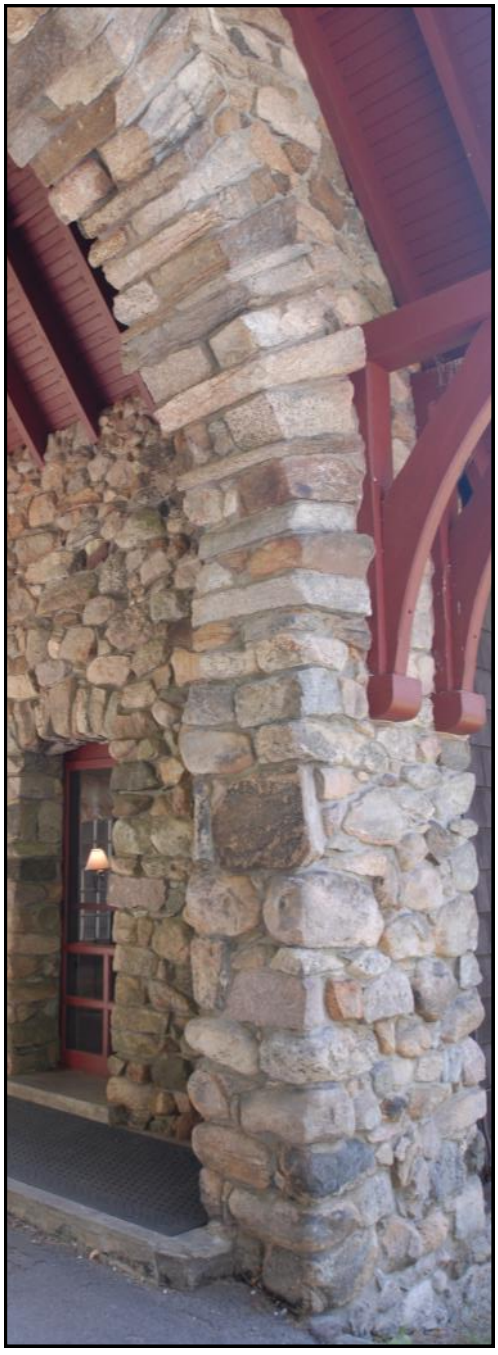
AARCH
MATTERS
WINTER NEWSLETTER 2016 VOLUME 25 NUMBER 1

Rock Solid: The Alden Family of Adirondack Stone Masons



Detail from Gate Lodge at Santanoni

Adirondack architecture often brings to mind the striking use of wood and other forest materials. But stone was also the choice for many structures, from fireplaces and houses to factories, barns, dams, bridges, even castles and towers. It is literally the bedrock of foundations all over the region. Rarely mentioned are the names and stories of the stone masons who brought these fantastic designs to life from local quarries, fields and river beds. Thanks to research by the Warrensburgh Historical Society, we know something about the Aldens, a family of masons who helped build Camp Santanoni, Camp Uncas, Sagamore, Kamp Kill Kare and many other widely recognized places in the Adirondacks.

The Warrensburg Aldens

Albert Alden was born in 1835 in Whitehall and lived in Warrensburg. He had three sons, Seth (b.1863), John (b.1864) and William (b.1885) who followed Albert into the trade. (Seth's son, another Albert, also joined the family business in the 1920s.) The Aldens were responsible for many of the signature stone buildings in Warrensburg (Church of the Holy Cross, Burhans Mansion, Woodward block), and also spent months and sometimes years working in different parts of the region and around the East Coast (and as far away as Michigan).

Durant and Great Camp Masonry

Great camp designer William West Durant employed Seth and John on some of his projects according to articles from the *Warrensburgh News*. In March 1893 John Alden left for Mohegan Lake for three months' work on Durant's new summer residence, Camp Uncas. Seth Alden also spent five months, beginning in September 1893, working on Uncas. The large stone fireplaces throughout the camp were more complex than anything Durant had designed before. The raised stone basements were another new architectural feature that provided space for coal- and wood-burning furnaces necessary for year-round living. Schuyler Kathan of Blue Mountain Lake was one of Durant's chief masons and Seth and John would likely have worked under his direction.

Burhans Mansion, built by Warrensburg mason Albert Alden

Seth moved on to Durant's largest Adirondack camp, Sagamore, where he worked on the foundations and other masonry between 1897 and 1899. The massive stone chimneys would have been erected first and then the wooden buildings constructed around them. The raised stone basements, stone piers and extraordinary stone fireplaces at Sagamore meant work for several masons.

Seth worked on Durant's projects in Newcomb as well during this time, at Mossy Camp and Arbutus. The stone work at these sites featured smooth, round stones from the lakes and rivers rather than the quarried finished blocks

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

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Dear AARCH Community,

As I write this in mid-February, a new year at AARCH is well underway. The 2016 tour and lecture schedules are being finalized, *The Guide to the Architecture of the Adirondacks* manuscript has been finished, advocacy campaigns continue on a number of essential issues and partnerships are moving forward on exciting new projects with the Adirondack North Country Association (ANCA), the Town of Ausable, and Cycle Adirondacks.

