

# HISTORY MATTERS

The Newsletter of Historic Saranac Lake at the Saranac Laboratory Museum



## IT WILL BE RED AGAIN!

*Construction slated to begin soon.*

Last spring, we purchased the historic Trudeau Building adjacent to the Saranac Laboratory for expansion of the museum. We will create a two-building museum campus that presents the rich history of the Saranac Lake region.

The architectural team has completed the schematic design for the extensive rehabilitation. Once plans are approved by the state, we will go out to bid on the exterior rehabilitation, with construction to start as soon as conditions allow.



*Rendering of the rehabilitated Trudeau Building*

To date, we have raised \$1,423,000 in grants, donations, and pledges of support. We are well on our way toward our \$3.9M goal to support acquisition, building rehabilitation, personnel, and museum exhibits. We are speaking with lead donors to advance the next phase of the campaign through naming opportunities.

In January, we finalized the Interpretive Plan for the expanded museum. The plan was developed in consultation with Museum Planner, Kate Cravens. Our thanks to the many community members who provided invaluable input! We are contracting with Bob Davidson of Exhibits and More to develop the overall exhibit plan. Visit our website to find out more and get involved!

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## WELCOME, ADAM GUILLETTE!

In March, we were thrilled to hire Adam Guillette as our new Membership and Grants Manager. This new position is supported by a grant from the NY State Council on the Arts and the Regional Economic Development Council. Adam graduated from Saranac High School and has a B.A. in Sociology from SUNY Plattsburgh. Adam served two terms of service as an AmeriCorps member at the local Red Cross chapter in Morrisonville. He also worked on local political campaigns, serving as a Regional Field Director for one of them. Hired at the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic, Adam hit the ground running, serving as a tremendous help as staff has scrambled to re-tool to connect online. Please drop Adam an email to welcome him to HSL: [adam@historicsaranaclake.org](mailto:adam@historicsaranaclake.org).



## BOARD MEMBERS

- President:  
Amy Jones
- Vice-President:  
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## STAFF

- Executive Director:  
Amy Catania
- Museum Administrator:  
Chessie Monks-Kelly
- Cure Porch on Wheels:  
Kayt Gochenaur
- Membership & Grants Manager:  
Adam Guillette
- Museum Assistant:  
Nathan Work

Made possible, in part, by the NY State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the NY State Legislature.



## OUR MISSION

Historic Saranac Lake preserves and presents local history and architecture to build a stronger community.

## A Letter from the Porch

*Beginning in March, as the coronavirus pandemic set in, we began writing a series of weekly “Letters from the Porch” to stay in touch with our members and to think about ways that our local history resonates in our current situation. The following letter is the first of the series. Please visit our blog at [www.historicsaranaclake.org/history-matters](http://www.historicsaranaclake.org/history-matters) to see all of the letters. See page 7 for a list of all of our online offerings!*

### *Lessons in Resilience*

Dear Friends,

Many years ago, Saranac Lake rallied to fight a deadly disease. Today’s news sure has us thinking about our local history. Tuberculosis killed 1 in 7 people in the late 1800s. Highly contagious and with no known cure, fear and stigma surrounded TB. Unlike the new virus we face today, many of its victims were young people in their 20s. Like today, quarantine was often seen as an appropriate solution, and sometimes people were isolated against their will. A person’s ethnicity, race, and socioeconomic status affected the kinds of treatments available.



Noting the lack of options for the poor, Dr. E. L. Trudeau established his sanatorium in Saranac Lake with the goal of providing care to those who could not afford it. Here he established a model of treatment based on the efficacy of the human immune system. Early diagnosis with x-rays and lab testing was key to identifying the sick early. Hygiene was of supreme importance. Trudeau’s “cottage plan” avoided aggregation of the sick. Nurses and doctors provided supportive care in well ventilated spaces. The Saranac Lake regimen consisted of rest, fresh air, healthy food, and attention to mental health.

