

HISTORY MATTERS

The Newsletter of HISTORIC SARANAC LAKE at the Saranac Laboratory Museum



OUT TO BID!

We are on our way toward creating a beautiful museum campus on the corner of Church and Main! Architectural design for phase one of the Trudeau Building project is complete, and plans have been approved by the NY State Office of Historic Preservation. On April 6, we went out to bid for exterior restoration. Phase one work includes removing the vinyl siding, installing new cedar clapboards, restoring the trim and exterior details, rebuilding the decorative front portico, restoring the west and south porches, and reinstalling the decorative entrance windows. Work is anticipated to begin on June 4. Fundraising for the museum expansion continues, with \$2,088,000 raised to date to support acquisition, rehabilitation, Saranac Laboratory improvements, handicap accessibility in both buildings, staffing, and museum exhibits. Find out more about this exciting project on page 7.



Architect Harry Gordon and Engineer Tim Northrup met with contractors at the pre-bid meeting on April 14.

COMING SOON!
A new exhibit and public programs:
PANDEMIC PERSPECTIVES
See page 5 for details!

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WELCOME, MAHALA!

We are thrilled to welcome Mahala Nyberg as our new Public Programs Coordinator! Mahala has a Master's in Public History with a certificate in Digital Humanities from Northeastern University, and B.A. in History and Archaeology from SUNY Potsdam. She believes that museums can serve as hubs for education, positive change, and public service. Mahala looks forward to interacting with museum visitors and is interested in exploring innovative paths for museum

education, public programs, and digital initiatives. Previously, she worked at the Old Stone House Museum in Brownington, Vermont, as the Associate Director of Collections and Programs. Her work experience includes education and interpretation at museums in and around Boston. In her free time, Mahala enjoys spending time outdoors and adding to the list of lakes and rivers she has paddled with her kayak.

OUR MISSION is to preserve and present area history and architecture to build a stronger community.

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



Council on the Arts

FULL CIRCLE

*Sing on, sing on you gray-brown bird
Sing from the swamps, the recesses, pour your chant from the bushes,
Limitless out of the dusk, out of the cedars and pines.*
— Walt Whitman, “When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom’d”

Dear Friends,

A whole year has gone by since we first heard the word “Covid.” We are coming full circle, and soon the hermit thrush will sing again.

Last March, on the brink of the pandemic, I spent a weekend in Potsdam at my son’s basketball tournament. I remember wondering when I would next spend time in a crowd of people. Between games, I worked on the first of what would become a year of essays, drawing parallels between the pandemic and Saranac Lake’s tuberculosis era. One year later, I returned with a family member to the Potsdam gym, not for a basketball tournament but for a vaccine. The arena, once teeming with players and fans, was now full of busy nurses, national guard soldiers, and grateful community members.

That day at Potsdam a year ago, things felt so uncertain. With no vaccine and no effective treatment for the new coronavirus, we were facing a situation similar to the time of tuberculosis in Saranac Lake. Dr. Trudeau’s treatment model was our best hope — prevention, diagnosis, rest, fresh air, and healthy food. During the pandemic, the world quieted down. Those of us who could, stayed in one place. We found the time to think more about the world and our place in it. We worried about our health and the well-being of our neighbors.

Interviews and written accounts of former TB patients show a range of experiences. Some people were lonely, in pain, sad, and anxious. Others fell in love, made friends, and discovered new talents and passions. People with better health, wealth, strong support systems, or upbeat personalities were more likely to enjoy their time curing. Surviving the fresh air cure, let alone learning from the experience, was a luxury not everyone had.

Although each experience was different, many people who regained their health in Saranac Lake report learning lessons that they carried throughout their lives. Many patients learned to value and care for their physical and mental health. They found new appreciation for friends and family. They discovered joy in nature, a love of learning, and creative talents.

One former patient described in a letter how his time curing shaped his life. Whitney North Seymour, Jr., was one of the last patients to cure at Trudeau when the antibiotic therapy was coming into use. He completed his cure at 89 Park Ave, staying there with his wife Catryna. Following his cure, he became a New York State Senator and served as United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York. Mr. Seymour wrote, “We walked for an hour every morning and afternoon, including in the deep snow, and learned important lessons about the role of nature in speeding return to good health...When I was in Saranac Lake, I listened to a lot of classical recordings and developed a strong interest in Brahms and Mendelsohn... I still listen for the hermit thrush and look for the witch-hobble in the early spring.”