Looking back for a moment to 2015, all I can say is ***Wow!!*** AARCH's 25th anniversary year was truly a rousing success. Months of brainstorming, planning, coordinating and, in some instances, good old-fashioned elbow-grease brought about a year of unprecedented celebration and accomplishment. Several highlights are worthy of special note.

In November Executive Director Steven Engelhart and founding board member Howie Kirschenbaum, travelled to Washington to accept the ***Trustee's Award for Organizational Excellence*** from the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Then in December, AARCH staff and board members were joined by our friends from the Town of Newcomb and the DEC to receive a special award from the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation for our partnership work at Camp Santanoni. These significant "feathers" in our cap affirmed the exceptional work of this small and dynamic organization. They are a tribute to those who founded and nurtured AARCH and to all our members and supporters across the region.

During the 2015 tour season we explored some fantastic new sites, experimented with new modes of transportation, and revisited some of your favorite destinations from past years. I was pleased that so many of our members, friends and supporters were able to participate in AARCH's most ambitious array of tours and outings ever that concluded, just a few weeks ago, with our first international "grand tour" of Cuba *(see page 4 for tour photos).*

In August, many of you gathered at the transformed and sparkling Stone Mill in Keeseville for our Gala 25th Anniversary Celebration. The tireless work of staff and volunteers gave this structure a remarkable "make-over," creating a gleaming event space that reaffirms our belief that the Mill has a viable future that is within reach. Later that month the AARCH board gathered in Essex to offer a special "thank you" as we raised a glass to honor many of our longest-standing and most significant private donors. I am pleased to report to you that 2015 also saw excellent revenue growth through membership, fundraising and individual contributions and the organization's finances are solid.

As we embark on the next quarter century of AARCH's preservation efforts, I am very fortunate to have the opportunity to work with a dedicated and exceptional staff and a prudent and engaged Board of Directors.

On behalf of the board and staff, I want to extend my best wishes and sincere appreciation to all our members, sponsors, underwriters, supporters and friends of Adirondack Architectural Heritage. Now, more than ever, **AARCH MATTERS!**

Edward P. Finnerty
Board President

Adirondack Architectural Heritage is the nonprofit historic preservation organization for New York's Adirondack region. AARCH was formed in 1990 to promote better public understanding, appreciation and stewardship of the Adirondacks' unique and diverse architectural heritage.

A World of AARCH exists online, join us there.

Continued from page 1

Lounge fireplace at Huntington Lodge (Arbutus)

at Uncas and other Durant camps. Unlike in his previous projects, Durant had spent little time in Newcomb supervising the work and, upon seeing the finished masonry, expressed his dissatisfaction in a letter dated October 21, 1899. He wrote that the masons "did poor work and wasted time," and Durant told the contractor he would deduct twenty-five percent from the final bill.

Today, Arbutus Camp is owned by the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry (SUNY-ESF). Renamed Huntington Lodge, it was extensively renovated in 2008, and the rubble stone fireplace in the main building is the dramatic centerpiece of the common lounge.

Seth Alden is also reported to have worked for Durant at Eagle Lake in 1900 while Eagle's Nest Country Club was under construction with its casino, golf course and clubhouse.

Bowling alley chimney at Great Camp Sagamore

Stone work at Camp Santanoni

The striking Santanoni stone work was begun in 1893 and extended over fifteen years. It included the construction of three bridges on the main road, huge double fireplaces and chimneys in the Main Camp, and several signature stone projects that came later. In 1904 and 1906, Seth Alden was in charge of masonry work at Santanoni. The new structures, designed by Delano & Aldrich, incorporated grand stone arches into three buildings: the Artist's Studio with its arched stone window (1904), the Gate Lodge with its iconic arched entranceway (1905) and the fieldstone Creamery at the farm with portico arches and pillars (1904).

Based on newspaper reports, Seth and his son Albert were at Kamp Kill Kare from November 1916 through 1918. Built in 1897 by Durant, Kill Kare was mostly destroyed by fire in 1915. The Aldens and other Warrensburg workmen were employed in the rebuilding and significant expansion of the camp. Many of the new structures, designed by architect John Russell Pope, used "cyclopean" construction,

Chapel at Kamp Kill Kare built in 1921

incorporating huge native stones that gave the appearance of being held together without mortar. In 1921 a reproduction Norman-style chapel was added using the same technique. Schuyler Kathan was again overseeing the construction and the newspaper reported that he was assisted by Seth "Allen" (a likely misprint of Alden).

The masons' family patriarch, Albert Alden, died in 1904 and Seth died in 1931 after contracting a cold as he was working on the Stony Creek bridge. Seth's obituary called him, "one of the most expert workmen in this section. He built a number of stone houses and specialized for many years in cobblestone fireplaces, of which he built hundreds in Adirondack camps." The Alden family legacy lives on in the stone work all around us.

