AARCH
MATTERS
YEAR IN REVIEW 2019

Buildings Speak, We Listen

There are at least a half dozen reasons why people love historic buildings and will go to extraordinary lengths to preserve and care for them. Among these are the beauty that they bring to our lives and communities, their important role as gathering places, the way they define our individual and community identities, and the economic opportunities they afford. But most people also understand that historic places have a way of connecting us to history, to stories in a tangible and accessible way. The following is a reminder of just how deep this connection can be and just how good buildings are at telling stories, if we'd only listen.

Think about what you experience when you see, feel, touch, or smell a historic building that you remember and love. These places linger in our memories not simply because they are nostalgic spaces, but because in a building, its stories are embedded in the walls, its character adheres to the rafters, and its memories are ingrained in marked up floors or timeworn door frames. They transcend time and speak to us, recalling the good and the bad, and acting as a roadmap to better understand our present and future, too. Often, the stories tied to a building or place are not immediately visible – it's only when you read it against the grain, sift through its record, and delve deeper into what is on the surface that you find the fuller, more complicated, and decidedly human stories. Scholar and urban planner Donna Graves puts it best when she asserts that a "community's most vital attachment is to its lived history–without that story being conveyed, a structure or site is an empty shell." Historic buildings are home to the stories that give communities a sense of place, a sense of history, and a sense of identity.

AARCH tours Saranac Lake's most storied places, including the Trudeau Institute pictured here. This photo was taken exactly 101 years after the dedication of this Dr. E. L. Trudeau monument on August 10, 2019.

Every year, we bring these stories and voices to life through our offering of public educational outings all across the Adirondacks and beyond. Finding and sharing the diverse and unique stories that are embodied in our region's buildings is what we love doing. It opens us to numerous histories, large and small, and helps us to effectively communicate why particular places are so special to the people who live and work in and around them, and also why they are worthy of our care and stewardship. We are also increasingly driven to tell the lesser known stories found in the Adirondacks, through its buildings, because these stories are of everyday people, often ignored by conventional histories. Yes, our Great Camps and the wealthy people for whom they were built get a lot of public attention but you'll find AARCH just as interested in a miner's cottage in Lyon Mountain, a log cabin near Lake Champlain where a Revolutionary War veteran and his wife raised more than a dozen children, and a lighthouse keeper's experiences. Their lives in these places matter, too.

Early on in our tour season, we explored the

Continued on page 2

Buildings Speak, We Listen

Continued from page 1

A 1915 photograph of Essex County Woman Suffragists gathering in front of "Sunny Jim." Courtesy of the Keene Valley Library.

life of famed summer resident and women's suffrage activist Inez Milholland and how the movement she gave her life to took shape in the region. Together with our guide, writer, and Inez scholar Sandra Weber, we followed the activist's life by visiting her family home, now the Meadowmount School of Music, her grave site in Lewis, and then traveled to Keene Valley where her contemporaries were fighting the good fight closer to home

A great example of a building we saw that embodies the battle for women's suffrage in the Adirondacks is "Sunny Jim" in Keene Valley. This Colonial Revival style home was modified in 1903 for Katherine Notman, a women's rights activist from Brooklyn whose family summered in Keene Valley. It was named "Sunny Jim" after an old breakfast cereal character and for its bright yellow color scheme. Here, in this gambrel-roofed house on NYS Route 73, Essex County suffragists hosted meetings, discussed politics, and challenged the socio-political norms of the time. In 1915, "Sunny Jim" was the headquarters of the Woman Suffrage Party of Essex County and, on July 15, the *Elizabethtown Post* announced that a conference set to be held there would be " . . . the most important conference ever held in Essex County, as reports will be read and work planned for the last months of the campaign for woman's suffrage in the 'Empire State'."

Notman's philanthropic and social reform interests were not limited to suffrage, but included providing education and training for local people, organizing a choir, and "slum clearance" to beautify the hamlet. The Milholland family home, Inez's grave, and "Sunny Jim" all bring us into direct contact with people who helped shape one of the most important movements of the 20th century and all deserve to be on the National Register of Historic Places.

Later in June, as this year's rainy, chilly spring weather finally broke to the warmth of the early summer, we explored an even more underrepresented part of our region's history – that of Native Americans' historic and continued relationship with the Adirondacks. Histories of the Park often fail to say much about a Native American presence here. In most of these works, Adirondack history begins with Samuel de Champlain's "discovery" in 1609, continues with 18th century wars, and then with the white Anglo American settlement and exploitation of the region's natural resources in the 19th century. But thanks to Melissa Otis' book *Rural Indigenousness*, we now have a fuller and richer view of the Native American presence in the region, before and after Champlain. Melissa was our guide for our "Indigenous Landscapes of the North Country" tour and, with her, we explored the faint traces but compelling stories of Native Americans in the region.

Our first major stop was "Indian Carry" – a name that congers up images of Native Americans portaging canoes between the Raquette and Saranac watersheds, a place that looms large in Adirondack culture. It is said to have been home to a small indigenous settlement and was a frequent stop and settlement for Haudenosaunee/ Iroquois or Abenaki traders, trappers, and hunters. Here, geography and opportunity created use and settlement for Native Americans over centuries but it was left mostly to our imaginations as to just what this must have looked and been like. After Native Americans largely disappeared from Indian Carry, it continued to be actively settled and used, because its importance as a key transportation route remained. Jesse Corey built a mid-19th century "Rustic

STORYTELLER
Howie Kirschenbaum

AARCH's founding board president Howie Kirschenbaum has led tours for AARCH for more than 25 years, including to Santanoni, Uncas, White Pine Camp, and Big Wolf Lake. He is just one of the many supremely gifted storytellers we have been fortunate to have interpret the many special and magical places in the Adirondacks.

