AARCH

Adirondack Architectural Heritage

2021 Annual Meeting & 26th Annual Preservation Awards

Hotel Saranac, Saranac Lake Saturday, September 18, 2021

Annual Meeting Agenda

10:00 ANNUAL MEETING, GRAND BALLROOM

Welcome & Introductory Remarks
Dean Melville, AARCH President

AARCH Business
Rich Frost, Board Development Committee Chair

Gratitude for Departing Board Members
William Johnston and Jennifer Betsworth

Election of New Board Members
For a first three year term: Maria Russell, Sara Heffern, and Ed Hodges

Financial Report
Jennifer Betsworth

What's Happening at Historic Saranac Lake
Chessie Monks-Kelly, Archivist/Curator
Historic Saranac Lake

Some Parting Remarks on 30 Years with AARCH
Steven Engelhart, Executive Director

Meet Our New Executive Director
Erin Tobin, incoming AARCH Executive Director

Questions & Comments from Members and Guests

Final Announcements

11:30 LIGHT REFRESHMENTS, GREAT HALL FOYER

Enjoy coffee and mingle in the Great Hall Foyer.

12:30 AWARDS LUNCHEON, GRAND BALLROOM

Lunch followed by presentation of 2021 Preservation Awards.

Incoming Board Members

MARIA RUSSELL

Maria Russell is retired from a career on the public relations faculty of Syracuse University's Newhouse School of Public Communications, including four terms as Chair of the school's Public Relations Department. Previously she enjoyed a fourteen-year career in the private sector, including supervision of the press center for the 1980 Winter Olympics in Lake Placid. She earned a Bachelor's Degree with Honors from College of St. Rose, and a Masters in Journalism at Syracuse University's Newhouse School. Maria lives in Fayetteville.

SARAH HEFFERN

Sarah Heffern most recently worked in social media for the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Previously, she managed website and e-mail communications for Historic Hotels of America. In the Adirondacks, she collaborated on website development for Camp Santanoni, where she also did hands-on preservation work. She received a Bachelor of Arts in American Studies from Siena and earned a Certificate in Historic Preservation from Goucher. Sarah lives in Washington, D.C.

ED HODGES

Ed is Principal and CEO of DiMella Shaffer, Architects in Boston and has lots of personal and professional experience in historic preservation. About being a member of the AARCH board he said "My interest in Adirondack architecture is rooted first in the fact that I am an architect, second that I am a woodworker, and lastly, that special places often need advocacy." Ed previously served for six years on the AARCH Board of Directors and we are pleased to welcome him back.

Introducing Erin Tobin

For more than 20 years, Erin Tobin has built a distinguished career in historic preservation, with experience in Philadelphia, Boston, and New York City, including as Director of Preservation Services for the Historic Albany Foundation; Executive Director of the James Marston Fitch Charitable Foundation; and currently as the Vice President for Policy and Preservation at the Preservation League of New York State.

At the Preservation League, she directs public policy and technical service programs across New York State's 62 counties; leads a statewide preservation policy agenda; advocates for effective preservation policies at local, state, and national levels; and develops partnerships and new program opportunities to respond to statewide and regional preservation challenges. Erin holds a B.A. degree cum laude in Architectural History from Binghamton University and a M.S. degree in Historic Preservation from the University of Pennsylvania.

Please join us in welcoming Erin as the next AARCH Executive Director. We know her dedication to our mission, passion for historic preservation, dynamic leadership abilities, and depth of experience will be a perfect fit for leading AARCH into the future.

Our 26th Annual Preservation Awards

The AARCH Preservation Awards program annually recognizes exemplary historic preservation work throughout the Adirondack region, including sensitive restoration, rehabilitation, adaptive reuse, and long-term stewardship by a wide range of individuals and organizations.