Last March, I thought often of Whitney and Catryna as I watched people following their footsteps down Park Ave. They walked slowly, in ones and twos, to the Sanatorium gates and back again. They were worried about their health and scared about the future, but they were learning some lessons worth keeping.

Be well,

Amy Catania



Patients in Saranac Lake, HSL Collection.

THANK YOU, VOLUNTEERS!

Bob Bevilaqua, Jane Carroll, Louis Catania, John Fadden, Russ Feher, Lee Foster, Gretchen Gedroiz, Priscilla Goss, Carolyn Greenberg, Tony Holtzman, Amy and Peter Jones, Andy Kelly, Bill Madden, Karen Morris, Mary Hotaling, Kathy O’Kane, Dan Nardiello, Amanda Phelps, Marty Rowley, Rob Russell, Chris Shaw, Sara Sheldon, Karen Sligh, Sally Svenson, Marc Wanner, Kim Weems, and Margaret Worden.

RECENT EVENTS



This February, the Cure Porch on Wheels visited historic Union College in Schenectady.

TRAVELS WITH THE PORCH

The Cure Porch on Wheels got moving this winter with three exciting trips!

- The Porch brought some holiday cheer to the residents of historic Saranac Village at Will Rogers. Many thanks to fabulous vocalist Kim Weems for her beautiful singing and to Hoffman Auto in Lake Placid for making the event possible.
- The Winter Carnival Committee borrowed the Porch to use as a merchandise sales booth and a warming hut for volunteers. Thank you to Bill Madden, Lee Foster, and Dave Rockefeller for helping make this happen.
- In February, we brought the Cure Porch on Wheels to Union College in Schenectady to visit with Dr. Nicole Theodosiou and her students, who are planning and designing a "mobile science communication cottage." Executive Director Amy Catania discussed Saranac Lake's TB history and the architecture of cure porches, and she shared lessons learned in creating the Cure Porch on Wheels. The adventure was made possible by our friend Bill Madden of Madden's Transfer and Storage. Thank you, Bill!

A BUSY FALL AND WINTER

As the weather cooled, we moved online with many events and presentations:

- In October, we held our Annual Meeting featuring a discussion with Chris Shaw, author of the new book of historical fiction, *The Powerline*.
- In January, we hosted a special Zoom presentation with Dr. Tony Holtzman on "The COVID-19 Pandemic in the United States."
- We hosted two online presentations to celebrate Winter Carnival. We presented to four classes of Petrova Elementary 5th graders, and we hosted an online discussion for over 100 attendees featuring carnival images from our photograph collection.
- In February, we hosted an online discussion with author Sally Svenson, exploring topics in her book, *Blacks in the Adirondacks*.

JOIN THE CPOW CLUB!

Support the Cure Porch on Wheels by joining the CPOW club! You will receive great CPOW merchandise such as a Cure Porch on Wheels t-shirt, lapel pin, sticker, or print of original artwork by Julie Riker. Visit our website for details!

COLLECTIONS



Late winter camp picnic. Historic Saranac Lake Collection, courtesy of John Durbin.

NNYLN GRANT SUPPORTS TB RECORDS

This fall, Historic Saranac Lake was awarded a generous grant from the Northern New York Library Network (NNYLN) to fund transcription of a series of records from the TB Society of Saranac Lake. These records, which were generously donated by the Saranac Lake Voluntary Health Association in 2020, contain approximately 18,000 index cards related to TB patients and cure cottages. The cards include applications to Trudeau Sanatorium, records of cure cottage proprietors and occupants, loans of objects such as cure chairs to patients, and much more. The project has allowed us to hire Mikayla Ploof as our Transcription Technician. This grant will also fund the establishment of our online, public-facing PastPerfect collections database. We anticipate launching this sometime this summer, so stay tuned. Thanks to NNYLN for their support!

