



North Country Notes

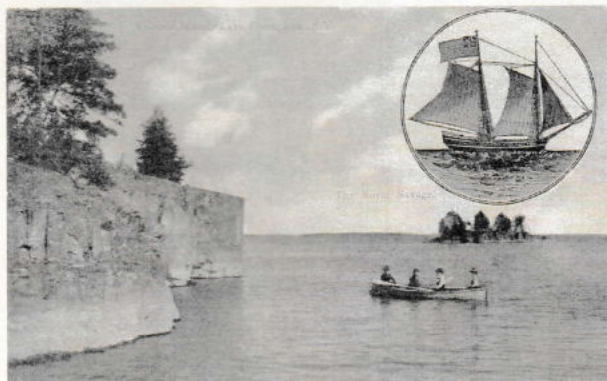
Issue #412

Fall 2013

The Royal Savage - The Ship and the Inn

By Barbara Benjamin

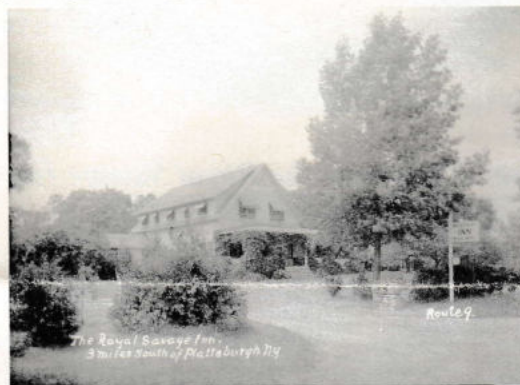
The Royal Savage Inn was named after the flagship of the American Fleet under the command of Benedict Arnold. The ship was built in Great Britain and transported to America where it was reassembled in Canada and used by the British during the Revolutionary War. At some point, the American Rebels captured it. Benedict Arnold chose it as his flagship during the Battle for Lake Champlain on October 11, 1776 at Valcour Island. There it was grounded and fired upon by the British burning it to the level of the lake where it remained until the 1930's just under the surface near Valcour Island, opposite the Inn. The Royal Savage was raised in 1937 by Captain Hagglund who spent the summer at the Inn.



Postcard: Valcour Island and the Royal Savage

When Don Benjamin took possession of the Inn, there was a box of artifacts in the closet

of one of the six bedrooms upstairs. It contained a large brass bolt, a huge chunk of the Royal Savage, a pewter plate with the maker's seal in



Postcard: Exterior of the Royal Savage Inn

scribed on its back, a small cannon ball and other small pieces of shot and nails. These were brought up by Captain Hagglund in the raising of the hull. Besides the Royal Savage, Captain Hagglund was instrumental in raising the Gondola, the Philadelphia, another of Arnold's fleet. The Philadelphia is on permanent display at the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C. The Benjamins donated all of these artifacts to the Clinton County Historical Association when they sold the business and left the area in 1999.

The Inn was originally a hay barn owned by William Gilliland, the first permanent white settler in this part of the County. In the early 1900's, the structure caught the eye of a local

The Royal Savage - Continued

architect who envisioned a large room using the old beams from the original barn and turning the stable into a working business. In 1919, the Booth family owned the building and leased it to Miss Marion Parkhurst who turned



Dinner Plate from the Royal Savage Inn

it into a tea room known as the "Better Ole" (from the British during the war "If you can find a better ole then find one" we assumed meaning a better fox hole). The lobby served as the entire dining space in those days.

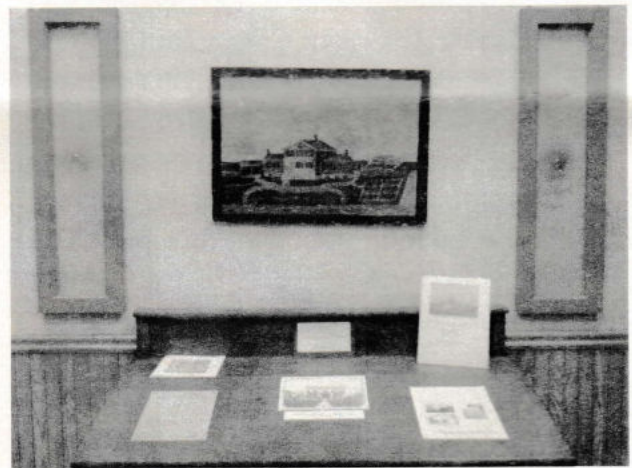


Postcard: Interior of the Royal Savage Inn

In 1932, Newton and Marion Keith leased the Inn for a seasonal restaurant and guest house and later purchased the property. The Keiths ran the Inn for 38 years, serving home style cooking in an early American tradition. Over the years, the Keith's added several rooms and

different levels, as well as a gift and antique shop.

