to the former Methodist Episcopal Church in the village of Jay. This c. 1848 brick church has Gothic arched windows, a fanlight over the entranceway, a four story bell tower and is situated in an important location across from the village green. Prior to being purchased and restored by Adirondack Life, the church had been vacant for many years and its future was very uncertain. Their work to restore and reuse the church saved an important local landmark, set an example for the reuse of church buildings and brought an important business to the village.

7. GENE DI SCENZA AND JEFF SWEET

The hamlet of Riparius, formerly called Riverside, is located on the Hudson River. It is a lovely settlement, with dozens of homes, a church and school, a graceful steel bridge across the river, and it is home to the Epworth Institute. It was also a stop on the Adirondack Railroad between Saratoga Springs and North Creek. When the railroad ceased carrying passengers in the 1955, the little depot in Riparius began its cycle of decline and by the mid 1990s was in serious disrepair. Thanks to a major initiative by Warren County to purchase and reopen the rail line and a grant from the federal ISTEA program, a new future for the depot was possible. Gene Di Scenza and Jeff Sweet purchased the depot and have done an incredible job of restoring it. It is now one end of the Upper Hudson Railroad Company's run from North Creek, a caboose on the premises is a snack bar, and the depot's waiting room houses a small historical exhibit about the village. Thanks to their hard work, an important piece of the village center is alive again.

8. LINDA MULLEN & HANK D'ARCY / DWIGHT & JOAN BURKETT

Several decades ago, classic early 20th century diners were among the most neglected and misunderstood buildings. Since then, there has been a new wave of interest in these unusual structures and with all that was part of diner life. The Adirondack Museum even moved the Gates Diner from Bolton Landing onto its grounds, as a way of paying tribute to and interpreting this era. The Miss Port Henry Diner, which had served the community for many years, was abandoned and had fallen into disrepair. Linda Mullen and Hank D'Arcy, who had been involved in the restoration of the King's Inn in Port Henry, fell in love with the old diner and saw a tremendous business opportunity there. They did an extraordinary job of restoring the diner and in rebuilding its complementary addition. Dwight and Joan Burkett are the current owners of the Miss Port Henry, and their love and enthusiasm for the place can be seen everywhere. The Miss Port Henry is now a busy restaurant, which brings new energy and life to the village.

Union Depot, Saranac Lake

News & Notes

ALBANY: Four recent Adirondack listings on the State and National Registers of Historic Places are: the Miller Homestead in the Town of AuSable, Clinton County; Paul Smith's Hotel Cottages, Town of Brighton, Franklin County; and the Wanakena Footbridge in the hamlet of Wankena, Town of Fine, St. Lawrence County. Also the Frazier Bridge in the Town of Ticonderoga, Essex County.

CHAMPLAIN VALLEY: Until March 1, 2000, the National Park Service is seeking public comment on a draft report on cultural and natural resources in the Champlain Valley and the potential role of the NPS in furthering the preservation, interpretation and promotion of these resources. To receive a copy of the Champlain Valley Heritage Corridor Project report, contact Douglas Lindsay, Superintendent, Saratoga National Historical Park, 648 Route 32, Stillwater, NY 12170. Phone 518 664-9821 x.206. E-mail: <doug_lindsay@nps.gov> On-line: www.nps.gov/boso/Planning.htm/Champreport

DEBAR PARK: New information has been unearthed on the architecture of DeBar Park Lodge, a log veneered frame building, in the Town of Duane, Franklin County. We included this property in our list of "Time Bombs" within the Forest Preserve (Spring 1995), as its exclusion will expire in about 2007. The owner who built the lodge in 1940 was Arthur Wheeler. His architect for the camp, service and garage buildings was LeRoy P. Ward, a native of Burlington, Vermont. Born in 1889, Ward studied architecture at Cornell. After a period of apprenticeship in others' offices, he hung out his own shingle in New York in 1928. "Leroy Ward's houses are always arresting to see: No matter what style, they are dramatically organized to highlight surface planes and textures, and elements are picturesquely massed and placed to catch light and cast shadows," writes Ellen Fletcher in *Long Island Country Houses and Their Architects, 1860-1940*, Robert Mackay, editor.

INDIAN CARRY: The 100 year old Indian Carry Chapel near Coreys (between Tupper Lake and Saranac Lake) is now for sale. The all-wood building with stained glass windows, original hardware and a cupola has a total floor space of about 1500 square feet, located on about one acre of land. An AARCH representative finds that it has "a high degree of integrity," and "it was built on a human scale, it is finely designed, crafted and detailed, and the warmth of the space lends itself to worship and contemplation." There is no electricity, water or sanitation associated with the property. For further information, contact Don or Martha Ely at 315 446-0259 or by e-mail at dely@ericir.syr.edu.

JAY: A reprint of *Log Cabins and Cottages: How to Build and Furnish Them* is now available in bookstores and through *Adirondack Life* for $12.95. The author, William S. Wicks, was the architect of many buildings at the Adirondack League Club (*AARCH NL*, Vol.6, No. 2)

LAKE PLACID: Despite efforts by the NY State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, AARCH and others to keep the Tiffany windows from the Memorial Chapel of the Lake Placid Club in the community, they have apparently been sold by USF&G to a buyer in Pennsylvania. OPRHP is now negotiating to acquire at least the Adirondack scene from the new owners.