Here we are, over a century after Trudeau’s death, facing a situation that is in some ways similar. For now, Trudeau’s same model of “non-pharmaceutical treatment” is the best hope against novel coronavirus. It’s not a perfect weapon, but for thousands of people in Saranac Lake’s history, it was effective.

Recognizing that fresh air was not a real cure, Dr. E. L. Trudeau worked for a scientific solution, just as scientists across the world are racing to perfect a vaccine today. Our two buildings — Trudeau’s medical office and his scientific laboratory — stand side by side at the corner of Church and Main, testaments to the power of medicine and science to fight infection. Now, as the world falters in the face of a new disease, we find it reassuring to remember Saranac Lake’s brave cure cottage economy. Looking back in our history we find comfort in the resilience and compassion that doctors, nurses, patients, and the hardworking people of Saranac Lake demonstrated in the face of a deadly pandemic.

We Saranac Lakers have demonstrated resilience in the recent past as well. In 2008, just as Historic Saranac Lake was pushing to complete the restoration of the Saranac Laboratory to open as a museum, the great recession hit. But with your help we pushed through, and we grew and flourished despite the hard times. We are confident that together we will do it again, because history matters!

Onward,

Amy Catania, Executive Director

Mary B. Hotaling, Architectural Historian

Laura Ettinger, Ph.D., Associate Professor of History at Clarkson University and Member of Historic Saranac Lake

### JOIN THE LEGACY SOCIETY!

You are invited to join the Historic Saranac Lake Legacy Society and ensure the financial viability of our museum and programs into the future. It’s as simple as adding Historic Saranac Lake as a beneficiary in your will and notifying us of your intention in a signed letter or making a donation to our endowment fund with the Adirondack Foundation. Please feel free to contact Executive Director Amy Catania with any questions at 518-891-4606.

**WINTER EVENTS RE-CAP**



*Legendary nurses ready to march in the Winter Carnival Parade*

**WINTER CARNIVAL EXCITEMENT**

We opened our museum doors to over 300 visitors for free museum days and “Make a Carnival Button” activities. We also brought the Cure Porch on Wheels to the ice palace for a pop-up exhibit on Carnival and ice palace architecture. And we honored the legendary nurses in our history in the gala parade. A great group of nurses marched with the Cure Porch on Wheels. We thank Billy and Alex Madden for all of their help!

**FILM SERIES**

This winter, we hosted a movie series highlighting films with a link to Saranac Lake and our Art of the Cure exhibit! The series featured “A Star is Born,” which includes the song “My Melancholy Baby,” written by TB patient, Ernie Burnett; “The Silver Chalice,” which premiered in Saranac Lake in 1954, and was Paul Newman’s big-screen debut. We look forward to showing “The Blue Dahlia,” starring Veronica Lake; and “Deep in My Heart,” which includes a scene in Saranac Lake.

**ANNUAL MEETING**

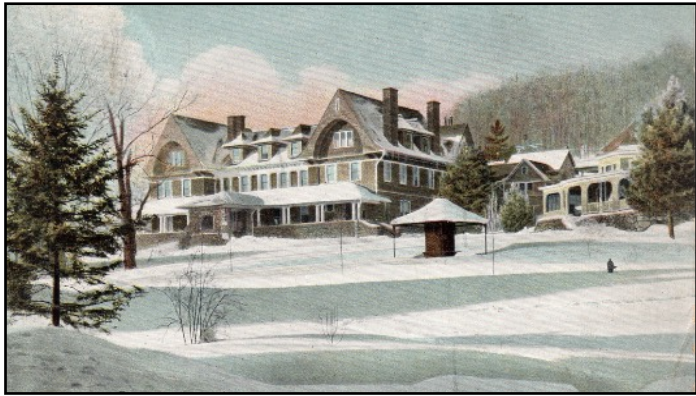
Friends and members of Historic Saranac Lake gathered for our 39th annual meeting in October. The meeting featured an excellent presentation by historian Neil Surprenant on the history of Paul Smith and Paul Smith’s Hotel.