Special thanks to John T. Hastings and the Warrensburgh Historical Society for information on the Aldens. Visit their website at www.whs12885.*org or email:*whs7396@yahoo.com.

Stone Fingerprints at Santanoni

Chuck Higgerson has spent years volunteering as a mason at Santanoni. He knows the stone there and shares some thoughts about the original masons' work.

Most inspiring aspect? The beauty of the work in so many different locations: the Gate Lodge, Creamery, camp fireplaces and Artist's Studio. And the hardships they went through. Making lime and moving the huge stones — the fireplace stones weigh up to 1,500 pounds each.

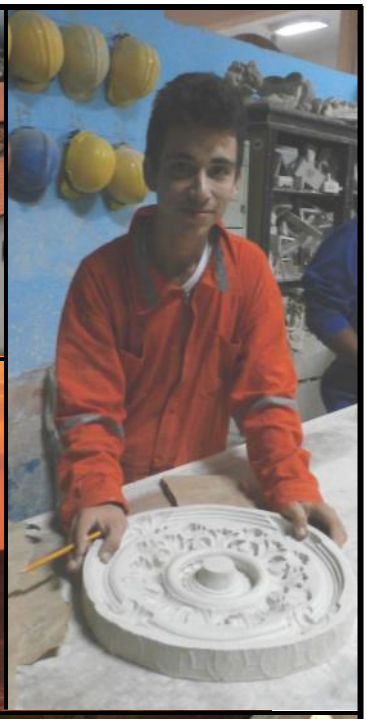
Biggest challenges for masons? The short season. They only had six months to build since temperatures have to be above freezing for the mortar to set and cure. Finding the stones, working them and transporting the materials and stones by ox cart would have taken many months and men, I'd guess more than 20 laborers. The granite would likely have been quarried on site but some stone may have come from as far as North Creek.

Notable features? The detail in the fireplace in the northside Guest Cabin *(photo below)*. The masons created mountains, water and sky with contrasting stone. It's a landscape painting in stone! The choice of color all over Santanoni is striking: blue granite, pink feldspar, white quartz, even some red garnet.

The massive size of the stones on the exterior work is awe-inspiring. The huge tapered stones (voussoirs) at the Gate Lodge and the cut and dressed stones that look completely natural *(photo page 1)*. The stone corbels. There is amazing and difficult work here. And it has held up so well for 120 years. Only the stone work that has been subjected to water has real damage.

Where do you "feel" the original masons presence most? The Creamery is the ultimate place. The stones are beautifully interwoven and rounded. Such skill and attention it took to keep the head joints from lining up. I can see the similarities between Uncas, Sagamore and Santanoni in the stone.

AARCH TOUR TO CUBA



A Cuba Connection

From tour participant Bill Bruce

In Trinidad, Cuba, we were astonished to see a Meneely bell in the city museum. The Meneely foundry in West Troy (now Watervliet) was once one of the most important in North America.

According to the Trinidad city historian, Nancy Benitez, it was purchased in 1857 for use on a nearby sugar plantation owned by the slaveholding Iznaga family. It was likely installed in the famous Manaca bell tower overlooking the Valley of the Sugar Mills, a UNESCO world heritage site we visited on our tour. The tower contained three bells: the largest rang to signal the start and end of the workday, the medium, a holiday, and the small one rang for Easter week. Bell combinations signaled slave escapes or slave rebellions. All three bells ringing together meant a pirate invasion.

The distance from Troy to Trinidad is not as far as it seemed before AARCH went to Cuba.

AARCH went to Cuba!
January 9-19, 2016

- **10 days**
- **9 cities, towns and villages**
- **2 beaches**
- **8 meetings with historians and architects**
- **468 mojitos**
- **25 people and our own bus**
- **17 versions of *Guantanamera***
- **1000s of photos**
- **One unforgettable experience!**

Come with us on AARCH's January 2017 tour to Cuba!

See Old Havana, Trinidad, Cienfuegos, Remedios, Santa Clara and many other fascinating places in Cuba with AARCH.

For information call **518.834.9328** or email **karyn@aarch.org**.

DISCOVER

2016 AARCH Tours: Surprises and Delights Ahead!

Our annual adventure schedule is always full of diverse architectural sights, culture, history, and good food and this year looks to be no exception! Planning is underway for a season with **ten new excursions** and many perennial favorites.

In 2016, we'll be taking a close look at pre-fab, post-war, and mid-century modern architecture—from roadside architecture and mail-order kit homes, to adorable A-frames and chalets in a 1960s vacation community. You will travel with AARCH by train, bicycle, boat, and even by "rail bike," and you'll be exploring new communities, buildings, and cultural landscapes within the Blue Line and beyond.

Look for the complete tour schedule in your mailbox and online in late April.

PRESERVE

2016 AARCH Preservation Awards

AARCH is now accepting nominations for our 2016 Preservation Awards, recognizing exceptional projects that exemplify sensitive restoration, rehabilitation or sustained stewardship efforts.