In 1970, after Newton Keiths passing, Marion Keith sold the Inn to Don Benjamin. He turned the large gift shop into a cocktail lounge, named the Spitfire Tavern, and began serving alcoholic beverages. In 1974, he added a lower-level dining area overlooking the Salmon River. During the course of his 29 years at the Inn, he and his wife, Barbara and their wonderful staff of local folks, built up a large banquet business, gift shop trade and catering business that covered the entire North Country, hosting numerous weddings, Christenings, anniversaries, funerals, holiday get togethers and more.



Redford Bullseye Glass Panels

During those early days, Mrs. Keith gave Don two panels of Redford bullseyes which he displayed in the dining room until 1999, when the Benjamins donated them to the Clinton County Historical Association where they hang today.

Mrs. Keith wrote her first cookbook in 1950 and it continued to be a good seller and reference for her delicious concoctions way into the 1970's. Many of the recipes are still used by those of us who are lucky enough to have a copy. Some of her most popular items both in the book and on

The Royal Savage - Continued

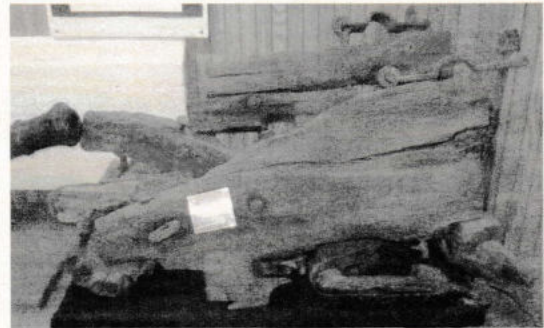
the restaurant's menu were: Hawaiian chicken, chicken croquettes, chicken livers and onions, brandy meringues, apple crisp, Indian pudding, and the ever popular popovers served every day at lunch.

Don ran the restaurant with a tight hand on the prices. He hated to raise them and struggled with that subject as prices for everything escalated over the years. He featured a Sunday Dinner Special for \$7.95 (all inclusive, coffee too) for many years. This was still a far cry from the opening dinners served by the Keiths at \$1.50 in the 1930's and 1940's.

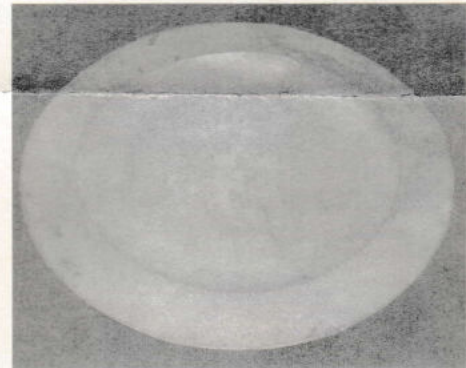
The Benjamins' daughter, Kate, had a wonderful time growing up at the Inn. When she was very young, she enjoyed perching up on the staircase with her legs pushed through the spindles where she could kick off her shoes scaring the folks walking through the lobby below. That did not go on for long. Kate also enjoyed "baking" in the kitchen with Alma. Her presentations were put out of sight, but she had wonderful times in the back of the house with the guys who cooked along the line. Kate was not shy when it came to visiting with the customers and often seated herself wherever she pleased to nibble on carrots and celery. Many customers got a kick out of her. Her favorite guest was Santa Claus who made an annual visit to the Inn for a "royal dinner."

The Benjamins left in 1999 and the Inn carried on for two more years. When they took it back, they held a large auction of its contents and sold the property, thus ending a long history of hospitality on Route 9 South. The Royal Savage Inn holds many memories of good times and good food for many folks in the North Country and beyond. It holds the same good memories for us. Thanks for the memories. Don and Barbara Benjamin.

