



North Country Notes

Issue #406

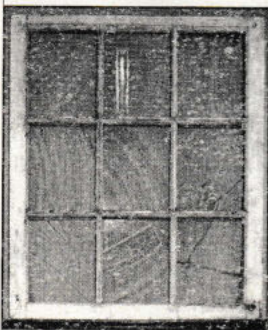
Fall 2010

New Additions to the Redford Glass Exhibit

By Julie Dowd

This year CCHA decided to refurbish the Redford Glass Room. As a result, several items have been added to the exhibit as well as a timeline and small interpretive panels about Redford and its people.

CCHA Trustee, Jan Couture, and her husband Dave, donated a Redford glass nine light window sash from their house in Saranac. Their house, the old Parsons house, is on Parsons Road near the Methodist Church. Dave made a stand for the window and it is placed above the glass collection cabinet that is on permanent display. Looking up at the window, one can see the arcs in the panes made by the crown glass-making process and its sea-green color.



Redford Glass Sash

A collection item on display is a photo of Redford taken at the end of the 19th century. It shows the village from the south side of the Saranac River



Parsons Road Home

Crown glass panes are made by spinning a bubble of glass that is open on one end. As it spins, the bubble flattens out around the thick bullseye in the center. Small panes are then cut from the flat, round piece of glass and the waste, called cullet, used again to make more glass.

while the land was still cleared and being used for farming. The picture was donated to CCHA in 1947 by Mrs. Winslow Watson, a stalwart of the DAR, who had a great interest in history.

Redford, in its glass-making days, must have looked



Redford Panorama

very much like it does in this picture. The woods for several square miles around had been cut for the needs of the factory because massive amounts of wood for the making of charcoal and the firing of Potsdam sandstone were needed. Fired sandstone was the main ingredient of Redford glass and the company had its own kiln down by the river near the present-day bridge.

Transporting the crown glass finished product from the isolated village of Redford was difficult and expensive. The company went to great lengths to pack the panes tightly in straw and specially made wooden boxes sized to the panes.

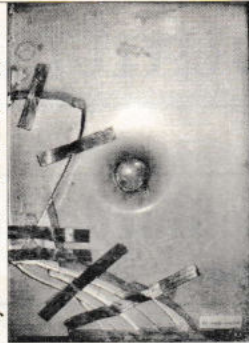


Redford Glass Packing Box

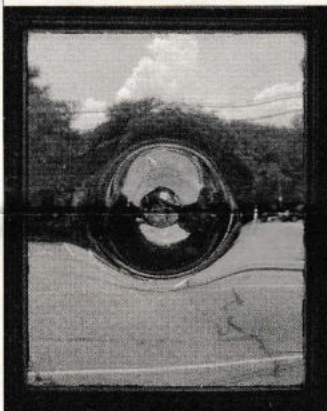
Another new piece being displayed is a broken and smoky bullseye glass pane. It is interesting because it came through the fire at the Peter Tremblay home in

Redford Continued

1931. This pane was one of several dozen bullseye panes that had been used on a porch built as an addition to the original 1826 house built by the entrepreneurs who created the Redford Glass Company. During the Depression, wealthy collectors, such as Alice T. Miner of Chazy, Elizabeth Havemeyer Webb of the Shelburne Museum in Vermont, and H. F. DuPont of the Winterthur Museum and Country Estate in Delaware, bought large quantities of Redford glass. Several of the unbroken panes from this porch are at the Alice T. Miner Museum. You can see them on either side of the front and side doors.



Bullseye Surviving the Fire

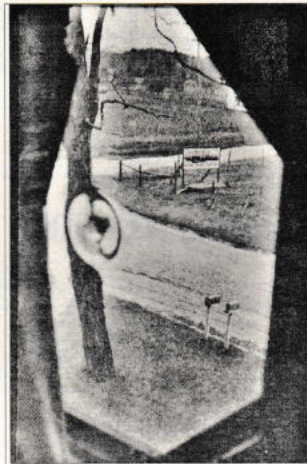


Bullseye at Miner Museum

In Winterthur, the panes were built into a skylight in the library.

The Depression Era generated another story about Redford glass. At the corner of Rte. 3 and Banker Road in West Plattsburgh a house still stands that had a large round crown glass table, or pane, used as an attic window. The bullseye glass pane, 45 inches in diameter, was sold to a dealer for \$500 who then sold the huge pane to the DuPont family for \$2,500. The Dupont's put this pane into their museum library at Winterthur as a skylight.