Lodge," the guesthouse of which still stands, indigenous artifacts were found and appropriated, and then 20th century camps were built. Yet, Native American figures like Daniel Emmet remained active here. Emmet sold artisan souvenirs and birch bark canoes at the center of the Carry near present-day Route 3, and served as an usher at the small chapel nearby. Layer upon layer define the history and power of this long-used crossroads.

The day ended with a visit to the Six Nations Indian Museum with David and John Fadden. In the absence of many direct physical remains of Native Americans in the region, the importance of this small institution is huge. In this artifact-filled space, and through their storytelling, the richness of Mohawk life and history in the North Country was slowly revealed. The Faddens explain that the building's design "reflects the architecture of a traditional Haudenosaunee bark house. The long bark house is a metaphor for the Six Nations Confederacy, symbolically stretching from East to West across ancestral territory." Here, oral tradition is alive and well in the site's buildings and traditionally constructed infrastructure, which serve as both literal containers for the region's timeless native voices. These spaces also remind us that indigenous peoples, culture, and buildings are still present if we care to see and hear them.

At Onchiota 's Six Nations Indian Museum (above), colorful and symbolic wampum belts tell Haudenosaunee stories and represent ancestral Mohawk voices. These belts are so large, that some circumnavigate the interior of the building (below).

In July, we explored the story of Isaac Johnson, a former slave, who went on to have an extremely successful career as a stone mason and builder in the North Country. His story is powerful, tragic, and inspiring all at the same time, and the remarkable buildings he constructed stand as a testament to black entrepreneurship at a time when terrorism in the form of convict leasing, lynching, and murder were commonplace for people of color in the United States.

Sold into slavery at age seven by his father in Kentucky, he eventually escaped to Union Army lines in 1863, joined a black regiment, and fought against the Confederacy. After the war, the thrice-wounded Johnson made his way north, eventually settling in Ontario, where he married Theodocia Allen, and started working as a quarryman and "lime mason." Soon after, Johnson joined a crew of workers at the nearby Winchester United Church. His involvement in this large project led to a string of other commissions in Ontario, including an Anglican church in Morrisburg and several farmhouses scattered across the countryside. After he moved to St. Lawrence County, he built institutional buildings in Ogdensburg, a multi-span stone bridge over the Grasse River, a Catholic church in Churubusco, houses, and the Presbyterian Church and Town Hall in Waddington. These are among the most prominent buildings in their communities – places of worship, gathering, and healing – and collectively would represent an extraordinary legacy for any builder. But they are all the more special because of Johnson's extraordinary path in life and overcoming of racial barriers at the time.

Three vignettes from our outing illustrate

Buildings Speak, We Listen

Continued from page 3

the powerful connection between place, people, and stories. Johnson worked as a quarryman at "Baker's quarry" near Winchester and it was from this quarry that the stone was extracted for the United Church. But Johnson also built the simple farmhouse in which the quarry owners lived. There are Baker family descendants still living in that house, the oldest of which recalled his grandfather telling his own stories about Isaac Johnson, as if he was there just yesterday. So more than 100 years after his death, we could not only see his work but feel his presence through this oral history. As we walked around the Gothic Revival style church in Winchester, our guide pointed out a sun, moon, and star high up in the stonework. Why was this done and what did it mean? In the absence of any written record, we are left to surmise but one interpretation is that this was Johnson's way of honoring the North Star that brought him to Ontario and the North Country soon after.

Isaac Johnson built the Waddington Presbyterian Church in 1887-1888. His core stone work notably survived a 1908 fire and remains standing as a testament of Johnson's lasting skill and craftsmanship.

The Waddington Town Hall is perhaps the most ambitious and meaningful of all of Johnson's buildings because it was at the very center of community life. It was here that generations of people heard live music, saw theatrical performances, participated in discussions and debates, held elections, did municipal business, and gathered in other ways as a community. When Johnson and his crew were building the Waddington Town Hall in 1884, a local newspaper declared it "one of the best town halls in the country" and that Johnson was " . . . the contractor and one of the best architects in the country." Despite the hyperbole, it does express the very high opinion that locals had for Johnson and his work. Today, the town offices are in another building but Johnson's Town Hall has been restored, is back in active use again, and a brass plaque at its entrance proudly lists Johnson as the builder.

Isaac Johnson

STORYTELLER *Fran Yardley*

A long-time friend of AARCH, actress, author, and unmatched storyteller, Fran has led AARCH 's outing to the Bartlett Carry Club for many years. Her stories and experiences from her and her husband's time researching and restoring the club appear in her recent publication *Finding True North* (2018).

Helping grass roots preservation projects succeed is at the core of our mission and it is with great pleasure that we lend our time and expertise to communities all across the region as they tackle their own work in creative and inspiring ways. The following section describes some of the exciting projects we have been involved with this year.

National Register of Historic Places

AARCH prepares National Register nominations for hire and provides guidance and support to others writing nominations. This is primarily done by our Preservation Services Director. Listing on the National Register of Historic Places elevates the stature of historic properties and allows owners to seek grant funding and take advantage of state and federal tax credit programs to help fund preservation work.

