Major Progress at Camp Santanoni

Thanks to a $365,000 Save America’s Treasures grant to AARCH and matching funds from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, the Town of Newcomb, and the Friends of Camp Santanoni, Mercer Construction completed the largest conservation project done to date at Santanoni. Guided by architectural planning work by Argus Architecture & Preservation, major exterior restoration work was done at the Gate Lodge and West Cottage and both now have new roofs, all exterior woodwork has been restored, stained and painted, and have had all their structural problems corrected.

Michael Frenette and crew also completed the restoration of the boathouse at the Main Camp. This four year project was funded by a $92,000 grant to AARCH from New York State’s Environmental Protection Fund with matching funds from NYSDEC, the Town, and Friends. In September, more than eighty friends gathered at the boathouse (left) to celebrate this huge accomplishment.

AARCH and its partners are also planning on how to use an additional $1 million in state funding for Santanoni. This will be used in 2008 for conservation and rehabilitation of the kitchen/staff wing at the Main Lodge; for restoration work on the Farm Manager’s Cottage and Herdsman’s Cottage at the Farm; and to repair one of the deteriorated stone bridges that carry the Newcomb Lake Road.

Advocacy for Endangered Properties

With several major advocacy successes in 2006 (Hadley Bow Bridge, Jay Covered Bridge, and Harriman Cottage), this year we turned our attention to several other important regional issues. Chief among these is our concern about the fate of the 1929 Lake Champlain Bridge, which crosses between Crown Point, New York and Chimney Point, Vermont. The New York State Department of Transportation and the Vermont Agency of Transportation are currently studying several options, including rehabilitation and replacement. We are doing everything we can to make sure the public recognizes and appreciates the historic and engineering importance of this bridge. And, in 2007, we were responsible for getting it listed on the National Register of Historic Places and to be considered as a National Historic Landmark. We have obtained funding from the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Preservation League of New York State, and the Preservation Trust of Vermont for the Lake Champlain Bridge Education Project, which will produce a brochure, interpretive signage, and web-based materials about the bridge. We are also serving on the Lake Champlain Bridge Public Advisory Committee and will help to ensure that the rehabilitation and preservation option is given the serious consideration it deserves.

We continue to be active in advocating for the preservation of the fire observation towers on Hurricane and St. Regis mountains, for Debar Pond Lodge in the Town of Duane, and for the Alert Facility or “Mole Hole”, a rare Cold War era structure at the former Plattsburgh Air Force Base.

Thanks to funding from New York State to the Open Space Institute, work was completed this year to stabilize both the McNaughton Cottage and McIntyre Furnace in Newcomb. AARCH has long been concerned about the future of this very important industrial site and is actively working with OSI and others to ensure its preservation and public enjoyment. The furnace, built between 1849 and 1854, is a rare surviving example of a mid 19th century blast furnace and the 1834 cottage was part of the industrial hamlet and was where Theodore Roosevelt stayed when he was in the Adirondacks in 1901. Work this year focused on correcting structural problems and preventing water infiltration from doing further damage to the structures.

We are most appreciative for the support we receive from the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA), a state agency.
Tours, Workshops, and Special Events

This year AARCH sponsored thirty-six public educational tours and workshops throughout the region. These explored a wide variety of places and were very popular with our members and the general public. We also partnered with the Adirondack Museum to offer three special tours of regional rustic architecture, offered twenty public tours of White Pine Camp, the 1926 summer White House of Calvin Coolidge, did several dozen public lectures, and held five special events – our annual meeting at the Essex County Fairgrounds in Westport, benefit events at The Uplands and Mohican Point, a sponsors’ event in Port Kent, and an awards luncheon.

Technical Assistance and Support

We continued to provide helpful assistance to dozens of historic property owners on a range of preservation issues. This included providing support for National Register nominations, distributing information on preservation grants and tax credits, giving conservation advice, and helping to nurture fledgling preservation organizations.

For the first time we held a technical training workshop at Great Camp Sagamore on repairing and restoring wood windows (left). AARCH staff also worked on National Register of Historic Places nominations for The Hedges on Blue Mountain Lake and the Alice T. Miner Museum in Chazy.

AARCH Awards

At our twelfth annual awards ceremony at the Lake George Club in Diamond Point in October, AARCH recognized six preservation and stewardship projects. Projects included: Willem and Marguerite Monster for the restoration of the Sacandaga Station near Northville; Lauren Murphy for several exemplary preservation projects in Essex; The Minerva Historical Society for the restoration of the Irishtown Schoolhouse; The Town of Duane for their long-term stewardship of the Duane Methodist-Episcopal Church; Major and Diane Bowes for their more than fifty years of stewardship of Covewood Lodge on Big Moose Lake; and The Church of St. Sacrement in Bolton Landing for their stewardship of the church.

Statewide Recognition

AARCH is receiving a 2007 New York State Historic Preservation Award from the Office of Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) for “outstanding commitment to recognizing and preserving the Adirondack region’s history and culture.” The ceremony will be held in Troy on December 13.

Website

With the help of a new web designer, we are changing the look and content of the AARCH website. These changes began in 2007 and will continue over the coming year. We will be adding a new resources area as well as updating our endangered properties list, the News & Notes section, and have an issues orientated area. Keep visiting our website in the upcoming months to see the new changes.

A New Home for A-ARCH

We are perhaps most excited that we are on the verge of acquiring an historic stone mill complex on the Ausable River in Keeseville as a new home for AARCH. During the last half of the 19th century this was the Ausable Horse Nail Company, manufacturers of horse nails and the machines to mass produce them. Here we will be able to have exhibits, workshops, a meeting and classroom space, a resource center, offices, and much more. Besides developing the site for our own uses, AARCH intends to develop all or part of the stone mill for other private and public uses. The revitalization of this site has been a high priority for the village for decades and it presents a wonderful opportunity for AARCH to contribute to the vitality of this historic village.

Adirondack Architectural Heritage …….. protecting and preserving the irreplacable architectural heritage, historic places, and communities of the Adirondack Park