In August of 2010, I went in search of this wonderful piece of Clinton County history. Heather Hansen, an intern at the Winterthur Museum graciously gave me a tour of all the exhibits relating to Redford glass and other crown glass pieces. We ended up in the library. When I looked up, the table of glass was not there. Unfortunately, it had been broken years before and the pieces had been lost. In its



Banker House Bullseye from the inside

place was a panel of 30 small bullseye panes of different colors. Heather told me that one of the greenish bullseyes may have been the center of what had been the large

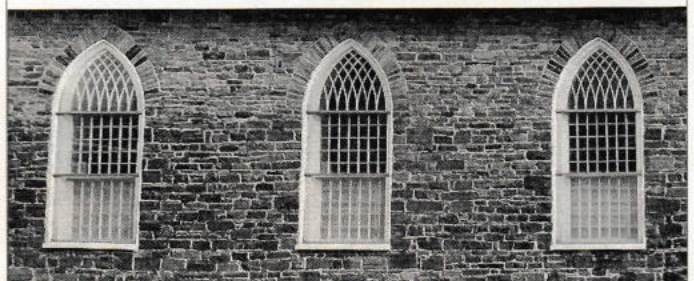


The Banker House

circle. I was so disappointed not to find the pane.

Redford glass windows can still be found all over Clinton County especially in stone buildings built in the second quarter of the 1800s. Today most of the windows in the main sections have been replaced or covered with more energy-saving solutions. Often the panes in the entrances or out-buildings are the only Redford pieces left.

There is one mystery in the continuing story of



Redford Glass in Peru Community Church

Redford glass in Clinton County that has yet to be solved. The last owner of the Redford Glass Company, Matthew Lane, a staunch Presbyterian, commissioned a set of glass bells to be made for the church next door to his house in Redford. Legend has it that when the church was torn down, it was rebuilt at Thorp's Patent in the Town of Peru and

Redford Continued

the bells were sent to the church in Peasleeville. The bells haven't been seen since. Wouldn't it be wonderful if they were still in Clinton County, carefully packed away from their last move, waiting to be rediscovered?

The Clinton County Historical Association is continually searching for items relating to Redford glass. At an auction last summer, a price list for Redford glass was bought for \$30. There are still pieces to be found in the local area whether they are pane glass, hollowware or paper documents. We would always be glad to see them.

The CCHA Redford Glass Collection

The Clinton County Historical Museum is home to a major collection of 47 Redford glass pieces, 34 of which were donated by Mr. and Mrs. Harold A. Boire in memory of Eva D. Boire of Mooers, New York who acquired the glass over a span of many years. Besides the manufacture of crown glass windows between 1831 and 1851, the Redford Glass Company produced many of the finest examples of glassware made in America. "End-of-the-day" or offhand pieces, utilitarian and whimsical, were made after the daily quota of window glass had been filled. Notable for the beauty of their liquid-like aquamarine color, Redford glass has a distinctive type of ornamentation



lies.

known to collectors as the "South Jersey tradition." These objects were an expression of the glassblower's craft and have survived in extremely limited quantities – only about 250 fully authenticated offhand pieces can definitely be attributed to the glasshouse at Redford. Sold in the company store, these objects found their way into the homes of local fami-

Gravestones Tell the Story

By Jan Couture
Town of Saranac Historian

In many respects, a cemetery is like a library. It beckons to you to enter and explore its treasures. Once inside, you find something of interest at every turn. Each gravestone is like a book jacket with just enough information to pique your interest to dig deeper into the past. When you leave, you know you will return.

One of the sad facts of settling a town is the necessity to provide a proper burial site for its dead. In 1827, three years after Saranac's creation, the early residents of the town recognized this, took the necessary steps, and located the burial ground on a level piece of land near the center of town. The Saranac Independence Cemetery contains the graves of many of Saranac's settlement era families and provides information about their struggles to survive in this wilderness known as the Adirondacks.



Saranac Independence Cemetery

One stone tells the story of the André and Experience Otis family. It shows that Franklin age 4, Juliann age 8, Joseph age 10, and William age 6 died on January 25, 1839 "having been consumed with the house and all its effects". The Otis name never appears in the cemetery again. In a sad twist

Gravestones Tell the Story of Saranac

of fate, twelve years earlier Andrew Otis had accepted the challenge to find a suitable burying ground for the town.