In 2019, our biggest National Register project was working to create a large **historic district in Malone** that will include about 135 19th and early-20th century commercial, civic, and residential buildings in the heart of the village. Malone has some of the richest and most diverse architecture in the region, including brightly painted Queen Anne style houses, the imposing Richardsonian Romanesque First Congregational Church, handsome downtown buildings, and a one-of-a-kind house with a Gothicized Greek Revival portico. This work, for the Malone Chamber of Commerce with support from the Malone Revitalization Foundation, is funded by a *Preserve New York* grant from the Preservation League of New York State and is part of a larger effort to revitalize Malone's downtown. In 2018, Malone received $988,000 in funding from the Restore New York program for downtown revitalization work.

Once the district is created, the opportunity here is for building owners to take advantage of state and federal historic preservation financial incentives. Municipalities and nonprofits (including churches) may apply for grant funds, including from the Environmental Protection Fund and Sacred Sites Fund. Private residential and commercial building owners can take advantage of two very generous tax credit programs that have the net effect of reimbursing the owner for up to 40% of a project's cost.

Please contact AARCH for more information about all of these programs.

We are also working on several other smaller National Register nominations, including for the William L. Coulter-designed **St. Regis Presbyterian Church** near Paul Smiths, **Echo Farm in Essex**, the **Keene Valley Country Club**, and a **former pharmacy building in Champlain**. We've also started a "reconnaissance level cultural resources survey" for the entire Town of Schuyler Falls. This survey will provide the underpinnings for future National Register work in the town.

One of Malone's Queen Anne style "Painted Ladies."

A Church Restores Its Steeple

A great example of how our technical assistance and National Register work makes a real difference to the preservation of a historic building and the continuity of a community institution is the role that we've played over the last two years at the **Hague Baptist Church**.

We were first contacted by parishioner Mike Cherubini late in 2017 after stones started falling off of the bell tower of this 1912 structure. A closer examination revealed that the masonry veneer of the tower and its underlying wood framing were severely deteriorated and in danger of further collapse. As a temporary solution, the top of the tower was removed and the remainder of the structure was covered until a more permanent fix could be made.

Our advice to this small congregation was three-fold. Start by getting the best possible technical advice on how to undertake the repairs from an architect, engineer, or preservation contractor. This they did by hiring Darren Tracy of West Branch Engineering (Saratoga Springs) to do a

Malone's Richardsonian Romanesque First Congregational Church (left) and a unique circa 1850 Gothicized Greek Revival home on Milwaukee Street (right).

Technical Assistance and National Register Work

Continued from page 5

condition assessment and to make repair recommendations. Eric Labarge of Labarge Masonry & Restoration (Ticonderoga) did a similar assessment and restoration plan, too.

Then there was the issue of getting the funding to undertake the project, estimated to cost more than $100,000. The church felt that much of this could be raised through private donations from the Hague's most generous people. We suggested that they also seek funding from the Sacred Sites Fund of the New York Landmarks Conservancy but this required that the property be on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. So AARCH took on these two projects simultaneously, a National Register nomination and a Sacred Sites Fund application and, late in 2018, the church was awarded a $25,000 grant. In awarding the grant, Peg Breen, President of the Landmarks Conservancy said "Religious buildings anchor communities by providing a sense of history and place and they are among our most important landmarks. Preserving them also allows congregations to continue to offer social service and cultural programs to their communities."

The 1912 Hague Baptist Church appeared in this early 20th century postcard (left). Today, it 's steeple has been fully restored (above).

The grant allowed the work on the church to proceed and, by the spring of 2019, the work by LaBarge was completed, returning the church to its original condition. By the end of 2019 the National Register work will be completed, too.

We've also provided a variety of technical assistance help to:

- Lavenlair Farm (Whitehall)
- Barn owners in Keene and Wilmington
- Chestertown Town Hall
- Steamboat Landing and Church of the Transfiguration on Blue Mountain Lake
- Lewis Town Hall
- Santa's Workshop (Wilmington)
- Lake Placid railroad station
- Church of the Assumption (Redford)
- Nettle Meadow Farm (Thurman)
- Hancock House (Ticonderoga)
- Sabattis Adventure Camp (Long Lake)
- Swing Bridge (Keeseville)

If you have an issue or project in your community that could benefit from this kind of assistance, please contact Christine Bush, Preservation Services Director, at 518.834.9329 or christine@aarch.org.

STORYTELLER *Amy Godine*

A superb scholar, historian, and *Adirondack Life* contributor, Amy explores the African American experience in the Adirondacks, lending vital context to discussions about regional history and identity. In 2019, she led our "Looking for Timbuctoo" tour, which brought us to several places associated with Gerrit Smith's experiment in African American settlement.

It was another great year at Camp Santanoni, where we made progress with conservation and planning projects and welcomed thousands of visitors arriving on foot, bicycle, skis, and horse-drawn wagon.

We had three great **staff people at Santanoni** this summer (left to right below): Wilkes Jordon (SUNY Brockport), Allison Brashears (Shepherd University), and Gabrielle Perlman (Mount Holyoke), They interpreted the camp to thousands of visitors, did window restoration, porch floor staining, more clearing at the Gardener's Cottage, rescreened "Aunt Ruth's gazebo," and other projects .