We welcome nominations from all over the Adirondack region and anyone in the community can make a nomination. For more information call or email Karyn Norwood, 518.834.9328 or karyn@arch.org. Forms are available online at **www.aarch.org/preserve/aarch-awards/nominations**

Save the date, Monday, October 3!
The 2016 Preservation Awards luncheon, always a highlight of the year, will take place at the Whallonsburg Grange Hall in Essex, one of our 2015 Preservation Award winners.

LEARN

Lectures

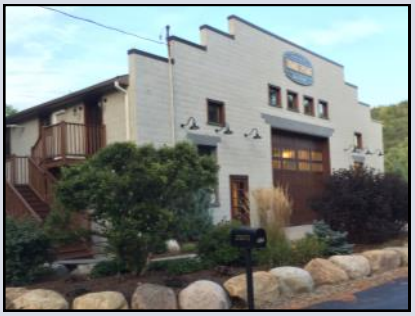
Want to hear a fascinating presentation on architecture and preservation? We've got just the ticket for your organization, library or school group. This year our lecture topics include:

- Great Camps and the Rustic Tradition
- What Style Is It?
- There's More to Adirondack Architecture than Great Camps

And new for 2016:

- Preserving Patrimony: Lessons from the Cuban Experience

Have a date in mind? Email **info@aarch.org** and we'll set you up!



Three of our 2015 Preservation Award winners: Tumblehome Boat Shop (Warrensburg), The Sembrich (Bolton Landing), and the Whallonsburg Grange Hall (Essex).

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Approximately 1200 households, organizations, municipalities, businesses, and foundations show their enthusiasm for AARCH's mission through their contributions that sustain our good work. Membership, annual appeal gifts, and foundations grants are the most important source of our revenue. Thanks to all who contributed generously to AARCH.

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Much of AARCH's work is made possible with funds from the New York State Council on the Arts.

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Marion Hannan
Gregory & Kathleen Harper
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Nancy Master
Doug & Margaret Masters
John & Laurel Maurer
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Marilyn McDonald
Patricia McDonough
Bill & Britt McDowell
Fran McIntyre
Marilyn McKnight
Alison McManus
Brian & Dotti McManus
Mark McMurray
Grace McNasser
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Ann Poole
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Jean Quattrocchi
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Warren Radcliffe
Mary Ann Randall
Paul Reagan
Mr. & Mrs. Anthony Reale
Pat Reed
Patricia Reed
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Gregg & Patricia Rettew
Gail Rheingold
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Penelope Smedley
Martha Smiles
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Karl Smith III
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Elizabeth Thorndike
Colleen Thornton
Enos & Muriel Throop
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Rex & Kathleen Trobridge
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Emily Tyner & David Bielefield
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Elizabeth Yokum
Diana & Greg Zais
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Ingrid Zimmermann
Patricia Zoli
Bill Zullo & Joan Roemer

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Alan Brown & Susan Moody
Jimm & Carol Blakeslee Collin
William Decker
Richard & Leanna Deneale
Joyce & Wally Dousharm
Lincoln Kilbourne
Barbara Kolapakka
Richard & Cheryl Maid
Jon & Mimi McBride
Robert Smyth
Anthony & Linda Taverni
Stephen Tilly & Elizabeth Martin
Elizabeth Wolf
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2015 ANNUAL GIVING

25-Year Members (2015)

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Adirondack Museum Library
Owen & Carol Beeder
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Margaret Datz
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Mrs. Louise Gregg
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Robert Kidd
Howard Kirschenbaum
Town of Newcomb
Francis & Alice Morigi
Jeffrey & Arlene Nichols
John & Susan Omohundro
Jeffrey Sellon
Peter Paine, Jr.
Ann Parks
Ann Poole
Gina Prentiss
Douglas Scott, AIA
Dr. & Mrs. Howard Smith
Michael Sorel
Carl Stearns
Mr. & Mrs. Donald Williams
Pat & Tom Willis
Ingrid Zimmermann

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($5000+)
Marilyn Burns & Jeffrey Sellon

($1000-$4999)
John & Wanda Callihan
Susan Darrin

($500-$999)
Andria Darby
Kimmey Decker
Jane & Bob Holder
Bruce & Amy Brelia Meighan
Willem & Margreet Monster
Carol & Gary Nordmann
Janice Woodbury

($250-$499)
Pat Benton
Dr. Sanders & Sally Berk
Gail Bradley
Edward Finnerty
Drs. Richard & Martha Frost
Nina Gershon
Frederick & Gloria Gleave
Charles & Margaret Higgerson
Charles Kilbourne
Anne Mackinnon
Patricia Marsh
Mrs. Annette Merle-Smith
John Mesick
Jeffrey Sellon
Anne Van Ingen