The Adirondack League Club for Long-Term Stewardship
Town of Webb, Herkimer County

The Adirondack League Club (ALC) was established in 1890 as a private landowners' organization, used mainly as a hunting and fishing club. The Club has 53,000 acres of woodlands, dozens of lakes, and miles of river frontage. It also has one of the most interesting collections of late 19th- and early 20th-century rustic buildings in the region and is one of the area's best kept secrets.

The main clubhouse at Little Moose Lake, completed in 1914, was designed by Augustus Shepard, as were many of the Club's private camps. Shepard's book *Camps in the Woods* (1931) is a compendium of his League Club lodges, camps, and boathouses, and it helped to further define the Adirondack rustic tradition, which influenced the design of National Park Service structures.

Within the ALC property are three distinct complexes, on Honnedaga, Bisby, and Little Moose lakes, and each has its own clubhouse and enclaves of cabins and camps. There are also "outlying" camps owned by the Club for the use of its members. Historically, the club's three complexes were fairly self-sufficient and, except for the lodge at Little Moose Lake, most camps and lodges were rustic and simple. Each complex includes buildings owned and maintained by the Club and camps owned and maintained by private owners.

At Honnedaga, there are approximately 22 camps built between the 1890s and 1930s, most of which have boathouses. At Bisby Lake, there is a Club-owned clubhouse, boathouse, guest cabins, and tennis courts, and a couple dozen privately-owned camps from the late 19th century to the early 20th century.

Little Moose Lake is the most developed of the club's complexes, mainly due to its ease of access. Club-owned buildings include its large Main Lodge, a guide's house, Winter House, powerhouse, utility buildings, guest cabins, and tennis courts. There are also dozens of privately-owned camps around the lake.

While a primary interest of the club is the preservation, protection and enjoyment of its forests, waters, and wildlife, the Club has always maintained a deep respect for its architecture, history, and the preservation of rustic camp life. The ALC's multi-focused approach preserves its forest, lakes, and wildlife and has made a major commitments to preserving its buildings and historic infrastructure for its entire history. Even new construction is mandated to "blend in" and this ensures that the overall architectural integrity of the club remains. These design guidelines specify size, scale, siting, and paint colors. Since its founding in 1890, the club has preserved and maintained its historic buildings, grounds, and traditions with remarkable and admirable success.

Travis Proulx for the Rehabilitation of the Basselin House Town of Croghan, Lewis County

AARCH first discovered the Basselin House on a tour of the Town of Croghan in 2020 which visited numerous properties there and included a visit to the Basselin House. It was then that we learned about Travis Proulx and efforts to rehabilitate the property. Travis purchased the home in February 2020 and set about stabilizing and repairing not only the manor house but the property's other historic buildings, which include a barn and a guest house that was originally an office. This property is impressively intact, retaining key features that help tell the story of the Basselin family and the influential role they played in Croghan.

The Basselin House is most known for its association with Theodore Basselin, who lived there from 1854 to 1914. He was Lewis County's first millionaire, and his financial success began with that of his family's general store and grew with investments in the lumber and railroad industries. He was also one of the original State Forest Commissioners, who were instrumental in determining the boundaries of the "Blue Line" of the Adirondack Park.

The Basselin House was constructed in 1854 for Anna and Dominique Basseline, who had just moved to the United States from Lorrain, France with their three-year-old son, Theodore. The couple ran a general store out of the first floor of the building and lived on the second floor. Their general store soon became a vital feature of Croghan's community and its success enabled the Basselins to expand their living space in 1875, doubling the size of the house. The added wing was more ornate than the original portion of the building, with ornamental plaster and wood moldings and a grand fireplace in the parlor. Theodore joined his mother in running the general store in 1873 (his father had passed away in 1861) and subsequently invested in the lumber and railroad industries as well. As his fortune grew, he continued to improve his family's home with another addition in 1900, which converted the general store into additional living space. In addition, he constructed the Basselin House Business Office at that time, which has since been converted into a residence.