We're also making progress with our goal to rebuild the farm barn that was lost to fire in 2005. This spring, NYSDEC hired Easton Architects to undertake a **feasibility study** to explore the cost, uses, and other practical aspects of reconstructing this vitally important structure on the property. A team from Easton kicked off their work with an initial meeting with the Santanoni partners and by doing the fieldwork in June.

In 2018, AARCH was awarded a $370,000 ***Save America's Treasures*** grant from the National Park Service for a large project to fix foundation problems and install a new roof on the Main Lodge. This was one of only nine building conservation grants awarded nationwide by this program. Since then, we have been working to secure the required matching funds from New York State ($250,000) and the Town of Newcomb ($120,000) and to begin the architectural planning process by issuing a Request for Proposals for architectural services later in the year. This project will take place over several years and should be completed by 2022.

Thanks to the financial generosity of the Town of Newcomb, the leadership of Wester Miga and Supervisor Robin Deloria, and the volunteer work of architect Chuck Higgerson, the entire **electrical system of the Gate Lodge** was replaced in May and early June. This reduces fire and safety risks at the building and ensures that our summer staff and visitors can fully enjoy living and visiting the site.

STORYTELLER *Paul Hai*

Associate Director of the Adirondack Interpretive Center Paul Hai has donated his spirited leadership to AARCH's programs, tours, and events time and time again. At Tahawus, Upper Works village, and Huntington Lodge, whenever there are stories needing to be told in Newcomb, Paul is there to lend his expansive expertise.

Board Changes

In 2019, AARCH elected seven people to our board of directors. We welcomed four first-time board members. **Jan C.K. Anderson** is a seasonal Adirondack resident with an international reputation in historic preservation as the founder and president of RESTORE, a nonprofit focused on educating the public about building conservation, and as a commissioner and former president of US/ICOMOS. **Bill Barnes** worked for several decades in human resources but is now retired and resides in Wilmington. **Darcey Hale** has had a professional life in education and her nonprofit work includes the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum and Willsboro Heritage Society. **Jim Van Hoven** is a historic homeowner in Essex and was a long-serving educator, headmaster, and school superintendent. He has served as a board member for Lake Champlain Committee, the Essex Planning Board, and Essex Zoning Board of Appeals.

We also welcomed back three returning board members: **Andy Prescott, Wester Miga,** and **David Hislop** and **Samantha Bosshart** and **Susan Harral** were elected to serve their second three years terms.

Staff Changes

Left to Right: Jessica Parker, Christine Bush, Nolan Cool, and Steven Engelhart at this year's Preservation Awards Luncheon at The Hedges on Blue Mountain Lake. Photo by John Eldridge.

FAREWELL *Virginia Siskavich and Mary Cirbus*

In July, we said goodbye to Mary Cirbus, our Preservation Services Director, who relocated to Boston to join her husband and begin a new job with the Boston Landmarks Commission. We thank Mary for elevating and expanding our technical services work and wish her all the best. In September, we said goodbye to our beloved Deputy Director Virginia Siskavich, who had been with AARCH for seven years and did so much to improve, grow, and strengthen our communications and visibility, and to make AARCH such a fine organization. We look forward to following Virginia wherever her new passions and interest lead her.

MEET *Jessica Parker*

In July, AARCH welcomed **Jessica Parker** as our new Office Manager. Jessica brings a wealth of experience (and a ton of personality!) to her role and has quickly become invaluable. She is also an avid outdoorsperson and has a knack for making people smile. As a Minnesotan, if she is not fishing, you'll likely find her in the kitchen cooking up a delicious "hot dish" with her beloved German Shorthair Pointer "Panzer" by her side.

MEET *Christine Bush*

Christine has worked in the preservation and construction industry for over 25 years. In addition to her academic training at Roger Williams University, she has worked with preservation architects, at Lowell National Historical Park and as an independent contractor on many diverse preservation-related projects. Christine also has a deep appreciation and love for the Adirondacks. When not exploring the lakes and woods in the region, she and her husband live on a small homestead in Jay with two miniature donkeys, dog, cat, and several honey bee hives.

Each year we hold a series of special events, to gather our members and friends at our annual meeting to conduct business and share inspiring stories and at a series of fundraising events to raise funds to support our important work

Annual Meeting
Depot Theater, Westport

On June 8, AARCH kicked off its summer season by holding our annual meeting at the historic 1876 railroad station in Westport. The station is an Amtrak stop and, for more than 30 years, has been home to the Depot Theater, the only professional Actors' Equity Association (AEA) and Stage Directors and Choreographers Society (SDC) affiliated theatre company in the Adirondack Park. The highlight of the gathering was a talk by Fran Yardley about the history of Bartlett Carry, the Bartlett Carry Club, and the work that she and her husband, Jay, did to bring this resort back to life in the 1980s. Fran is the author of *Finding True North* (2018).

Chamber Concert
Greystone Mansion, Essex

In June, we also hosted our 5th annual benefit concert at Greystone Mansion in Essex, where we had a full house for an intimate evening of chamber music. David H. Miller and friends Claire Ferner and Matthew Hall performed a selection of 17th century English music by composers such as Henry Purcell and John Blow. David spoke with the audience throughout the evening, discussing relevant historical and musical contexts of the featured pieces. Thank you to David Hislop and Stephen Maselli for hosting and organizing this event.