($100- $249)
Ken & Barb Adams
Ann & Joseph Armstrong
Anthony Brankman
Langdon & Susan Brown
Duncan & Caroline Cameron
Pidge Curtiss
Sara Jane & William DeHoff
Dan & Maureen Deighan
Richard & Leanna Deneale
Greg Dickson & Susan Hearn
Sarah Disney
Martha Evanoff
In Honor of the AARCH Staff
John & Tillie Freeman
Sarah French & Holger Nissen
Bill & Susan Harral
Heritage Properties of the Adirondacks
David Hislop, Jr.
Kristee Iacobucci & Tom Riley
Joan & Miles Kulukundis
Douglas & Arlene Langdon
Talia Latif
Christine & Eugene Lozner
William & Pamela McGarry
Melvin S. Cutler Charitable Gift
Lorraine & Wester Miga
Stephen & Mary Muller
John Nuzum, Jr.
Ida & Jim Nystrom
Peter & Patty Paine, Jr.
In Honor of Steven Engelhart
Nancy & William Paternotte
Ted & Donna Prime
Gregg & Patricia Rettew
Charles & Katie Richman
Charles Savage
In Memory of Arthur Vandervoort Savage
Janet Schloat
Gilbert Smith
In Memory of Dorothy A. Smith
John & Martha Spear
Donald & Rachael Spieler
Barbara Sullivan
Carolyn Summers & David Brittenham
Lynn Valenti
Brenda & John Valentine
Tania Werbizky & Brad Edmondson
Angeline Whisher
Richard & Jean Williams
Pat & Tom Willis

(Up to $99)
Jane Barlow
In Memory of Mark Barlow
Jennifer Betsworth & Matthew Shepherd
Elena Borstein
Cynthia & Rick Bullock
Christine Campeau
Peter & Janet Clarke
Jimm & Carol Blakeslee Collin
Alexander & Carleen Crispo
John & Marianne Diglio
Joan Doran
Yvonne Farmer
Robert & Sharon Faulkner
Geri Favreau
Sally & Ray Freud
Joel Friedman
Mark Frost & Sandra Hutchinson
James & Judy Goar
Norma Goff
Daniel Goltzman
Graeme & Janet Hammond
James Jacob
William & Meredith Johnston
James Keebler
Andrew Knox, Architect
Ruth Kuhfahl
Richard Lamb
David LeRoy
William Little
Stefanie Noble
Jerome Pinto
Peter & Colleen Prescott
Seymour Preston, Jr.
Rogers-Carroll Family Foundation
Leonard & Glenda Seyfarth
Lenton & Barbara Simms
Marina Petoff Smith
In Memory of Linda M. Petoff
Stephen Tilly, Architect
William & Mary Ughetta
Stephen Vekasy
Anne Weld
Cecil & Gilda Wray
Elizabeth Yokum
Charlene Zebley

SUSTAINING MEMBERSHIP— *It works for everyone!*

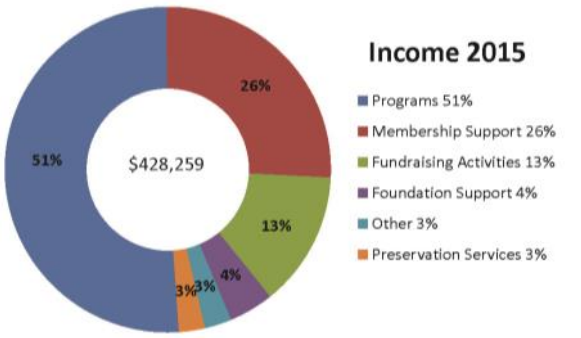
2015 was a busy year! We bought (and began fixing up) an 1882 Italianate house, volunteered for AARCH and Camp Santanoni, helped clean up and then danced the night away at the Stone Mill gala, ran, camped, hiked, and ate our way around the state. And, oh yeah, we became AARCH Sustaining Members. We didn't want to lose our membership renewal letter under a pile of drywall or at the bottom of a backpack, so we signed up online. That simple monthly payment makes it easy to give.

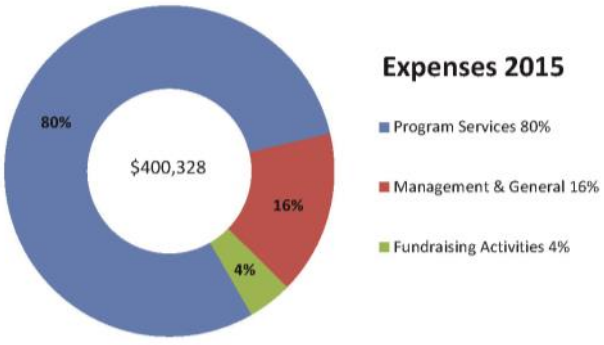
AARCH is the key to our Adirondack adventures (*yours, too, I'm sure)*. Join us as Sustaining Members and you won't miss out on any of the fun! *Jennifer Betsworth and Matthew Shepherd, Troy*

Sustaining Members support AARCH automatically with easy monthly payments. Sustaining membership means more of your gift will go directly to advocacy, education and preservation efforts (less paper, stamps, and administrative costs). Join Jennifer and Matthew and make this your sustaining year! **To sign up visit www.aarch.org or call 518.834.9328.**

Look what we did together this year! Thank you for your generous support.