LOON LAKE: Property owners are forming a new, not-for-profit organization called APRILL, the Association for Preservation and Revitalization In Loon Lake. For information, contact Nancy Pagano, author of "Loon Lake Historical Structures" published in the 1999 edition of *They Told Me So*, at 891-1128.

NORTH ELBA: Trinity Chapel, a non-denominational conservative ministry, is in need of new members. Its dwindling congregation finds it harder and harder to pay the mortgage taken when the "Old White Church," built in 1878, was moved down the Old Military Road from the site of the Olympic Training Center in 1988. The abolitionist John Brown was remembered last May 1 at a very well-attended service there. Interested persons may contact Al Rupp, 523-1665.

AARCH Board Welcomes Jane Mackintosh

AARCH is pleased to welcome Jane Mackintosh to its board of directors. Jane splits her time between Queensbury and Blue Mountain Lake, where she is currently curator and graphic designer for the Adirondack Museum. Jane brings to AARCH a wealth of valuable experience, including many years as a graphic designer, a great knowledge of regional history and material culture, and extensive exhibit development and production work. She is also a frequent contributor to Adirondack Life, leads field trips and workshops in the region, paints and draws. She is offering her c. 1875 stone school house in North Creek for sale since she has relocated to Blue Mountain Lake.

News & Notes *continued*

PAUL SMITHS: The formerly vacant Baker Cottage, now called Blum Hall, has been renovated and is in use as a "wellness dormitory" for 18 students at Paul Smith's College. Original cherry doors, woodwork and floors were refinished. The former hotel cottage is one of three listed on the National Register last year. The future of nearby Harriman Cottage, vacant and water-damaged, is still in doubt. This cottage was also used by E. H. Harriman's friend, Dr. E. L. Trudeau, which probably accounts for the second-floor sleeping porch, the only one in the small historic district.

PLATTSBURGH: *Lake Champlain Lighthouses*, an attractive, new 32-page booklet by George Clifford, highlights the ten extant structures on the lake, in both New York and Vermont. The publication is illustrated with original drawings by Sid Couchey, and is available for $4.95 in bookshops, marinas and museums throughout the Champlain Basin.

SARANAC LAKE: New owners Irwin and Karen Lieb have made extensive structural repairs to their new home at 127 Park Avenue. Historically called Highland Manor, this 1900 home and 1907 carriage house, beautiful examples of the work of architect W. L. Coulter, are located in the NR-listed Highland Park Historic District. One of the first, experimental, sleeping porches was an original feature of the house, later enclosed.

SARANAC LAKE: On January 4 the first new residents will move into Saranac Village at Will Rogers, billed as "the historic retirement community of the Adirondacks." Alpine Adirondack Associates have restored the facade of the former Will Rogers Hospital and remodeled the two-patient suites into studio, 1- and 2-bedroom apartments. Daily lunch and dinner are included in the cost, and a menu of other services can be provided as needed. Contact Elizabeth Phelps at 518 891-7117. On-line at <saranacvillage.com>.

THENDARA: As of November 7, Henry Parnass, President of the Adirondack Railroad Preservation Society, is also its acting General Manager. Parnass is retired CEO of Newton Falls Paper Mill and former President of the Adirondack North Country Association. ARPS is gearing up to open a new short-line tourist railroad between Lake Placid and Saranac Lake in the late summer of 2000.

UPPER ST. REGIS LAKE: Attendees of the first AARCH tour of this territory — by war canoe! — learned that Count von Bernsdorff, who lost his credibility as German envoy after a scandal involving a photo taken with women in bathing suits at White Pine Camp, was also a guest at Ogden Reid's Camp Wild Air (NR-listed as one of the Great Camps of the Adirondacks). Many such overlapping details enrich Adirondack history, and we are always glad to learn more of them.

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.

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 900 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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Discover ...

St. William's on Long Point

Mary B. Hotaling

St. William's on Long Point before the new shingling began.

Brooding on the shore of Raquette Lake is a hooded, shingled form, intriguing passing boaters. William West Durant built the church of St. William's on Long Point, and perhaps also the associated rectory, in 1890 for the use of Catholic residents in a now-vanished, year-round community there. The architect was Josiah Cleaveland Cady of Cady, Berg & See, New York, whose records call it "the Church in the Adirondacks." During its ownership by the Diocese of Ogdensburg, St. William's on Long Point — reachable only by water — was succeeded by a new, road-accessible parish church in the hamlet, also called St. William's and still in use. The Long Point property was used for many years as a summer retreat center by the Conventual Franciscan Friars, who added a dormitory building to the complex. Faced with the church's severe structural problems, the Friars gave up their use of it (see AARCH NL Fall 1992). In the spring of 1993, the diocese agreed to donate the property to a non-profit organization. A group of Raquette Lake residents organized as St. William's on Long Point, Inc., to take title to the property, preserve it, and use it for small group retreats, gatherings and other compatible uses. The 39 granite piers were stabilized in 1994 at a cost of $26,000, financed almost entirely by private donations. Soon the complex was open for summer use, including lodging and meals. When the current project — re-roofing and re-siding the church in thick wood shingles — is complete, passersby will have a rare view of a Shingle style building as it was intended to look, with a unified and continuous "skin." A National Register nomination is also in progress.

Make your reservations early for overnight stays or for the series of Thursday lectures in July and August, free but requiring reservations. Raquette Lake historic coverlets ($50.00) and a year 2000 calendar ($10.00) are available now. Director Sue Norris can be reached at PO Box 71, Raquette Lake, NY 13436, or phone 315 354-4265.

MARY B. HOTALING

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