A Summer Soiree on Chazy Lake

Our Summer Soiree was held at the 1928 (McKim, Mead & White-designed) **Werrenrath Camp** on Chazy Lake on August 3 and was lots of fun and a great success. It was a spectacular summer afternoon that included music by the Wickmore Jazz Trio, a special cocktail by Murray's Fools Distillery, food by Anthony's, and an Eleanor Roosevelt impersonator. A special thanks to our hosts, Bob and Lee Brewer for making this such a special and memorable occasion.

AARCH Goes to Slovakia

In late September, AARCH took a group of 19 people on a fascinating and far-ranging 11 day tour of Slovakia. This was our fourth international outing. We traveled all across the country, from the capital of **Bratislava** to the **High Tatras** mountains in the north to the more isolated rural towns along the border with the Ukraine. We saw churches, lively city squares, walled medieval villages, went into mines, climbed Calvary hill, mourned the Holocaust at memorial sites around restored synagogues, met preservationists and learned about their work there, ate well, and enjoyed the company of our fellow travelers.

The concert, soiree, trip to Slovakia, and our annual raffle are great fun AND are all important fundraising opportunities for AARCH, the proceeds from which help to support our good work in the region. We are especially appreciative to all our members and friends who took part in these events.

AARCH tour-goers at the Isaac Johnson-built Waddington Presbyterian Church.

BY THE NUMBERS

Between **1991 and 2019**, AARCH has offered over **190 distinctly different** tours across the Adirondack Park, North Country and beyond the Blue Line. These include **65 tours in Essex County, 31 in Franklin, 22 in Clinton, 13 in Hamilton, 19 in Warren,** and 25 in Herkimer, Lewis, Oneida, St. Lawrence, Saratoga, Washington, Fulton, and Jefferson Counties, as well as 10 outings outside of the North Country. And our tours have brought us to **five different countries!**

Representing the Underrepresented

Each year, we push ourselves to create the most interesting and far-ranging series of educational programs that we can. One of our goals this season was to take people to new places that explored the lives and stories of people *not* well represented in Adirondack history. That we mostly fail to recognize these people, their stories, and the buildings associated with them is not just an Adirondack issue. According to a 2015 National Park Service survey, only 8% of the sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places are connected to underrepresented communities, including women and people of color. So we put together a series of new outings that took up this challenge.

In June, we had the great fortune of teaming up with scholar and *Adirondack Life* contributor Amy Godine on our **Looking for Timbuctoo** tour, which traced the history, important figures, and few remaining buildings associated with Gerrit Smith's experiment in creating an African American settlement in Essex County. On this outing to John Brown's farm, the New Russia Post Office, and a few other sites, through Amy's eyes and depth of knowledge, we were able to better understand this African American experience and discover what was hiding in plain site.

In stark contrast to the faint traces of Timbuctoo in the landscape, the work of escaped slave and master builder Isaac Johnson is found in the some of the most prominent public buildings in the St. Lawrence River Valley. Travelling alongside historian Corky Reinhart, our **Isaac Johnson: Stone Mason and Freedom Seeker** tour explored the remarkable life of Johnson from his enslavement to his success as a North Country entrepreneur.

Through other outings on this theme, we explored the world of Native Americans in the Adirondacks at Indian Carry and the Six Nations Indian Museum; looked at the life of Inez Milholland and the Essex County women's suffrage movement in Lewis and Keene Valley; and walked in the footsteps of mill and mine workers in Corinth and Newcomb.

We also offered a handful of other new outings. Our **Lighthouses of Lake Champlain Open House** brought people to two lighthouses in New York and two in Vermont to take in the sights, sounds, views, and history at these iconic, well-preserved historic sites. We returned to Plattsburgh for what promises to be a new AARCH favorite, **Brews at the Barracks**. Under the expert guidance of AARCH board member and local historian, Rich Frost, we learned how the former Army Barracks and Air Force Base was transformed into a remarkably well-preserved residential and commercial

We visited Oval Craft Brewing, housed in a restored Plattsburgh Barracks firehouse built in 1890.

In a new outing to Old Forge, we received a special behind-the-scenes tour of Enchanted Forest Water Safari, one of the premier Adirondack theme park attractions featuring quirky, storybook architecture.

neighborhood filled with thriving businesses and welcoming homeowners. This tour included sampling some superb craft brewing at the Valcour Brewing Company and Oval Craft Brewing.

We also returned to many of our favorite historic Adirondack camps, communities, and historic places, including tours of **Valcour Island, Raquette Lake, Camp Santanoni, Big Moose Lake, Bartlett Carry, Wanakena, Loon Lake, Leary Castle and Hemlock Ledge, Historic Essex**, and **Tahawus and the**

Spectacularly preserved communities like Loon Lake welcomed AARCH with open arms!

Upper Works. The season ended in the Capital Region to explore the architecture and landscapes of the **Garden Cemeteries of Albany and Troy**.

This season, **over 1,050 people attended our 38 outings**!