Much of this history is still visible in the Basselin House property today thanks to the work of Travis Proulx, along with his mother and stepfather, Kay and Kenneth Gerow. The foundation, roof, and porches of the Basselin House required major repair, and every effort was made to match the historic fabric and details. New siding was installed to match the existing in areas needing repair. They stabilized the barn, residing it with matching clapboards and removing trees and vegetation that were causing harm and they rehabilitated the Guest House (former Office). In addition, the family has carefully brought the remaining interior accents back to life, stripping off decades of paint and finishes to reveal the original features. Any elements that could be salvaged were – some, such as windows and doors, were found in the barn – and those that could not were brought to the Croghan Island Mill for reproduction.

The rehabilitation of the Basselin House property has already had a significant impact on the community of Croghan. Events such as bake sales not only helped to raise money for the property's repairs, but also reestablished it as a vital hub in the community. Now, Travis Proulx is using the Basselin House to give back to his community, hosting fundraising events for local projects like the revitalization of the Croghan Village playground.

The Blue Mountain Center for Long-Term Stewardship
Town of Blue Mountain Lake, Hamilton County

Toward the end of his life, Harold Hochschild, a New York City businessman and founder of the Adirondack Museum, collaborated with his son, Adam Hochschild, a noted author and co-founder of *Mother Jones* magazine, to convert a portion of their family property on Eagle Lake into a nonprofit retreat center for artists and writers. For this project, they chose the clubhouse and other nearby buildings that were once at the center of a William West Durant-designed country club complex there.

Founded in 1982, the Blue Mountain Center provides support for writers, artists, and activists. A 501(c)(3) organization, the center also serves as a resource for various progressive movements by welcoming and curating conversations among the progressive community.

Over several decades, long-time regional nonprofit champion and the center's founding director, Harriet Barlow, along with many others like Ben Strader who came to BMC as an intern in 1984 and serves as the current Executive Director, shaped the organization we know today.

The relative quiet of last year offered a unique opportunity to work on several preservation projects that could not be accomplished with artists in residence. First, the work team removed giant solar panels from the 1980s designed to generate heat for the hot water system before the new electric solar panel system and efficient water heaters were installed. Because of those system upgrades, the panels hadn't been used for five years, but were the first thing you'd see—big shiny aluminum boxes. Underneath the panels was old asphalt roofing, which was in decent shape, but did not add to the character of the building. The work team planned to replace those shingles with the original 1938 copper patina shingles that Ben had salvaged years ago from another Eagle Nest building.

In spring 2021, the team restored the leaking, circa-1980s skylight over the big fireplace, allowing light to pour in over the central congregating space in the clubhouse. A group of volunteers also started staining the whole house with a fresh coat of brown stain. Ben Strader explains "I tell people who are helping anything that's brown has to be brown again. As soon as you finish staining everything on a house this big, it feels like it's time to start again," reflecting the scope and scale of the work in front of the team. However, the nurturing of the building was not limited to the exterior and Christian Grigoraskos lemon oiled all the wood walls throughout the building's interior.

An annex to "Harriet's Cottage," the building closest to the clubhouse, is being converted to accommodate wheelchair accessibility in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act so anyone, regardless of mobility, can use it. This is part of the long-term goal to make the BMC property entirely accessible, so physical ability is not a factor anywhere throughout the campus.

This project took more care than a simple accessibility modification because the team wanted it to feel like and be as beautiful as the rest of site. The work group didn't want this to feel like a token handicap-accessible space, like any old hotel room, but a room where anyone visiting the center would want stay. Daniel Edelstein was the architect and Craig & Brian Lamphear the contractor.

Another big project was to replace the rotted Boathouse piers and Douglas Butterworth's thoughtful and patient approach to restore these piers in the exact manner was inspiring. Together, these caring and thoughtful preservation projects will help the center to not only continue to shine as a superb nonprofit in the region, but to help its defining and historic buildings retain their character, life, and beauty.