**SPECIAL VISITORS**

Fred Roedel III and Fred B. Roedel, owners of Hotel Saranac, and supporters of the Trudeau Building Museum Expansion, visited to check in on our progress in February.



**COMING EVENTS & PROJECTS**



*The Trudeau Sanatorium, site of one of our regular walking tours*

**“EXPLORE HISTORY” BROCHURE**

We are excited to be working with the Hotel Saranac to develop a new brochure that will encourage visitors to explore the historic downtown, the Saranac Laboratory Museum, and Hotel Saranac. This project is supported by a grant of \$3,000 through the Franklin County Destination Development and Marketing Fund. We are working with Chris Morris of Tell Media ADK and Aaron Hobson on the design. The brochure will be printed and shared with local businesses when Saranac Lake opens up again as social distancing measures begin to be lifted.

**BIG BAND GALA POSTPONED**



Our Gala at the Hotel Saranac, originally scheduled for August 8 has been postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic. We are excited to announce a new date soon, so stay tuned for news! We will go back to the 1940s and dance to the tunes of the Big Band Era with the Adirondack Jazz Orchestra. Our Guest of Honor will be our good friend and patron of the arts, Lex Dashnaw.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

Leaders in Washington recently passed the CARES Act, which provides two incentives for giving in 2020 to public charities like Historic Saranac Lake:

- For individuals using the standard deduction, a reduction in taxable income for 2020 cash gifts up to \$300.
- For those who itemize deductions, a one-year suspension of the annual contribution limit for cash gifts.

Please consult your financial adviser about how this applies in your situation, and thanks so much for your support!

## MUSEUM AND COLLECTIONS



*Cigar box discovered in Trudeau Building, courtesy of Dr. Tony Waickman.*



*Museum Assistant Nathan Work surveying artifacts at Post Office Pharmacy.*

### COLLECTIONS HELP TELL A STORY

We are learning new things about the Trudeau Building by exploring historic photographs, blueprints, and more, but we recently had an item donated to us that might explain a little mystery in the attic of the building. Dr. Tony Waickman recently brought in a donation that included a metal box from "Between the Acts Little Cigars." This box was originally discovered tucked into the eaves of the attic, right next to a mysterious charred rafter! Thanks to Dr. Waickman for helping us uncover a possible solution to the mystery of the attic smoke break.

### CONFERENCE SHARING

Our Museum Administrator Chessie Monks-Kelly and volunteer, Andy Kelly, shared about our DIY audio tour buttons and the Cure Porch on Wheels' Story Phone with attendees at the Northern New York Library Network fall meeting. Andy explained how simple components and a little soldering can come together to make fun and low-budget interactive additions to museum exhibits.



### POST OFFICE PHARMACY COLLECTION

We were all saddened by the closure of Post Office Pharmacy in December, but we are happy to share that we've been working with Jim Bevilacqua to preserve the history of the last of our historic independent pharmacies. We have selected hundreds of items to add to our collection including bottles, prescription logs, tools, correspondence, photos, and more. Stay tuned for more updates as we work with these items and make interesting discoveries. Thank you to Jim for his enthusiasm and support in preserving our history!

### MORE COLLECTIONS NEWS

Recent exciting additions to the collection include:

- A silver platter featuring Little Red and the signatures of the Trudeau San Board of Directors in 1954, courtesy of Jeanie Trudeau Fenn.
- Film footage of Saranac Lake, 1932, taken by TB patient William A. Winn and donated by his son, Bill.
- Photo album belonging to Frank F. Vanderhoef, including photos of Saranac Inn and President Taft, courtesy of Susan Swan.