NOLAN'S TOUR NOTES

Tour Miles (and Carbon Emissions) on Nolan's Car : *2,273! Let's all try to reduce our driving miles in the future by doing more carpooling on future outings.*

Favorite Tours of 2019: *Isaac Johnson: Stone Mason & Freedom Seeker, Indigenous Landscapes of the North Country, Lighthouses of Lake Champlain, and the Alvin Inman Architecture tour.*

Hidden Gem: *Lighthouses of Lake Champlain Open House*

New Tour Sure to Become a Classic: *Brews at the Barracks — Rich Frost's spirited leadership and visiting two fantastic breweries in historic buildings—what could be better?*

Best Weather: *Tahawus and the Upper Works – we were lucky this year with weather, as this tour was not too hot, not too cold, and in October no less. Great fall foliage!*

Hottest: *White Pine Camp — a balmy 90 degrees but splendid!*

Coldest: *Garden Cemeteries of Albany & Troy — a brisk, chilly late October day beyond the Blue Line!*

Best Food: *Modern Homesteading — Laurie Berube's fantastic farm-fresh lunch, alongside learning to make delicious sauerkraut.*

Thank you to everyone who joined us, participated, and made each tour such an enjoyable and memorable experience. We hope to see you on the AARCH trail next year!

Do you have an idea for the next AARCH adventure?

Let us know!

Your suggestions and feedback help shape our programs. ***Contact Nolan*** *at* nolan@aarch.org *518.834.9328*

We Give Talks, Too

In 2019, **AARCH Executive Director Steven Engelhart gave a dozen lectures** all over the region, including in **Lake Luzurne, Tupper Lake, St. Regis Falls, Willsboro**, and **Woodgate.**

Our AARCH Preservation Awards Program *annually recognizes exemplary historic preservation work throughout the region. We honor examples of sensitive restoration, adaptive reuse, community revitalization, and long-term stewardship. Our 2019 recipients represent the wide range of projects, places, and people who are helping to preserve and enhance the unique heritage and built environment of the Adirondacks.*

BLUFF POINT LIGHTHOUSE
New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
Clinton County Historical Association
Town of Peru, Clinton County

During the 19th century, Lake Champlain became an extremely important and busy waterway in the region. In order to safely guide ships along the waterway, the United State Lighthouse Service built 13 lighthouses in New York and Vermont. Work started on the Bluff Point Lighthouse on Valcour Island in 1871 and it was finished in 1874. Built with limestone quarried in Willsboro, the lighthouse is a 28' square building capped with a mansard roof and a 35' light tower. A cantilevered balcony surrounds the light, which was a "Haines 5th order lens of the fixed white type," and visible for 13 miles. The lighthouse's first floor features a kitchen, pantry, living room, foyer and bath, and its second floor features four bedrooms for its keeper and family.

Beginning in the late 19th century, more economical rail transportation led to the eventual demise of the lake's commercial transportation, thereby reducing the need for manned lighthouses. In 1929, an automated beacon on a steel tower was erected near the lighthouse and the lighthouse was shut down, as were all others along the lake. In 1932, this lighthouse and its 1.5 acres were sold into private hands.

In the 1960s, New York State actively began acquiring properties on Valcour Island. Wanting to sell the lighthouse property to the state but concerned about its future in state ownership within the Adirondack Forest Preserve, the Raboff family entered into an easement with the Clinton County Historical Association that gave CCHA the right, in perpetuity, to preserve and interpret the lighthouse to the public, even after the state acquired the property in 1986. This began a thirty year stewardship partnership between CCHA and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC).

Volunteers from CCHA have restored all of the interior rooms of the lighthouse, including repairing and painting walls and ceilings, and refinishing floors and architectural details. CCHA has also created interpretive exhibits throughout the building, opened the lighthouse on a regular basis during the summer, and published a Valcour Island Heritage Trail map to help visitors explore the history of the rest of the island. NYSDEC recently funded a complete restoration of the exterior of the building, including new roofing and gutters, shingle work, restoration of architectural details, and a complete paint job. Together, CCHA and DEC have preserved this lighthouse and made it an important beacon and destination in the region.

ECHO FARM
Dillon Klepetar
Town of Essex, Essex County

Echo Farm was originally built circa 1820 by Lieutenant Colonel Aaron North, who commanded New York's 37th militia regiment during the Revolutionary War and War of 1812. He

received the property as partial payment for his time in service. Like many early 19th century farms in the Champlain Valley, this began as a small farm, raising diverse farm products for the needs of the family, with occasional surpluses to sell for cash or barter. Over several centuries of use, as the nature of the farm changed and families there grew, the house was enlarged and modified, farm buildings were added or removed, as needed, and by the late 20th century there was still a simple farmhouse, large timber frame barn, and several other outbuildings, all amid beautiful farm fields and country landscapes.

The property is currently owned and operated by Dillon Klepetar as Echo Farm, a farm-based catering company and working farm that raises livestock for meats and dairy products and grows vegetables and flowers, primarily to provide food for highly individualized weddings and other special events where clients want only the very freshest ingredients and meals.

Central to the operation of Echo Farm is the barn, which Dillion rehabilitated over the last several years into the farm's milking parlor and for other farm uses. This work was done with great respect for the historic fabric of the barn and using a state historic barn tax credit as a financial incentive. The barn compliments other buildings on the property, including the farmhouse, a catering/kitchen building, two greenhouses, other outbuildings, pastures, and cultivated lands.

The Champlain Valley is well-known for its large dairy farms and apple orchards, but Echo Farm represents another very exciting and encouraging future for regional farming – the small farm raising meats, dairy products, fruits and vegetables or producing value-added products from local farms which are directly sold to consumers through Community Supported Agriculture groups, farmers' markets, and farm stands.