First Child born
in Saranac

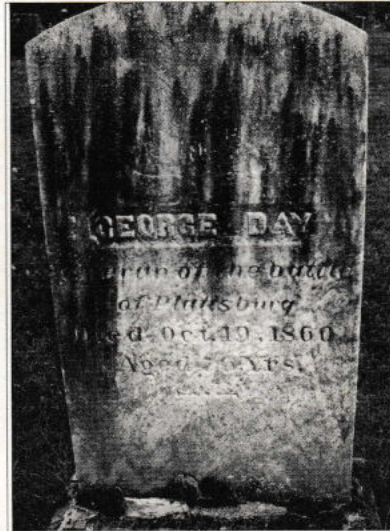
New Englanders from Vermont and Massachusetts as well as French Canadians settled Saranac in the early 1800's. As Clinton County grew, more and more people settled west of Lake Champlain and the town of Saranac grew.

Many never forgot their roots. The grave of John Martin, 1793-1853 states simply, "Born in Ireland".

George Parsons outlived three wives and their birthplaces are noted on the stone. Parsons and his first wife, Sarah Strong (1795-1830) were from Massachusetts. Mary Hoyt's (1811-1841) inscription shows she was originally from New Hampshire. Parsons third wife, Adeline Holt Tunnicliff (1812-1872) was born in Plattsburgh. Benjamin and Julia (Smart) Peer's marker states they were born in New Hampshire and Peru, respectively.

The gravestones represented in the Saranac Independence Cemetery also reflect the Spartan lifestyle of the settlers and residents of Saranac during the 19th century. The settling of the area proved to be very difficult on the early people. The Saranac River was a major highway for the logging industry. The river provided waterpower to run iron forges, various small mills and factories (starch, shingle, and lumber). Many residents were farmers who dealt in livestock and crops. The iron forges and the secondary industries employed the balance of the citizens.

A hand chiseled stone displays the dangers of logging. The marker, a rectangular piece of simple fieldstone is about three feet high and memorializes



Veteran of the
Battle of Plattsburgh

two men whose names have been eroded by time. However, their fate is still clear. One man came from Maine and the other from Potsdam. They were "Lost at High Falls".

Sickness took many people. The loss of children to diseases such as scarlet fever, diphtheria, and pneumonia was common.

Many families lost at least one child at a young age.

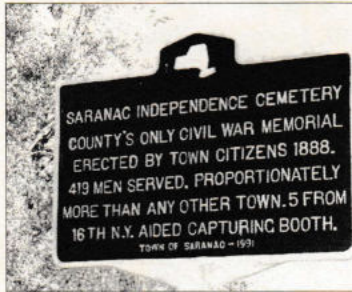


Couture pointing to children's graves

Several marble stones tell the story of those children. There are the Felton children: Elam (1846-1847), George (1852), and Isaac (1845-1857). Henry (1867) and Nellie (1869-1873) Dunham were the children of Dr. George and Sarah Dunham. The Muzzy family had particular sadness as their children: Andrew, Herbert, and Lodica all died between September 7 and 9, 1848. Sadly, all these children were less than two years old.

The cemetery contains the graves of many veterans from various wars. There are three known veterans from the War of 1812 (two from the Battle of

Saranac continued



Civil War Historical Marker

Plattsburgh), many from the Civil War as well as the Spanish-American War, World Wars I and II, Korea, and Vietnam. A New York State historical marker for the cemetery notes that the town of

Saranac sent 416 men to the Civil War, proportionally more than any other town in New York State, and that five of these men were among the 25 who helped capture John Wilkes Booth. Approximately 150 flags proudly wave in the cemetery from Memorial Day to September 11 to honor those who served during times of war.

The tallest structure in the cemetery is a white zinc monument memorializing those Saranac soldiers who died during the Civil War. Dedicated on Memorial Day 1888 and topped by a sculpture known as "American Soldier," the memorial names the 72



Civil War Memorial

men who died in battle, in prison, or from disease during the war. Proudly inscribed at the base are the following notations: "Saranac furnished 416 soldiers for the Army of the Union" and "Erected by the soldiers and citizens of the Saranac Valley". It is the oldest war memorial, the only Civil War monument, and one of only two white zinc monuments in Clinton County.