Robert & Beryl Ierardi for the Restoration of Camp Paradiso Trovato Crater Club, Town of Essex, Essex County

Camp Paradiso Trovato (formerly Lochanbrae), is part of the historic Crater Club founded by John Burnham in 1899. In the fall of 1910, Burnham built Lochanbrae for Lillian D. B. Carr from Chicago. It was one of the few camps designed by an architect, but several changes were made by Burnham to make the camp more rustic in appearance. Burnham's building style has been called, *Rustic Simplicity*, adhering to a Simple Life Philosophy that was taking hold in America at this time. Burnham built simple, matter of fact architecture using whatever material could be found on site. He also designed and built much of the furniture. This is considered the best-designed house in the club. In 1924 the camp was purchased by Harry Mulliken, and it remained in the family until Bob and Beryl Ierardi purchased the property in 2012.

By 2012 the camp had not been maintained for quite some time and fallen into disrepair. The fireplace wall was leaning 9" out of plumb, and the entire building was in danger of collapsing. A second-story sleeping porch had become dangerous and required immediate removal. The foundation work to stabilize and gradually move the building into plumb involved hand digging out 20 piers and replacing them with sono tubes and structural I-Beams. A series of cables were run through the building and attached to trees on the opposite side to bring the building back to plumb. Through a process of slowly pulling and lifting, the building was eventually back in place. The resulting holes from the wires were skillfully filled and finished so that holes appear as old pegs or knots. The structural work is only evident if one explores underneath the building and is not visible.

Remarkably, the original Burnham furnishings were still in the camp and, while needing some TLC, were in good condition. John Burnham was fond of using trees found on the property to create rustic furniture and equipped each camp with tables, cabinets, shelving, and built-ins. Every Crater Club camp also was fitted with the same set of caned chairs. At Paradiso Trovato, all the furniture has been cleaned up and preserved. The Ierardis were intent on keeping the camp as it originally was conceived and constructed, and great attention was paid to every detail. Before starting renovations, Bob removed all the glass towel bars, hardware, lighting, and plumbing fixtures to be cleaned, repaired, and reinstalled. The original piano is tuned annually and still enjoyed.

Since 2012, the Ierdardis have devoted endless hours, resources, and love to bring the camp and the grounds back to their original state. While most of the heavy lifting was done within a few years, bringing back, all the finishing touches has been ongoing. All the floors and walls have been lovingly restored. Any artifacts or mementos that have been part of the camp's history have been preserved.

Adirondack Architectural Heritage

The Private Nonprofit Historic Preservation Organization for the Adirondack Park

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A world of AARCH exists online, join us there.

Stewardship Committee

Special thanks to the AARCH Stewardship Committee for their planning and oversight of this annual awards presentation.

Rich Frost, Chair
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Sponsors

We also extend our thanks to the following sponsors for their generous support of this celebration and all of AARCH's work throughout the year.

Sally & Sanders Berk

This Year's Host: Hotel Saranac

We are delighted to hold our Annual Meeting & Awards Luncheon at the vibrant and wonderfully rehabilitated **Hotel Saranac**, a 2018 AARCH Award winner. Designed by the architectural firm of Scopes and Feustmann, the Hotel Saranac opened in 1927 and was a regional landmark from the start. It was the first fireproof hotel in the area, had 100 rooms all with private baths, and its second floor lobby was modeled on a Renaissance-style Italian palazzo. Throughout most of the 20th century, this "metropolitan hotel in the woods" welcomed guests in all seasons with its affordable elegance, and endured all kinds of economic ups and downs and changes in public preferences.

After several years of renovation and restoration, Hotel Saranac opened in 2018 to much fanfare and community support. The Roedel Company purchased the property in 2013 with a grand and ambitious vision for its future, with first class accommodations, exciting food and beverage offerings, and warm and generous events spaces - all within the restored splendor of the original hotel. The quality of the restoration work is exceptional this institution is already having a deep and lasting positive impact on the community and the region.