WADDINGTON TOWN HALL
Town of Waddington, St. Lawrence County

Waddington's Board of Supervisors voted to construct a new town hall on March 20, 1884.The $10,000 project was slated to start during that summer and was to be built by Isaac Johnson. Johnson, a former slave from Kentucky who escaped slavery and fought in the Civil War for the Union Army's 102nd Colored Troops regiment, had eventually found his way north and became an accomplished mason and builder in both northern New York and Canada. In late May, workers were "drawing stone from the dock" on the St. Lawrence River to build the structure's foundation and Johnson estimated that "180 cords of stone" would be used in all.

Ogdensburg architect William J. Akin designed the building. His plans called for a 45 x 90 foot building and with a large "audience room" and a tower 50 feet high. John Willis was contracted to do the carpentry work. This native limestone building mimics architecture more typical of regional stone churches and features a gabled front with two asymmetrical towers. The Town Hall's dramatic main entryway features a one -story, three-bay, arcaded portico set between the towers, over which is centered a large round-arched window. The building also has a bracketed wood cornice, standing seam metal roof, a wide flight of stairs ascending to the stone landing, and large doors leading into the auditorium.

The construction of the building concluded in late December 1884, and reportedly cost $15,500 total. Historically, besides its use as a town hall, the building was used as an opera house, dance hall, dining space, basketball court, roller skating rink, polling place, court space, as well as for some church functions, rummage sales, auctions, socials, and a forum for local politics. The town ceased using the building in 1977, and later built a new municipal building.

But the community still had a need for large gathering place, so the town took up the work of restoring the old Town Hall, receiving architectural planning advice from Crawford & Stearns, Architects, and eventually receiving state funding to undertake the work. In 2018, it completed a large restoration and rehabilitation project that included refinishing interior spaces, insulation and a new heating system, new accessible restrooms, and an elevator between floors, all of which have made this an extremely attractive venue for town events. The town historian is also housed in the building. Live music, performing arts, and regional art installations are just a few of the featured uses of the restored venue. All of this has brought new uses and new life back to the building, and Waddington is immeasurably better and more vibrant for this good work.

NORTHBROOK LODGE
Geoffrey Robillard
Town of Brighton, Franklin County

Master builder Ben Muncil (1867-1930) built Northbrook Lodge, on Osgood Pond near Paul Smiths, for Canadian Senator Wilfred L. McDougald beginning about 1920. Muncil was a prolific builder who also built nearby White Pine Camp and Camp Topridge (for Marjorie Merriweather Post) but, unlike these

other architect-designed camps, no architect is known to have been involved in the design of Northbrook Lodge, suggesting that Muncil may have designed the camp himself. Architectural historian Mary Hotaling writes that "only a designer who was also the builder would create such immensely complex roofs [as the one in NBL's boathouse lounge], because no architect would have that much confidence in a builder."

Author and founding AARCH board president Howie Kirschenbaum is particularly effusive about the "great room" in the boathouse, saying "This room is, I think, a Muncil masterpiece, in every respect. The truss system foreshadows what would come, on a much larger scale, at Topridge a few years later. Muncil was excellent at creating these large open spaces without posts in the middle. I think this is one of the greatest 'great rooms' in the Adirondacks."

Besides its use for decades as a private camp, many people know Northbrook Lodge from the time it was run by the Schwartau family as a popular Adirondack resort, offering beautiful and comfortable cabins, three meals a day, and "no organized activities." This was operated by two generations of the family from 1952 to 2009. When it came time to close the resort and sell the property, Laura-Jean Schwartau wanted to ensure that the camp's distinctive architecture would be protected.

The family entered into a preservation easement with Adirondack Architectural Heritage. This is one of five easements that AARCH holds on historic properties in the Adirondacks In selling the camp to Geoffrey Robillard in 2012, the property could not have gone into better hands. Jeff has taken up the restoration, rehabilitation, and improvement of Northbrook Lodge with great enthusiasm, sensitivity, and resourcefulness. In doing so, he has largely relied on the talents of his caretaker Jay Dawson and many other skilled builders and craftspeople. They have restored interior spaces and building exteriors, added kitchens, improved bathrooms, made subtle exterior changes, refurbished roads and the tennis court, all in keeping with the original architecture of the complex. In 2014, Northbrook Lodge was placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

14 MILE ISLAND
Laura Finley
Town of Bolton, Warren County

Lieutenant James Hadden, a member of the 2nd Battalion of the British Army's Royal Artillery during the American Revolution, explained in a July 1777 journal entry that his regiment "came to anchor at 14 Mile Island, so called because it is 14 miles from Fort George," which stood near the present-day village of the Lake George on its southern shore. 14 Mile Island actually sits 12 miles from Lake George's southern shore but Hadden's description stuck, despite the artilleryman's mistaken calculation.

During the nineteenth century, the Fourteen Mile Island House opened as a sportsman lodge and eventually expanded to accommodate over 40 people. By 1890, the Delaware and Hudson Company had constructed a pier to accommodate steamships on the east side of the island and, three years later, the steamship Rachel crashed nearby, killing 12 guests that were headed to the island for a dance.

Today, under the ownership of Laura Finley and family, much has been done to restore the island's historic buildings, particularly its all-important boathouse. Work to repair and restore the boathouse began in 2010 after ice damage caused the building to twist on its cribbing. The upstairs interior had been vandalized and beavers had colonized the downstairs. It also required major wall repairs and roofing, two enormous 20'x30' lodges to be removed, and the building to be "beaver proofed" with a permanent, submersible chain-link fence. Once the major exterior repairs were done, including an authentic cedar shingle roof, the second floor apartment was restored to its original configuration, including its north-facing covered porch, flower boxes, balconies and railings. The original flooring was exposed and refinished, the original French doors on the balconies were reconditioned, and all original hardware was retained and restored.