POMEROY FOUNDATION SUPPORT

With generous support from the Pomeroy Foundation, we have purchased a camera, lightbox, and other equipment to photograph the hundreds of glass plate negatives and lantern slides in our collection. Our collection includes slides of X-rays used in asbestos research, historic negatives of Trudeau Sanatorium, and much more. Glass plates and lantern slides are fragile, which can make traditional digitization difficult. The equipment will allow us to photograph them without any physical contact. With these tools, we will also be able to photograph all of the 3D objects in our collection. We plan to make this equipment available to other local organizations in the future.

IMLS-FUNDED IMAGE CATALOGING

Our Archivist / Curator is continuing work on the IMLS-funded image cataloging project. Among the 450+ photographs cataloged so far is an album kept by Fletcher M. Durbin, who came to cure several times in the early 1910s. The album includes images of cure cottages, winter sporting events, and more (see photo, above). We are sharing some of our favorite images from the project on social media and our blog. The project will continue until September 2022, and we anticipate creating catalog records for 2,000+ images.

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

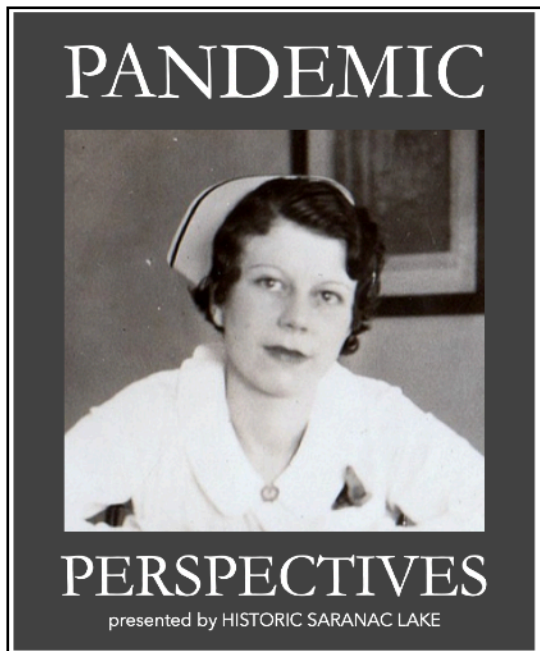
Kayt Gochenaur interviewed Chris Hildebrand, Erna Hoover, Mary Hesselgrave, and Judy Meagher about their memories of Eagle Island. These interviews are all available on the Oral History Project website now! Head to www.hslstories.org to listen to these and many other fascinating interviews.

RECENT DONATIONS

- The papers of Dr. Leonard Bristol, who conducted radiological research on occupational diseases of the lung. Courtesy of Noreen Oslander.
- Albums of photographs kept by TB patients Roger Parish, Teresa Dare, and Gladys Shatley. Courtesy of Tom Parish, Donna Hartless, and Mary Brown.
- Pieces painted by Jean Monaghan while curing at Stony Wold in the late 1940s. Courtesy of Philip Monaghan.

Do you have something to donate to our collection? Contact our Archivist/Curator, Chessie Monks-Kelly, at chessie@historicsaranalake.org or 518-891-4606. Visit www.historicsaranalake.org/collections for more information.

THE MUSEUM

NEW EXHIBIT AND PROGRAMS WILL
EXPLORE PANDEMIC PERSPECTIVES

The museum will reopen this spring with a new participatory exhibit titled, “*Pandemic Perspectives*.” Exhibit panels placed throughout the museum will invite visitors to explore connections between their experience during the current pandemic and Saranac Lake’s history as a community that welcomed people suffering from infectious disease. The exhibit incorporates historic images and quotes from literature highlighting experiences common to pandemics throughout history. The exhibit is informed by a course taught by Columbia University Professor Arden Hegele titled, “Epidemic Fictions.” Complementing the new exhibit, we will host a series of online and in-person events and temporary exhibits on the Cure Porch on Wheels, supported by a grant from the Lake Champlain Basin Program and a design grant from the NY State Council on the Arts. We recently applied for a grant from Humanities NY to support additional programs in collaboration with humanities scholars. Each talk will inform a temporary traveling exhibit for the Cure Porch on Wheels. Exhibits will also be shared online. Stay tuned to our website for details!

MUSEUM PLANNING

Planning for the museum expansion continues! Building on our interpretive plan and a new exhibit policy, a committee is coming together to shape the goals and objectives for both buildings. We recently completed a planning project supported by Humanities NY to consider ways to incorporate history of Native American peoples into the new museum. Our thanks to John Fadden of the Six Nations Iroquois Cultural Center; Iakonikonriosta of the Akwesasne Cultural Center; Tim Messner of SUNY Potsdam; and Jen Krester of the Wild Center.