Among the many stones of veterans of the Civil War, two are noteworthy. Godfrey Phillip Hoyt (1820-1905) assisted in the capture of

John Wilkes Booth. Stephen Bull's (1837-1864) stone honors the prisoners of war buried in mass graves at Salisbury Prison. The zinc monument gives the names of four men from the Brice family. Isaac, who died of disease, is buried beside his wife, Mercy (1819-1888). There are no stones for George and Amaziah since they died in prison, or Andrew, who died in battle.

When the Saranac Independence Cemetery Association took the responsibility of the cemetery from the town in the 1880's, one of the first things they did was build a cast iron fence along the front boundary. Bowen & Signor Iron Works, the area's largest employer, created the fence of Saranac iron. It is the only documented piece of Saranac iron in the town.

As it did in the past, the cemetery reflects the rather austere and modest lifestyle of the residents of Saranac. There are no mausoleums or ornate



1880's Iron Fence

gravestones in this cemetery. This is a burying place for the 'common' person. The Independence Cemetery is an example of a small town's pride and respect for those who have gone before them. Here you can get a glimpse of what life was like for the early settlers,

search for relatives that have been only a name on a piece of paper, and enjoy peace and quiet in a pastoral setting as you contemplate the stories each gravestone tells.

Without Volunteers There Would Be No Museum

The Clinton County Historical Museum has six exhibit galleries, a regionally and nationally significant collection of more than 10,000 objects, including prints, photographs, paintings, folk art, textiles, furniture, musical instruments, letters, diaries, posters, jewelry, agricultural equipment, maps, Redford glass, postcards, ephemera, toys, and rare books. It also has only one staff person. How does it keep going?

Ruth Clackler, Julie Dowd, Helen Nerska, Colleen Prescott, and Kathleen Schumacher are the Museum's five loyal docents who dedicate at least two days a month to guiding visitors, working on collections inventory, and many other projects. Julie Dowd has also spent months researching and reinterpreting the Redford glass collection (see article on page 1). Two interns from SUNY Plattsburgh, Shannon Egloff and Samantha Mitchell are inventoring artifacts, doing research, leading tours, and

learning and implementing museum best practices. Another SUNY student, Matt Hewson, led 20 boys and girls through the first CCHA Civil War Camp in July.

Board Trustee Jan Couture recently led a very successful CCHA cemetery tour from Lyon Mountain to Saranac, the first of a new series of county tours. The tours are the brainchild of the Board's Outreach Committee chaired by Helen Nerska and made up of Roger Harwood, Bill Laundry, Heidi Dennis, Alita Desso, and Richard Jarrette. Outgoing Board member Alita Desso has also maintained the CCHA Facebook page. Herman Drollette maintains our furnace. Without Wally Barber and Jimm Collin the Cold War exhibit would never have opened on time. Jimm is also our computer guru. David Patrick has cataloged the entire McLellan Collection. Roger Black has made himself indispensable indexing and scanning CCHA's collection of glass plate negative portraits and creating

Memberships, Donations and Other Support Received From March 7, 2010 through September 14, 2010

Adirondack Architectural Heritage, Adirondack Mountain Club-Algonquin Chapter, Joseph and Jane Alexander, Stasia Arcarese, Ara Asadourian, Linda Atchinson, Ausable Chasm Company, Marion Bass, Gerald Bates, Thomas C. Beach, Dave Bodah, Terry and Michele Branon, Brown Funeral Home, Bruce Butterfield, The Caterpillar Foundation, David and Kathy Champagne, Champlain National Bank, Chapel Hill Foundation, Virginia Chase, Jim Ciborski, Shirley Coffey, Edward Comstock, Herb and Irene Cottrell, Craftsbury Schools, Luke and Lisa Cyphers, Richard Daly, James and Caroline Dawson, Janet Deeb, Suzanne DeForge, Cheryl Dodds, John Drown, Geri Favreau, Ellen Fleming, Maurice and Gina Gilbert, Noel Sowley and Maurica Gilbert, Irving and Eleanor Goldman, Lisa Gould, Robert Haley, Rebecca Hayes, Richard and Christie Jarrette, Marceline Kavanagh, Keeseville Pharmacy, Debra Kimok, Timothy and Jeanette Konanan, William Krueger and Suzy Johnson, Arthur and Rosemary LaMarche, William Laundry, Paul Leduc, Chantal LeFebvre, Patricia Lewis, William and Nancy Manning, Eva Martin, William and Scarlett McBride, Linda McGuire, Tom and Elizabeth Metz, Thomas and Katherine Murnane, William and Barbara Murray, Museumwise, Sam Northshield, Jack and Joanna Orr, James Papero, Patricia Parker, Charles and Shelley Payson, PHS Student Docents, Plattsburgh Professional Firefighters Benev. Assoc., Gordon and Sandra Pollard, Stanley Ransom, Anastasia Pratt, Colleen Prescott, Sharon Ratner, Geraldine Rickert, Bill and Bunny Rowe, Judy and Jack Russell, Carol Schnob, Seton Catholic Central, Charles Smith, Jr., Frank and Pat Smith, Curt and Michele Snyder, Ed Stansbury, Stewart's Foundation, Noel and Debbie Stewart, Town of Beekmantown, Arthur Tremblay, Travis Tucker, Gary Van Cour, George and Marcia Wagner, Connie Wheeler and Aurora Billings, Peggy Whipple, Lynn and Ann Wilke and Clinton County.