DR. FERGUSON HOUSE
Darren & Lisa Tracy
City of Glens Falls, Warren County

This little 20' x 20' building, located at 5 Culvert Street in Glens Falls, is a French Second Empire style building that was constructed c. 1870 to house the medical practice of Dr. James Ferguson, a prominent Glens Falls physician. French Second Empire style buildings are typically much larger in size and at least three stories tall, so what makes this building so unique is its diminutive size, its prominent mansard roof, and the extent of its exterior architectural

ornament. Ferguson's office closed around 1900 and the building was converted to a residence soon after. The building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in the 1970s, where it was noted as "the only structure of its type and period remaining in Glens Falls," presumably referring this unusual combination of size and ornamentation.

During the decades around the turn of the last century, the building was not well cared for and, in 2013, the City of Glens Falls seized the property from its owner for unpaid taxes. Uninhabited, the building continued to deteriorate into a state of severe disrepair. Holes in the roof and exterior walls allowed for the infiltration of rain and snow and its two floors collapsed into the cellar. Citing structural instability and public safety concerns, the city first condemned the building and then announced to the public that bids would be accepted for its demolition. But with this announcement, a dedicated and persuasive group of local people, with help from AARCH, spoke up about the importance of trying to save this building and convinced the city to put off demolition and try to find an owner who would take on its rescue and rehabilitation.

To their great credit, the city heeded these calls for putting off demolition and eventually sold the building to Darren and Lisa Tracy for $1, after being convinced that the Tracys had the resources and expertise to take on this difficult project. Darren is a licensed engineer, with 30 years of experience as a general contractor, who had also completed several historic preservation projects, including the restoration of Hubbard Hall in Elizabethtown.

Work on the structure commenced in October 2017, as soon as the title was transferred, by first building a temporary roof over the existing roof and then carefully rebuilding the structural systems of the building. Over the next two years, the Tracys completely restored the exterior, saved as many interior architectural details as possible, and created all new living spaces, the upshot of which is a beautifully restored building with a modern interior. The Tracys took advantage of state and federal investment tax credit programs for the rehabilitation of historic buildings as a financial incentive for their good work.

AARCH's Annual Preservation Awards Luncheon

AARCH celebrated these six awardees on Monday, September 9, at our annual awards luncheon. This year our annual celebration will be held at The Hedges, a former 19th-century great camp built by Hiram Duryea on the shores of Blue Mountain Lake and 2018 Preservation Award winner. Over 80 people joined us for an afternoon of good food, wonderful company, and beautiful stories about the people behind these notable preservation projects.

AARCH 2019 Awards Recipients (left to right): Laura Finley, AARCH Board President Dean Melville, Geri Favreau and Pat Parker (CCHA), Bob Stegemann (NYS DEC), AARCH Executive Director Steven Engelhart, Lisa and Darren Tracy, Dillon Klepetar, and Geoffrey Robillard. Photo Credit: John Eldridge

Have an idea for a future award nomination? Please contact us at christine@aarch.org or give us a call at 518.834.9328.

ADIRONDACK ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE
1745 MAIN STREET. KEESEVILLE. NY 12944
518.834.9328 | WWW.AARCH.ORG

Nonprofit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Keeseville, NY
Permit No. 18

A World of AARCH exists online, join us there.

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

Ñùś L êņ çêś ș śê Ñùś Ääĉľ çòŋê

Nearly 30 years ago, a small group of concerned individuals came together to save Camp Santanoni and begin AARCH's broad and effective work across the region. We ended that first year with 150 members.

Today, over a 1,500 people— people just like you— are AARCH members. You come from all corners of the Adirondack Park, four countries, and 38 states!

Everything we do — advocacy, education, and preservation — is supported primarily by your donations to our Annual Appeal and through membership contributions. ***Thank you for your continued support.***

JOIN online at **www.aarch.org**. We're available by phone at 518.834.9328 and email at info@aarch.org.

NEW YORK STATE OF OPPORTUNITY. Council on the Arts

This publication was made possible, in part, through the generous support of the New York State Council on the Arts, Architecture + Design Program

AARCH BOARD OF DIRECTORS

JAN C.K. ANDERSON, *Jay*
WILLIAM BARNES, *Wilmington*
SALLY BERK, *Indian Lake*
JENNIFER BETSWORTH, *Troy*
SAMANTHA BOSSHART, *Saratoga Springs*
SUSAN DARRIN, *Hague*
RICHARD FROST, *Plattsburgh*
DARCEY HALE, *Willsboro*
DAVID HISLOP, *Essex*
SUSAN HARRAL, *Keene Valley*
ED HODGES, *Boston*
WILLIAM JOHNSTON, *Wadhams*
DEAN MELVILLE, *Upper Jay*
WESTER MIGA, *Newcomb*
ANDY PRESCOTT, *Keeseville*
PETER SEFTON, *Northville*
JIM VAN HOVEN, *Essex*

STAFF

STEVEN ENGELHART, *Executive Director*
NOLAN COOL, *Educational Programs Director*
JESSICA PARKER, *Office Manager*
CHRISTINE BUSH, *Preservation Services Director*