Row 1: 25th Anniversary Gala; AARCH Preservation Awards presentation; HistoricCorps crew at Santanoni. **Row 2:** "A Keene Eye on Architecture" gallery reception; tour group at the Gate Lodge; Adirondack Scenic Railroad conductor and passengers; receiving the National Trust *Trustees' Award.* **Row 3:** AARCH, Town of Newcomb and DEC receive NYS award for work at Santanoni; Plaza des Armas in Old Havana, Cuba; Hurricane Mountain firetower restoration.





AARCH had a healthy fiscal year in 2015. Our overall revenues were up significantly from the previous year and, by keeping expenses in line, we ended the year in a position to put $27,931 into our operating reserves. We are especially pleased that many of our most important sources of revenue were strong. Compared with 2014, membership revenue was up 9%, fundraising income was up 40%, contributions from individuals were up 24%, and program revenue was particularly strong, primarily because of our Cuba tour.

AARCH is grateful for the support of many businesses in the region and beyond. We especially value our business partners' commitment to sponsoring our Golf Tournament, benefits and other events. Please help us thank them for contributing to the preservation of historic places in the Adirondacks by supporting them.

SPECIAL THANKS TO THESE MAJOR SPONSORS AND BUSINESS MEMBERS:

AARCH is also grateful to these businesses for their support:

Adirondack Designs
Adirondack Massage Therapy
Adirondack Premier Properties
Aunt Polly's Material Girls
Boordy Wines
Burnham Benefit Advisors
The Chronicle
Cloudsplitter Carpentry
Community Bank
Cronin's Golf Course
Fledging Crow Farm
Harvest Homes
Heartspace Yoga
Heritage Properties of the Adirondacks
International Paper
Thomas LaBombard, P.E.
Linear Art Studio
Mace Chasm Farm
MARCH Associates
Mark Kurtz Photography
Mastoloni Pearls
Merrill L. Thomas Realty
MJ Sagan Architecture
Nancie Battaglia Photography
North Country SPCA
Kevin O'Keefe, DMD
Anthony Paskevich & Associates
Phinney Design Group
Raquette Lake Navigation
Renew Architecture & Design
Schutze Family Dentistry
Select Sotheby's International Realty
The Sembrich
Timberlock Resort
Upstate Agency
The Waldheim

AARCH business membership and event sponsorship is a great way to show your company's support for the special places in the Adirondacks and to reach new audiences!

Sponsorship opportunities are available for these AARCH events:

- Annual Golf Tournament on August 29 at the Lake Placid Country Club;
- Annual Meeting on June 11 in Wells;
- Gala Benefit on July 9 at the Valcour Brewing Company in the Old Stone Barracks, Plattsburgh;
- Preservation Awards Luncheon on October 3 in Essex.

For information on business membership and sponsorship contact Mary-Nell Bockman at 518-834-9328 or marynell@aarch.org.

NEWCOMB: CAMP SANTANONI

A new Unit Management Plan for Camp Santanoni, at least five years in the making, went through several rounds of public review and comment and appears close to final approval by the DEC and APA. The new plan gives DEC and its partners greater latitude for interpreting the site, allows for the rebuilding of the Barn lost to fire in 2004, and makes some additional allowances for restoring a portion of the farm's agricultural landscape.

In 2015, we had the great pleasure of having an **HistoriCorps crew at Camp Santanoni** for two weeks in August. HistoriCorps is a nonprofit that organizes skilled volunteers to do work on historic buildings on public land. Working under the supervision of Michael Frenette and Steven Engelhart, the crew took on some of the most challenging work remaining at the Farm, doing major structural repairs on the Farm Manager's and Herdsman's Cottages. At the Farm Manager's Cottage this meant safely stabilizing the largely collapsed interior of the building and adding a new floor system.

ESSEX CHAIN LAKES: GOOLEY CLUB

The management plan for the Essex Chain tract calls for the preservation and public use of the historic **Outer Gooley Club** building but requires the removal in 2018 of the arguably more historic **Inner Gooley Club** complex on Third Lake. AARCH will continue to advocate for the preservation of these buildings and their use as a "hut to hut" destination within a network of regional trails. We will also nominate the property to the National Register in 2016.

NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATIONS

Several properties in the Adirondacks were listed on the State and/or National Registers of Historic Places in 2015. The largest of these was the **Helen Hill historic district** in Saranac Lake, a neighborhood of late nineteenth and early twentieth century homes built during the heyday of the village as a tuberculosis curing center. This nomination was sponsored by Historic Saranac Lake and prepared by AARCH staff.

The Uplands, a camp complex in Keene Valley, was built about 1910 and is "an impressively scaled and highly intact example of seasonal Adirondack camp architecture." It has been owned by the Thorne family since 1922.

The **Caldwell Presbyterian Church** in Lake George was finished in 1856 and is typical of an antebellum rural Protestant church "of timber frame construction, Wren-Gibbs in overall form, and ornamented with distinctive Greek Revival-style detailing."