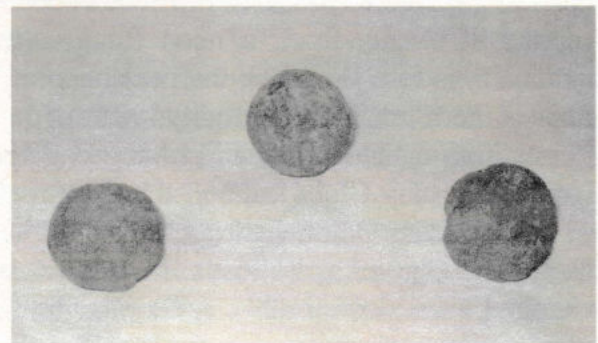
Royal Savage Artifacts at the Museum



*Part of a Gun Carriage on the Royal Savage.
From the Collection of John Martin.
Presented by his son, Harold Wyman Martin*



*Pewter Mess Plate from the Royal Savage
Donated by Don and Barbara Benjamin*



*Grapeshot found on the deck of the Royal Savage
Donated by Don and Barbara Benjamin*

“Know Thy Work and Do It:” The Tuesday Club of Plattsburgh By Ellen E. Adams

“In the Fall of 1890, being deprived of the mental stimulus which mothers have when the children are at home, I thought I would try to get some of my friends to come in one evening and see if we could not start a little reading circle, which might be of mutual benefit.” Almira Averill thus described the origins of one of Plattsburgh’s longest-running organizations, the Tuesday Club. Originally called the Clover Club, it began when Mrs. Averill enlisted six or seven friends and neighbors who gathered in her home with “some magazine articles and newspaper clippings and took turns in reading.” They soon left off their miscellaneous reading and took up a more systematic study of American authors, followed by a study of “English Men of Letters” the second winter.



As the Club expanded (membership was eventually capped at twenty-five), a need for greater organization was felt. By 1896, the members had reorganized the Club more formally, with officers, a constitution, and dues, and changed their name to the Tuesday Club. Initially, the Club met every Tuesday from October through April, with a break for the Christmas holidays. In 1907, this was changed to twice-monthly meetings. Each year, the members chose a topic for their course of study; topics ranged from American history to

archaeology to “Vital Subjects of the Day.” Over the years, they began to intersperse “miscellaneous” programs with the planned ones, and in 1951, the Club abandoned topical programs altogether. From then on, members were free to present on any subject which interested them. In many ways, Plattsburgh’s Tuesday Club



was not at all unusual. It was one of many similar clubs started by middle and upper-class women in the United States in the years after the Civil War. Voluntary associations had always been an important part of American life and women were active participants in missionary, asylum, school and prison reform groups. In Plattsburgh, women



1973-1974 Officers, From Left to Right

Mrs. Leclair Smith, President
Mrs. Richard Guibord, Vice President
Mrs. Milton J. Coulter, Secretary
Mrs. Edward H. Bragg, Treasurer

"Know Thy Work and Do It:" The Tuesday Club of Plattsburgh (Continued)

had organized societies to establish the Home for the Friendless and the Children's Home of Northern New York, and many were members of the Women's Christian Temperance Union.



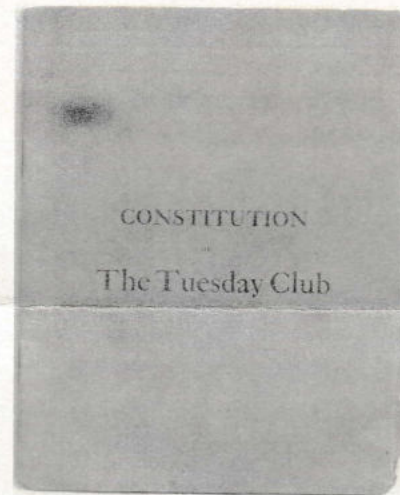
1972-1973 Members, From Left to Right

Mrs. Benjamin Allen
Mrs. Robert D. Arnold
Mrs. William H. Ladue
Mrs. Winslow B. Watson

In the post-war years, these kinds of philanthropic associations expanded and were joined by a new kind of organization, the women's literary society. The first of these, both founded in 1868, were the New England Women's Club, established in Boston by Harriet Hanson Robinson, and Sorosis, founded by Jane Cunningham Croly in New York. In an era when few women had access to higher education, literary and study clubs provided a venue and a framework for reading, writing, and presenting scholarly work. Literary, civic, and reform clubs all flourished in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in cities and towns all over the United States, and Plattsburgh was no exception.

Plattsburgh's Tuesday Club is unusual in its longevity- beginning in the last decade of the nineteenth century and continuing into the twenty-

first, and in its continued dedication to its original purpose of "intellectual culture." In the twentieth century, as women's access to formal education and work outside the home expanded, women's literary clubs no longer seemed quite as necessary. In many cases, clubs altered their activities to incorporate civic and political activism. Some became more purely social organizations while others died away completely.



