



Port Henry possesses a stretch of well preserved, late 19th century commercial buildings, reminiscent of the town's more prosperous years. The four story brick structure occupying most of the block is the former Lee House hotel. The modillions along the cornice, flat lintels and the use of columns suggest a classical revival influence. Uneven distribution of windows strays from the classical order though.

To the south is an interesting two story building with store front space on the first floor. The second floor would have probably provided space for an office or living quarters for the business owner. Though the surface of the exterior appears to be stone, it is actually pressed metal, a more affordable option for dressing up what may be a simple wood frame building.

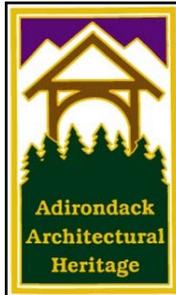
The large brick building to the north is a good example of the Italianate style being used on a commercial scale; the heavily detailed cornice line features brackets, and two over two windows are capped by arched lintels. Originally the ground floor would have contained store fronts, as it does today, though they have undergone significant alterations. The upper floors, however, may have housed offices, whereas they were more likely to contain apartments in later years.



Architecture of the Champlain Valley



Port Henry



Adirondack Architectural Heritage (AARCH) is the regional, nonprofit historic preservation organization for the Adirondack Park. This tour is one of over fifty events AARCH is offering in our 2009 program schedule. Further information is available by contacting AARCH at 518-834-9328 or by visiting our website at www.aarch.org.

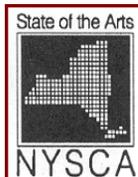
AARCH would like to thank Joan Daby, Moriah Town Historian, for helping to prepare and lead this tour.

For more information about Port Henry history call: Joan at 518-546-7524 or the Iron Center at 518-546-3587

In 2009 the Iron Center is open Saturday, June 20 thru Saturday, October 17,

Thursdays, Fridays & Saturdays from noon to 3 p.m. Group tours may be made by appointment.

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The earliest permanent settlement near Port Henry dates to 1785, led by William McKenzie. Within 50 years, there were numerous sawmills in operation, kept busy by the rapid clearing of timber. It would be the area's most valuable resource, however, iron, that would lead to a majority of the development, increased population, and the construction of a railroad. The high quality of the iron found in the hills off Lake Champlain put Moriah on the map as a leader in the industry.

The buildings we see today were mostly built in the mid to late 1800s and early 1900s when the iron industry was flourishing and many immigrants came to this area to work at the mines or apply their many useful trades, leading to an impressive melting pot of ethnic peoples. These old structures possess special unique qualities that the proud builders of old were noted for. They demonstrate the craftsmanship and styles that were popular during the town's most prosperous periods.

Port Henry is located within the Town of Moriah, which also encompasses the settlements of Moriah, Witherbee and Mineville. The main highway of Route 9N & 22 runs through this pleasant village which is nestled into the hillside on the shores of lower Lake Champlain, with spectacular views of the lake and the Vermont shoreline and its green mountains. Also within view to the south are the Crown Point Bridge and Light House and the ruins of Fort Crown Point. Port Henry has a N.Y.S. boat launching site at the north end, along with a public beach and campsite. The south end of the village also has a public beach and campsite. Another useful attraction is our 1888 D&H railroad station, which is used as a Senior Center & Senior Nutrition Site, as well as a daily stopping point for the C.P. Rail passenger trains.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR...

Currently the town offices, this impressive high style example of the French Second Empire period was constructed in 1875 as the Witherbee, Sherman & Company office. This style is identified by the use of the Mansard roof, dormers, and heavily detailed cornice line and brackets. Paired windows capped by a flattened arch reflect Italianate influence, also very popular during this period. The carriage house, now home to the Iron Center and Moriah Historical Society, is located in the background. The smaller building mimics the same three bay design, center arch and decoration as the office.



Mansard Roof

A roof having a double slope on all four sides, the lower slope being much steeper.

Roof shape may be straight, flared, concave, convex, or S-curved.



common, the Mansard roof lent itself well to single story structures as well, providing nearly a full second floor of living space. The porch on this residence was most likely added closer to the turn of the century.

The prevalence of French Second Empire buildings throughout Port Henry indicates a period of growth and prosperity during the mid to late 19th century. The use of a tower occurred in about 30 percent of buildings of this style. Though 2 story houses were most

ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS, MATERIALS, STYLES, FUNCTIONS, ALTERATIONS

Built in 1911 as Henry's Garage, this four story industrial building is constructed of cast concrete block. This material was developed in the early 20th century and grew in popularity as being affordable and worked both as structural infill and exterior finish. A number of employee houses in Witherbee and Mineville were constructed of the same or similar blocks. The cornice line incorporates paired brackets, which, along with the paired windows hint at Italianate influence. The straps of wood encasing the façade indicate that the building had been sided and these were used as nailers. The garage, which stretches through an entire block is currently home to the Port Henry Fire Department.



Vernacular architecture is a part of any 19th century town, particularly those with a population of middle class laborers. Folk houses were often two story, frame buildings with little architectural detailing. They were constructed without the use of a professional architect, instead employing local construction methods. Porches were common, particularly during the Victorian era when turned posts, brackets, and other pre-cut detailing was being produced at mills and shipped by train. This made the pieces affordable and available to a wide audience, local builders who used them to add style to an otherwise basic structure. As Port Henry is located on a rail line, distribution of these type of architectural elements would have been common.



The Neoclassical style, popular during the first quarter of the 20th century incorporated elements of classical architecture such as pilasters, columns, and dentil molding. Unlike the earlier Classical and Greek Revival styles though, the Neoclassical interpretations enlarged the details and added more embellishment. This trend was inspired by the 1893 Chicago World's Exposition, where design mandated that all the buildings be in the classical theme. Glens Falls National Bank is a good example of this style as many of the classical elements

are present. The open balustrade along the perimeter of the roof line was rare in the original designs.



There are a handful of buildings in Port Henry that exhibit the heavy, rough-cut stone of the Richardsonian Romanesque style, made popular by Boston architect, H.H. Richardson.



One is Mount Moriah Presbyterian Church, built in 1888, which has several characteristics associated with the style. Arched openings frame windows, doors and the porte cochere, the façade is asymmetrical, and the design employs a tower, though it's not a rounded turret which is more typical. Most importantly is the use of masonry, a necessity of Richardsonian Romanesque. The rough faced stone is polychrome, or more than one color, creating added dimension through tone and texture. The heaviness of the material and massing often give these designs the feeling of being anchored to the ground.