Without Volunteers There Would Be No Museum

CCHA History's Mysteries asking people to locate 19th century photos of local places. It can be found on the Press Republican's Facebook page. Roger is also our incoming webmaster taking over from the longtime web team of Roger Harwood and Jim



Jim Bailey

Millard who have faithfully used their combined skills to keep the CCHA website current and interesting. Then there is Jim Bailey, the Plattsburgh City Historian and a Board trustee. He mows the lawn, gardens, paints, keeps the book shop going, inventories, and fills in wherever necessary.

Another trustee, Luke Cyphers, has been quietly inventorying documents one or two times a week for months. The whole organization would truly fall apart without the boundless energy of our Board Treasurer Maurica Gilbert who besides keeping us financially sound, does a bit of everything including masterminding the inventory project. Finally there is Roger Harwood, CCHA's outgoing President, who organized the move and renovation of our present building, built countless items for the museum, maintains the Bluff Point Lighthouse, organizes the lighthouse docents, and even mows the lawn and controls the poison ivy at Crab Island.

Volunteers at the Lighthouse

The Bluff Point Lighthouse was open this summer every Sunday afternoon from Memorial Day to Labor Day.

Over 700 visitors from 3 countries, 15 states, and 2 provinces made their way to the prominent landmark on Valcour Island. The Clinton County Historical Association could not keep the doors open without the many docents who provide building maintenance and interpretation for visitors to better understand the history and function of the Bluff Point Lighthouse. A big thank you to the 2010 volunteer docents:



Roger Harwood

Ann & Jim Bailey, Heather & Fred Finn, Roger Harwood, Carol & Frank Hochreiter, Peter & Claudia Hornby, Scott Johnson, Helen Nerska, Pat Parker and Kim & Bernie Peine

A special thanks goes to New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Valcour Island Caretaker Anthony Tyrell for transporting our docents to the island on Sundays.

Programs Spring 2011

Monday, April 4: Adirondack Ice: A Cultural and Natural History by Caperton Tissot, Stories and photos about the fast disappearing era of Adirondack ice industries, transportation, and accidents, with a book signing, 7 pm at the Museum.

Monday, May 2: A Photographic Exploration of 19th Century Adirondack Ironworks by Gordon

Pollard with a focus on his archeological research of the Clintonville ironworks site, 7 pm at the Museum.

Monday, June 6: The Heyday of the Catholic Summer School of America in Cliff Haven by Roger Black, 7 pm at the Museum

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New in the Gift Shop

Clinton County by Anastasia Pratt. \$21.99

Part of the Images of America series, Pratt chronicles the county's agricultural and industrial pursuits, military history, and the lives of county residents working, playing, and praying with archival photographs from the last 150 years.

Empires in the Mountains: French and Indian War Campaigns and Forts in the Lake Champlain, Lake George, and Hudson River Corridor by Russell P. Bellico. \$27.50

With 150 illustrations, firsthand accounts, and period sources, Bellico, author of three important earlier books, caps his career as a historian with this comprehensive history of the Great War for Empire.

December Program

Monday, December 6: Between a Rock and a Hard Place, Convicts and the Big House in 19th Century Clinton County by Amy Godine. Godine will explore the politics of the prison labor program and the 19th c. prison experience, 7 pm at the Museum.

Thursday, December 9: Christmas Shopping Special on the Museum Campus
5-8 pm at the Museum with wine, cheese, cider, & cookies