*Have an item you want to donate to the collection? Contact our Museum Administrator at [chessie@historicsaranaclake.org](mailto:chessie@historicsaranaclake.org).*

### SIX NATIONS COLLABORATION

The new museum campus will provide the space to tell a broader history of the Saranac Lake region. We are excited about plans to explore history of Native Americans who lived in the area. We have reached out to the Six Nations Indian Museum in Onchiota for their assistance, and we have received a Vision Grant from NY Humanities to support John Fadden's consultation on this project. Our goal is that the collaboration results in an exhibit that highlights the amazing resources at the Six Nations Museum.

CURE PORCH ON WHEELS



RECENT CPOW EVENTS

The Cure Porch on Wheels’ winter season was busy! November brought us to Saranac Lake High School. In December, we hosted our first annual Caroling on the Cure Porch! In the new year, we brought the Porch to the Ice Palace and marched with it in the Winter Carnival parade. March saw the Porch at the Colby Classic Fishing Derby, documenting an important Adirondack tradition.

HOW-TO GUIDE

Curious about creating a mobile exhibit space? We learned a thing or two while creating the Cure Porch on Wheels, and we are eager to share the plans! We recently posted a complete “How-To” guide on the CPOW website. You can view the complete design plans, get the specs for the handicap lift, the steel frame, the solar panels, heater, and more! We look forward to presenting about the CPOW as a replicable model at an upcoming conference of museum or design professionals.

CPOW MERCHANDISE

Show your love for the Cure Porch on Wheels with our new merchandise! Available in the museum store and online are Cure Porch on Wheels T-shirts, lapel pins, stickers, and prints of original artwork by Julie Riker.



ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

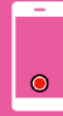
the oral history project: STAYING CONNECTED

**1. Call your grandma** (or anyone else who might be isolated!)

Ask if you can record her oral history. Tell her you want learn more about her life.



**2. Record.** Call and record with a free app like Google Voice.



Or use Voice Memos (or a similar free app) to record from a separate device.

**3. Listen.** Use open-ended questions as prompts.



**4. Share.** Send your recording to [cpow@historicsaranaclake.org](mailto:cpow@historicsaranaclake.org)



Don't forget to include both your names and the date!

[www.hslstories.org/get-involved.html](http://www.hslstories.org/get-involved.html)

ORAL HISTORIES FROM HOME

The oral history project has switched to conducting telephone interviews. Last week, we interviewed Natalie Leduc, who shared her memories of World War II. This is a great way to connect with people you care about, and ask the questions you’ve always meant to ask! Visit [www.hslstories.org/get-involved.html](http://www.hslstories.org/get-involved.html) to learn more. Each Sunday, we are sharing a one-minute video about tips for conducting your own oral history interview. Follow the Cure Porch on Wheels Facebook page to catch these features!

RECENT INTERVIEWS

Pictured above left, Oral History Coordinator Kayt Gochenaur interviewed Charlie Jessie at the Colby Classic Fishing Derby. We interviewed 15 fishermen to document the Adirondack tradition of ice fishing. Visit [www.hslstories.org/ice-fishing.html](http://www.hslstories.org/ice-fishing.html) to listen!

STORY SATURDAYS

Each Saturday, we share a short story from our oral history archive. Each story is under a minute long and is posted to the Cure Porch on Wheels Facebook page. You can listen to previous story Saturdays on our website [hslstories.org/story-saturday.html](http://hslstories.org/story-saturday.html).

JOIN THE CURE PORCH ON WHEELS CLUB!

- Porch Sponsor \$40: We'll send you an "I support the Porch" bumper sticker so you can help us raise awareness about the project!
- Lead Sponsor \$100: As a lead sponsor, you can create one prompt-of-the-week for the story phone!
- Business Sponsor \$130: Your business name and logo will be featured on our website and on one CPOW event. You also get a 20% discount on Porch use.
- Key Sponsor \$140: Get a 'Porch Key' keychain! Spend an afternoon on the Porch behind the museum. Pick a date & bring a book!
- Porch Patron \$500: Porch Patrons get a canvas print of CPOW painting by Julie Riker. Display it with pride!