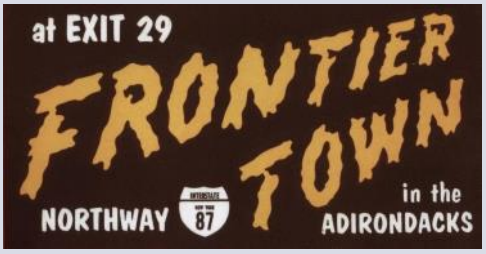
Continued on next page

REMSEN TO LAKE PLACID RAIL CORRIDOR WINS *SEVEN TO SAVE* DESIGNATION FROM PRESERVATION LEAGUE

AARCH nominated the threatened railroad corridor as a "Seven to Save" site with the Preservation League of New York State. On March 2, at a press conference at the State Capitol, League President Jay DiLorenzo announced that the Remsen to Lake Placid Rail Corridor has been designated as a statewide "Seven to Save" site. The League will bring all of its advocacy, public policy, and technical assistance resources to the fight to save it. We are thrilled by this major step forward in the campaign.

The state appears poised to give final approval to "Alternative 7," the DEC plan to remove 35 miles of railroad track between Tupper Lake and Lake Placid to create a multi-purpose trail. The Adirondack Park Agency voted its support to ripping up the rails despite ten years of active use by the Adirondack Scenic Railroad (22,000 riders on this section in 2015), the popular new Adirondack Rail Explorers rail-biking business (15,000 riders in its first season), thousands of people speaking out against the destruction of the rails, an alternate plan that would create rails *with* trails, and state laws that require significant further effort before an irreversible "adverse impact" on this National Register-listed historic resource can be carried through.

AARCH and other railroad advocates — the Adirondack Scenic Railroad, Historic Saranac Lake, the Trails with Rails Action Coalition, the Preservation League of New York State and hundreds of others — will continue the fight throughout the coming year until all options and remedies are exhausted.



FRONTIER TOWN

This once popular family and tourist attraction was built by Arthur Benson and opened in 1952. Thousands of vacationers every year stopped to see the "Wild West" re-created beside the Northway, including Prairie Junction, a saloon, stagecoach and a train that were routinely robbed by outlaws on horseback. Its pioneer village included an operating forge, sawmill, and gristmill and a log church in the settlement. Many Adirondack residents spent their summers working in period costume, greeting visitors, and turning out souvenir sheriff's badges.

Closed since 1998, the park has fallen into ruins. Essex County is exploring the demolition of the buildings owned by the county because of safety concerns. Sad as it is to see the passing of this once great regional attraction, arrangements have been made to move some of the forge equipment to the Penfield Homestead Museum in Crown Point. A new book, *Frontier Town, Abandoned Theme Park Then and Now* by Jennifer St. Pierre and Tammy Whitty-Brown, documents and explores the fascinating history and architecture of the site.

The **Essex County Municipal Complex** in Elizabethtown represents a history of continuous use as the seat of county municipal government since 1824 when the courthouse was built. The body of abolitionist John Brown lay in state there on December 6, 1859 on its way for burial at the Brown farm in North Elba.

The **Eli and Diadama Beecher house** in Edinburg was built about 1830 as a home, but it has also served as a store and the Beecher Hollow post office over its long history.

EAGLE ISLAND, UPPER SARANAC LAKE

Thanks in large part to an anonymous donation, the **Friends of Eagle Island** were able to purchase the National Historic Landmark camp on Upper Saranac Lake that architect William Coulter designed for Vice President Levi P. Morton in 1903. This is the first step in fulfilling the Friends' dream of bringing youth camping and outdoor education back to the island. By the end of 2015, they had also raised more than $500,000 for planning and restoration costs. They hope to make significant progress towards getting the island ready for use this year. AARCH is pleased to be working with the Friends to make good things happen there.

KEESEVILLE

The Town of Ausable received a $49,000 grant through the state's Consolidated Funding Application process to hire a consultant to prepare plans for the adaptive reuse of the village's **Civic Center** for a variety of community functions. The 50,000-square-foot building was built in 1936 as the Keeseville High School and has been used in various ways by the community for the past thirty years. It was closed in 2010, but the Town and a local group of supporters have recently taken up the cause of its restoration.

PLATTSBURGH

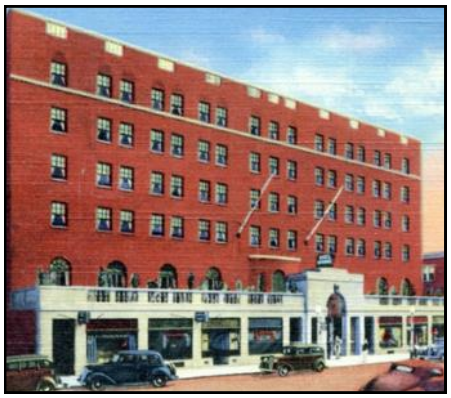
On January 17, 2016 the Valcour Brewing Company opened its doors at the **Old Stone Barracks** for the first time, allowing the public to see the incredible progress they've made on restoring the building and to taste its initial beer offerings. Renovation and restoration work will continue throughout the year and VBC expects to be fully operational by mid-summer, just in time for AARCH's Benefit Gala on Saturday, July 9. Plan to join us there and celebrate the preservation of this special place.