NYSICA MUSEUM GRANT

We were thrilled to learn that the New York State Council on the Arts has awarded Historic Saranac Lake a two-year grant of \$25,000 each year to support general operations of our museum. This is a major step in our work to grow and care for our collection. NYSICA support will allow us to continue to provide excellent exhibits and public programs.

COMING EVENTS

Book Talks on the Anniversary of the APA

On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the APA, we will host a series of conversations exploring three books about the development of the Adirondacks and the founding of the APA:

- *Rural Indigenusness* by Melissa Otis
- *Crimes against Nature* by Karl Jacoby
- *A Wild Idea* by Brad Edmonson

Visit our website to register soon for this exciting series!

Art by Ursula Trudeau

This summer we look forward to celebrating the life and work of Ursula Trudeau with an auction of a collection of her beautiful paintings. Stay tuned for details.

Summer and Fall Tours

We look forward to a busy season of tours and other in-person and online events and programs. See our website for a complete schedule to be announced soon!

Our thanks to these businesses for their membership
and for supporting the Cure Porch on Wheels!

Adirondack Daily Enterprise, Adirondack Massage Therapy, Adirondack Experience, Blue Moon Home Builders, Carcuzzi Car Care Center, Essex Community Heritage Organization (ECHO), Geomatics Land Surveying, PC, Hoffman’s Auto, Madden’s Transfer and Storage, North Woods Engineering, Owl and Fern, LLC (DBA Wilkins Agency) Saranac Lake Free Library, Gordon + Gordon Architecture, LLC, and Prescott House ADK.

ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION



Workers from GS Restoration repaired and reinforced the Saranac Laboratory portico, damaged by ice this winter. The work is supported by generous donations received this fall for emergency museum repairs.

PRESERVATION AWARD

We are honored to be one of the state's historic preservation advocacy organizations recognized this year for an award in Excellence in Historic Preservation Organizational Achievement. The Governor's Office stated in its February press release, "The state's preservation organizations rose to the challenge of programming during a global pandemic and tumultuous political year. Their ingenuity, resilience, and creativity proved that preservation is imperative to quality of life and will be essential in navigating the path to economic recovery."

PRESERVATION WORKSHOP

If you didn't get a chance to join us for our Historic Property Tax Credit Program webinar with Frances Stern from NYSHPO last month, you can watch it on our YouTube channel! If you have questions, want to check your property's register status, or want copies of the slides or handouts mentioned in this presentation, email us at mail@historicsaranaclake.org.

NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT

In 2019, we submitted a proposal to the State Office of Historic Preservation to expand the National Register Berkeley Square Historic District. Review of the project was delayed, and now revisions are requested. We are working with our colleagues at Adirondack Architectural Heritage to move the project to completion. We are eager to make the expanded Historic Tax Credit available to qualifying commercial property owners. NY State recently increased the credit from 20% to 30% for small projects under \$2.5 million. Contact us with any questions!

SUCCESS STORIES

Support is growing for preserving Debar Pond Lodge through a land exchange amendment. This will preserve an important historic site and use it in the public interest, while still enabling the public to have access to the natural, scenic and recreational resources of Debar Pond and the surrounding Forest Preserve. Another success story is St. Gabriel's Church in Paul Smith's, which is now safe from demolition. Also, we commend the congregation of the Church of the Ascension at Saranac Inn for undertaking careful planning to restore and preserve their beautiful historic church and for working to nominate the building to be listed on the National Register.

PROPERTIES WE ARE WATCHING

NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation oversees Camp Colby, the former home of William Morris. The main building is vacant and in disrepair. We have been encouraging DEC to plan for rehabilitation and reuse of the National Register-listed building. We are also monitoring the Union Depot in Saranac Lake, which is currently overseen by NYS Dept. of Transportation. HSL led the effort to rehabilitate the depot in the mid 1990s. We await the day when the building is again open to the public.