**SCHOOL OUTREACH**



**COLLEGE VISITS**

Pictured above, first- and second-year occupational therapy students from Clarkson University visited our “Art of the Cure” exhibit and enjoyed a tour to the Trudeau Sanatorium Occupational Therapy Workshop. This fall and winter, we also presented tours and presentations for students of the Wanakena Ranger School, Saint Lawrence University, and the Albany School of Public Health. Executive Director Amy Catania presented a lecture at Clarkson University as part of the Community Connections Series.

**SCHOOL TOURS AND PROJECTS**



Last fall, we led our annual 5th grade history project. Students researched a person buried at Pine Ridge Cemetery and took a walking tour to the cemetery, where they presented about their research. Our thanks to the teachers who make this possible each year, and to special volunteer, Jim Clark, who meets the kids in the graveyard to



share his stories about local history. We look forward to more museum visits soon once the school year returns to normal!

**PRESERVATION**



**PRESERVATION WORKSHOP**

In May, we had planned to bring the Cure Porch on Wheels to historic Prescott House at 129 Franklin Street for a workshop on architectural preservation. This event is postponed to a later date to be announced. Don Rumble will present some tips on the care and repair of historic windows, staff of Historic Saranac Lake will answer questions about the National Register and the New York State Historic Homeowner Tax Credit, and attendees will enjoy a guided tour of beautiful Prescott House. The event will be free of charge, although donations will be welcome to help cover costs. Stay tuned for a new date for this event!

**PRESERVATION COLLEAGUES**

In the fall, Executive Director Amy Catania attended the Preservation Colleagues meeting in Albany at the Preservation League of NY State office. The new Director of the State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation met with attendees.

**NATIONAL REGISTER PROJECT**

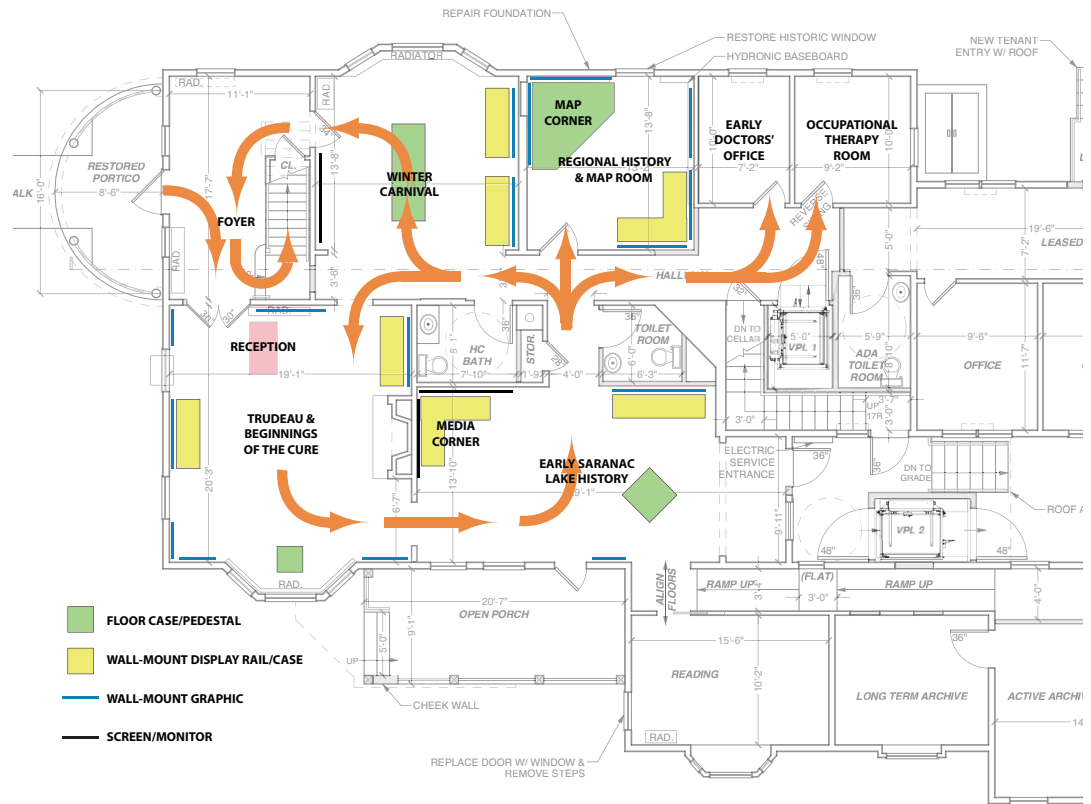
Our proposal to expand the Berkeley Square National Register district has been submitted to the state. The new district includes several additional buildings located along Broadway, Main Street, Olive Street, and Woodruff Street, ultimately making the historic preservation tax credit available for approved for building repairs. Over 230 local properties are currently listed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places.