Why was the Tuesday Club able to maintain so tenaciously its existence and character in the face of the massive social changes of the twentieth century? No doubt it is at least partially due to the stability of its membership. It was not unusual for women to remain in the Club for thirty or forty years, and in some cases even longer. Members also had important connections outside the Club: through their families, their husbands' businesses and professions, as neighbors, in churches and schools. The Tuesday Club contributed to the intellectual and social life of Plattsburgh, and the broader community helped to maintain the Club as an institution. The Tuesday Club is but one link in a network of mutual relationships that shaped the Town of Plattsburgh, past and present.

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Photos from Recent Events



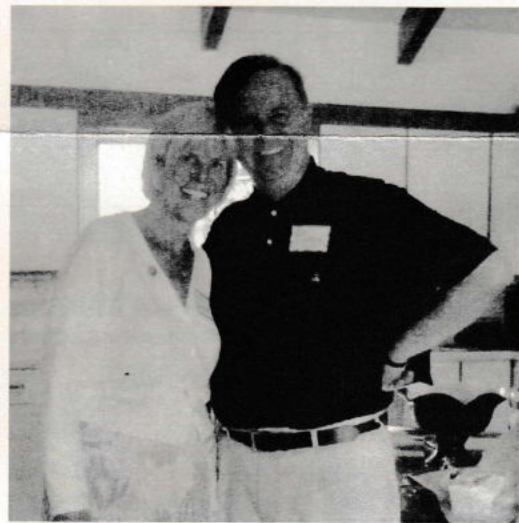
In September, Bruce Saxman, Director of Adventure Programming at Green Mountain College in Poultney, Vermont, camped at the site of the old Washbourne Camp on Valcour Island with his Lake Champlain Sea Kayaking Group.



This year marked the 4th annual Civil War Youth Camp at CCHA. Campers, dressed in Civil War Union uniforms, pose for a photo while waiting in line to fire a re-enactment rifle.



CCHA Trustees pose for a picture at the Museum during a meeting. From left to right, Geri Favreau, Helen Nerska, Maurica Gilbert and Julie Dowd.



Mary Nicknish, CCHA Trustee hosted our 2nd Annual Volunteer Appreciation. Bill Laundry and Mary pose for a picture while preparing goodies in the kitchen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Annual Meeting of the Membership

Saturday, November 2, 2013 at 2 pm

Special presentation by Clinton County Historian, Dr. Anastasia Pratt

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Current Resident or:

New in the Gift Shop

Adirondack Civilian Conservation Corps Camps: History, Memories & Legacy of the CCC by Marty Podskoch. \$20.00
Marty Podskoch records the accomplishments of the CCC camps throughout New York State, many in the Adirondacks. We must not forget their labors in the woodlands and State parks that continue to be enjoyed by millions - Clarence Petty, Adirondack Wilderness Guide.

Nine Days a Soldier by Joy A. Demarse. \$9.95

September 1814: the British have crossed the Canadian border and are headed to Plattsburgh, New York, a village on the shore of Lake Champlain. When a group of schoolboys from Plattsburgh Academy volunteer to defend their home town General Macomb tells them they can fight - if they can find a sponsor. They do and become Aiken's Volunteer Rifle Company - Joy A. Demarse.

Chateaugay Lake: The Adirondack Resort Era 1830-1917 by Henry Cassell Ruschmeyer. \$23.99

Between the years 1830-1917 the Adirondack Mountains enjoyed a summer civilization unique in the annals of American resort life. This vast wilderness went through three phases of development in evolving from a favorite spot for fishermen, artists, and intellectuals to a preferred destination among the rich - Henry Cassell Ruschmeyer.

Chateaugay Ore & Iron Company compiled by J.R. Linney. \$23.00

The history of the Chateaugay Ore and Iron Company is a story of an "ironworks" that was founded, among others, in the dense wilderness of the Adirondack Mountains in New York State. Adventure and romance filled many of the years of its pioneer founders and builders. - J.R. Linney.

Town of Clinton, "Churubusco" compiled by the Churubusco History Committee. \$12.00

In the northwest corner of Clinton County lies a small town with a big history. The Town of Clinton was formed from Ellenburg, May 14, 1845. It was once a farming community but today many of the large farms have gone. This book chronicles the history of the Town of Clinton in such chapters as, "Old Military Tract," "Citizens of the Past," "The Potato Industry," "Clinton Mills," "Influential Businesses," and many more - Churubusco History Committee.