NYS CA DESIGN GRANT

The NY State Council on the Arts has approved a grant of \$15,000 to support the Cure Porch on Wheels as an architecture and design project. The grant will support programs interpreting the CPOW as a unique architectural space, central to Saranac Lake's history as a sanatorium community.

THE TRUDEAU BUILDING

GREENING THE TRUDEAU BUILDING

Planning for interior construction and museum exhibits continues. One key aspect is energy efficiency. Our lead architect Harry Gordon is a nationally-recognized expert in sustainable building and community design and has extensive experience in integrating these principles in historic buildings. We plan to implement recommendations from a 2019 energy audit such as installing efficient heating and cooling systems, sealing the building's envelope, improving insulation, and adding LED lighting. The new ventilation system will improve the air quality for guests, staff, and museum visitors and help preserve our collection. We will also install efficient cooling and ventilation at the adjacent Saranac Laboratory.

FUNDRAISING SUCCESS

We have raised \$2,088,000 in donations, grants, and pledges, on our way to our \$3.6M goal to support acquisition, rehabilitation, personnel, and exhibits. "Friends of Trudeau," a special group of donors and foundations, launched the project and helped us leverage almost \$1 million in state grants. Our special thanks to Cloudsplitter Foundation for their early support and to Honorary Chair of the Campaign, Garry B. Trudeau. In the last year, we have raised over \$620,000 through these naming opportunities:

- ◆ Trudeau Building Dedication *in the memory of Mary Rousmaniere Gordon*
- ◆ The Outdoor Life *by Alex and Renate Dreyfoos*
- ◆ Occupational Therapy *by Dorothy and Jay Federman*
- ◆ The Pecora Research Room *in memory of Dr. David V. Pecora by his wife Dorothy*
- ◆ Special Exhibits Room
- ◆ Walkway Connector/Landscaping *by Joan and Bill Grabe*
- ◆ The John Black Room *by the Robert and Esther Black Family Foundation and Fund*
- ◆ The Trudeau Cure Porch *in honor of professionals in medicine and science*
- ◆ West Laboratory Space *in loving memory of Dr. Leonard J. and Virginia G. Bristol*
- ◆ Second Floor Office *by the Hyde and Watson Foundation*
- ◆ Trudeau Building First Floor Porch *in memory of Elsie and Phil Wolff by the Wolff Family & the Carroll Family*

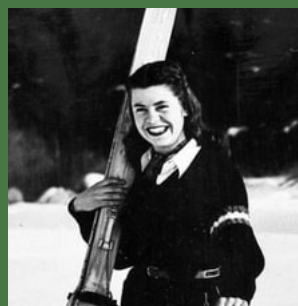
Contact us to find out about naming opportunities in the new museum!



TRUDEAU WINDOWS RESCUED

The beautiful sidelight windows were removed when the front entrance was altered and the vinyl siding was installed. Luckily, Dr. Jay and Dr. Dorothy Federman, who practiced medicine in the building with Dr. Frank Trudeau, saved the windows from the landfill. One was stored in their basement, and the other window was built into their shower during a renovation. The Federmans have graciously allowed us to remove the window from their shower in order to reinstall both windows in their original location. We are excited to bring these windows back to life!

IN MEMORIUM



Natalie Leduc



Dot Fobare

This past year, we lost two very dear friends. Natalie Leduc was an irreplaceable advocate for all things Saranac Lake, and a fountain of knowledge about our local history. Dot Fobare was one of our founding board members, a tireless volunteer, and a feisty advocate for the preservation of Saranac Lake's history and architecture. We are grateful to have known these two irrepressible spirits, and we were honored to accept donations in their memories. You can listen to interview recordings with Natalie and Dot on our oral history website at hslstories.org.

JOIN OUR LEGACY SOCIETY! You can ensure the preservation of our rich history by joining the Legacy Society and including Historic Saranac Lake in your estate plans. Planned gifts, including bequests, represent a wonderful opportunity to preserve Saranac Lake's history for future generations. Contact Executive Director Amy Catania to find out more!

HISTORIC SARANAC LAKE

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Saranac Lake, NY 12983

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

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Card No. _____

Exp. Date _____ security code _____

Name as appears on card:

Signature: _____

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

Become a Member of Historic Saranac Lake!

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



Patients on Porch at Ray Brook, Courtesy of Berni Gorski, Historic Saranac Lake Collection.

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