**BARTOK CABIN REPAIRS**

We are beginning to plan for some repairs to the Bartók Cabin, where the great composer spent the last summer of his life. We will be coordinating some fundraising events in order to support the repairs. Stay tuned for news of this project, and please contact us to get involved!

# MUSEUM PLANNING

This winter, with the help of museum consultant Kate Cravens, we completed the overarching interpretive plan for both museum buildings. Now, moving forward with the planning process, we have contracted with museum planning consultants at Exhibits and More in Liverpool and Victor, NY to create a plan for traffic flow and exhibit layout. The consultants have worked with our architect to advise on the building's schematic design.



## ONLINE OFFERINGS

We have re-tooled our programs to stay connected with our audience and continue to meet our mission to preserve and present local history to build a stronger community. Here are some of ways we are connecting online:

- **Museum Mondays** — We will share a story about something from our collection or exhibits.
- **Tuesday Letters from the Porch** — a weekly letter from our Executive Director.
- **Wednesday Mini-Tours** — Come along with staff on a mini-tour of the museum or area historic site.
- **Be a Witness to History** — Take our survey to help document life during this historic pandemic situation.
- **TB Thursdays** — Watch our social media channels for interesting posts related to our TB history!
- **Story Saturday** — We share a segment of an oral history from our archive.
- **Talking Points Sunday** — Watch a one minute video tip for conducting your own oral history interview.
- **Live from the Porch!** — Mini-physically distant concerts twice a week at the Cure Porch on Wheels!



Members of Ursula's family pose with a collection of her hats in December.

## IN MEMORY OF URSULA TRUDEAU

In December we celebrated the wonderful life of Ursula Trudeau.

In Ursula's honor, we displayed a small exhibit of her amazing hats at her service at St. Luke's Church. Later this year, we will hold a show and auction of some of her beautiful paintings.

A talented artist, irreplaceable personality, and special friend, Ursula is very much missed.



Illustration by Diane Leifheit

**HISTORIC SARANAC LAKE**

89 Church Street, Suite 2  
Saranac Lake, NY 12983

Non-profit Org.  
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Saranac Lake, NY  
Permit No. 9

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

**OUR MEMBERS MATTER!**

*Become a member of Historic Saranac Lake and be a part of our exciting future!*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Make your check payable to Historic Saranac Lake  
or donate by credit card:

Visa  M/C  AMEX  Discover

Card No. \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ security code \_\_\_\_\_

Name as appears on card: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

You may also give online at  
<http://www.historicsaranaclake.org/support-us>

*Your membership matters now more than ever!  
Join Historic Saranac Lake and preserve the past for the future.*

Benefactor: \$1,000     Patron: \$500     Historian: \$100  
 Family: \$65     Individual: \$35     Business: \$125  
 Nonprofit: \$35



*Assemblyman Billy Jones (with red tie) visited with HSL members and staff  
at the site of the Trudeau Building museum expansion in 2019.*

**Historic Saranac Lake is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization.  
Dues and other contributions are tax deductible as provided by law.**