One of the William Coulter designed buildings at Eagle Island

SARANAC LAKE

A newly restored **Hotel Saranac** will reopen in 2016. The Roedel Companies of New Hampshire bought the hotel in 2013 with plans to return the hotel to its former grandeur. Having the building listed on the National Register of Historic Places and accessing state and federal investment tax credits for the rehabilitation of historic properties have helped to subsidize this $13 million project. The newly renovated hotel will have 88 redesigned guest rooms, a fully restored Grand Hall, a restaurant, spa, gift shop and ample parking.

The hotel was designed by architects Scopes and Feustmann, built by Branch & Callinan, and finished in 1927 at a cost of about $500,000. It was an important center of village life for decades. The Hotel Saranac was purchased by Paul Smith's College in 1962 as a facility to train students in its hotel management program, who worked under the supervision of professional staff. It was owned by the Arora family from 2006-13.



Hotel Saranac in Saranac Lake

TICONDEROGA

Thanks to funding from the New York State Council on the Arts, Fort Ticonderoga has engaged John G. Waite Associates to prepare plans for the restoration of **the Pavilion**. The Greek Revival-style building was built in 1826 as the summer home of William Ferris Pell. It was used as a hotel, catering to Lake Champlain and Lake George steamship passengers between about 1840 and 1900. The Pavilion was then used again by the Pells through much of the 20th century.

This project is part of the overall master plan for the site. Reuse ideas include meeting and event space, administrative support, and dining and lodging services.

VALCOUR ISLAND

In 2015, a major exterior restoration project was completed on the **Bluff Point lighthouse** on Valcour Island. Located within the Valcour Island Primitive Area, the lighthouse is owned by NYSDEC, but is managed by the Clinton County Historical Association and is open to the public in the summer through a conservation easement. The state-funded, $170,000, restoration project was done by Rabideau Construction of Plattsburgh and included a new metal roof and gutters, restoration of all exterior surfaces, repointing the brick chimney and stonework, structural repairs and painting.

WARRENSBURG

Ash Anand of the Lotus Group recently purchased three historic industrial buildings along the Schroon River with the intention of expanding various commercial activities there. **The Grist Mill** restaurant, located in a former mill built in 1824, will go from a seasonal establishment to year-round operation. A circa 1892 building, once used by the Empire Shirt Factory, will become a brewery if all goes well.

The **Merrill Magee Inn**, a popular lodging and dining institution for decades in Warrensburg, was reopened to the public in 2015. Bought at foreclosure by Michael and Donna Flanagan and Richard and Leslie Flanagan, the energetic new owners have restored the existing buildings and constructed a new kitchen, restaurant and tavern within the complex, which also includes ten guest rooms. The oldest section of the inn dates back to 1812. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Welcome Karyn Norwood, AARCH Program Director

Karyn Norwood joined the staff as our Program Director in late December. She comes to AARCH by way of Vermont, equipped with five years experience in programming, education, and historical research in museums and libraries.

She graduated from the University of Vermont with an M.S.in Historic Preservation and received her B.A. in History from St. Michael's College. Karyn is hard at work planning the 2016 Tour Schedule and is enthusiastic about contributing to AARCH's outreach and technical assistance as well. You can reach her at karyn@aarch.org or 518.834.9328. Or sign up for one of our tours and you'll be sure to meet her.

RAFFLE MANIA!

Purchase tickets **before May 9** for your chance to win one of **10 great prizes**!

- ★ Weekend at Big Shanty
- ★ Adirondack Museum tickets
- ★ Cruises on Raquette Lake and Lake George
- ★ Rail Explorers Rail Bike Excursion . . . *and more!*

Visit www.aarch.org for information on prizes and to buy tickets.

Your generous support makes a **BIG** difference!

ADIRONDACK ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE
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A World of AARCH exists online, join us there.

PRESERVING THE ARCHITECTURE AND COMMUNITIES OF THE ADIRONDACKS THROUGH EDUCATION, ACTION AND ADVOCACY

SAVE THE DATE

Special Events You Don't Want to Miss!

- **Right now!**
  Raffle Mania! Ten spectacular prizes! Help make this our biggest and best ever. Drawing is May 9.
- **Saturday, June 11**
  Annual Meeting at The Revival in Wells, followed by lunch and tour of the studio and sculpture park of John Van Alstine and Caroline Ramersdorfer
- **July** (*date to be announced*)
  Opening reception for ***Patrimonio*: Sketches and Photographs of Cuba** in the AARCH Gallery
- **Saturday, July 9**
  Benefit Gala at the Old Stone Barracks, Valcour Brewing Company in Plattsburgh
- **Monday, August 29**
  8th Annual Golf Tournament at the Lake Placid Club
- **Monday, October 3**
  Preservation Awards Luncheon at the Whallonsburg Grange Hall, Essex