Welcome to PAST!

The 19th-century Mansion House of the utopian, religious Oneida Community in Oneida, New York. This 93,000-square-foot structure with several restored outbuildings and its landscaped grounds was the winner of the 2013 PAS:APAL Historic Preservation Award. (Photo courtesy of Scott Roper)
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Echoes of the PAST
Letter from the Editor

This issue of the *Pioneer America Society Transactions (PAST)* contains six articles from papers presented at the 2013 conference in Utica, NY, as well as an On-the-Road section. The first of these articles is *Courtney Allen’s* “Catskill Mountain House: Social-Spatial Delineations in an Iconic American Landscape,” the first mountain resort in the United States. Courtney traces shifts in economic diversification of the resort’s clientele, and how these shifts are mirrored in the social space and physical landscape.

“Brookwood Point: The Evolution of an Estate from Private to Public,” by *Michele Palmer*, gives a detailed account of the changes played out in the estate’s physical landscape – most prominently the garden spaces – as ownership of the property changed hands. Of particular interest is the maintenance of a coherent site even as sections of the original property were sold. Ultimately, it was the desire to keep the Italianate style Brookwood Garden and associated buildings intact that helped to secure the estate’s future through the transfer of the property to Otsego Land Trust.

*Wayne Brew and Scott Roper* recount the 2013 field trip through New York’s Mohawk valley in “The Mohawk Valley: New England Extended – A Field Trip Through Landscapes of Economic and Cultural Change and Diversity.” Wayne and Scott’s field trip encompassed the Barneveld and Holland Patent area, and the towns of Oriskany, Rome, Clinton, German Flatts, Herkimer, Little Falls, and Utica, with stops that highlighted the region’s rather complex cultural mosaic.

*Thomas L. Bell and Margaret M. Gripshover’s* article “Sterling Reputation? Representation and Commemoration in the 1893 World’s Fair Souvenir Spoons” delves into the commemorative souvenir spoon industry. Thomas and Margaret make the distinction between mementos (personal) and souvenirs (location), placing commemorative spoons associated with the 1893 Chicago World’s Fair firmly in the latter category. The spoons detailed in the article offer a view into the cultural aesthetic of the period, and cover a wide variety of subjects – from individuals to sites at the fair.

In the article “The Distribution and Forms of Rural Gasoline Stations in South-Central Pennsylvania,” *Paul Marr and Claire Jantz* examine rural gas stations from the 1950s-1960s in light of earlier work on gas station form and distribution done by Keith Sculle and John Jakle. The authors found that the diffuse rural populations limited the size of the gas service areas. Because of this, multi-use gas station forms (e.g. gas stations that were also residences or post offices) were more common than purpose-built stations.

In his article, “Staple Anew: The Potential of an Adaptively Re-Used Gasoline Station in Powell, Wyoming,” *Keith Sculle* follows the fortunes of one gas station as it is adapted for reuse as a community center. Keith examines the hurdles – operational, political, and financial – that local entrepreneurs and planners faced when trying to repurpose a 1940s ENCO service station in downtown Powell, Wyoming.
In this issue we again have a section of PAST called Student Research, which highlights recent student research projects. **Nathan Trombley**’s article, “Main Street Canandaigua Adapts to the Automobile: 1900-1930” is an outstanding example of current student research that tracks the shift from horse-based to automobile transport along Main Street in Canandaigua, NY. By examining how individual properties changed functions along a single transect of five time periods, Nathan suggests that horse-related transport businesses could be replaced by or evolve into related auto-related businesses. For his study town he found that while evolution was adopted where practical, replacement was more common.

Rounding out the volume is **Wayne Brew**’s On The Road article, “The French Connection: Interstate Route 11 – A Biography of a Highway in Pictures.” Wayne has undertaken a project to examine and document the vernacular architectural landscape along the entire length of Route 11: New York to New Orleans. He’s broken the project into manageable pieces, and this is the first installment – from Rouses Point, New York on the Canadian border to Scranton, Pennsylvania.

And finally, this issue of PAST would not be possible without the help of Deborah Slater. Her web and image editing skills give the journal a truly professional look (check out the printable pdf version as well!) that allow for the incorporation of graphics in a way that cannot be accomplished with traditional print media. I hope you find this issue of PAST as enjoyable a I have.

Paul Marr, Professor of Geography, Shippensburg University
Catskill Mountain House: Social-Spatial Delineations in an Iconic American Landscape

Courtney Allen, Botanical Education Manager, The Huntington, San Marino, CA

Catskill Mountain House was the first mountain resort in the US, operating from 1824 to 1942. Known as the nation’s playground, the entity shaped how Americans constructed concepts of landscape and nationalism. Catskill Mountain House has been amply discussed by scholars as the birth of nature tourism and environmental history, the epitome and pioneering effort of upper class luxury, and the cultivation of an American aesthetic taste through the talents of the Hudson River School. Yet, little literature exists examining Catskill Mountain House’s exploration of social distinctions during the nineteenth century – how the economic diversification of the clientele may have altered social behaviors, and how that may have been evident in the physical landscape and in interpretations of the landscape. In a region and time of class stratification and increasing transportation technologies, how might Catskill Mountain House have served as an experimental model for a mixed, socialized landscape of leisure? What divisions existed in America’s playground? Ultimately, what does it mean to have a collective experience in a situation where people are “not like you” (Figure 1)?

Figure 1. Postcard of the Catskill Mountain House on a busy day. Catskill Archive.
Figure 2. Tanner, Henry S. A New Map of New York with its Canals, Roads & distances from Place to Place along the Stage & Steam-Boat Routes. Philadelphia: H. S. Tanner. 1836. David Rumsey Historical Map Collection.

Figure 3. New York State Dept. of Environmental Conservation. Map of State Land in Greene County.
In this paper, I intend to demonstrate that Catskill Mountain House served as an experimental model for a broadening definition of leisure over the course of the nineteenth century: addressing who was considered eligible and by whom, the expectations and technologies that encouraged these assumptions, and how these distinctions are suggested within evidence of the landscape. I will examine this thesis through primary sources such as the hotel’s floor plans, art and memorabilia, as well as secondary literature pertaining to nineteenth century American ideas of class, culture, tourism, and leisure.

Part I: Region

Much literature examining the popularity of Catskill Mountain House as an early American tourist spectacle approaches from a deterministic viewpoint, claiming that the geographic location between the Erie Canal and New York City deemed these mountains as the inevitable place for the first resort. The steamboat travel route began in New York City, 100 miles south of the resort area, ran north along the Hudson River and then another 350 miles west to Niagara Falls (Figure 2). But the Catskill Mountains were not strictly a place to gawk at natural wonders; “Catskills” grew to form an experimental world of travel expectations, of distinct artistic and intellectual culture, and ultimately of social interactions.

“Catskills” originally referred to the area just opposite of the town of Catskill, where the resort was established, an area of about 20 square miles. Yet the desire to create a scenic park of the region, based on the resorts, constantly pushed the boundaries throughout the nineteenth century; today, Catskill State
Park encompasses 900 square miles. The Catskill Mountain House was located in the saddle between two mountains and two lakes. The south side was the popular side during the entire time the resort was running, as opposed to today’s north side popularity (Figures 3-4). From the property, visitors could see for about 70 miles, including the Berkshires and the Connecticut River Valley.

The resort was obviously not easily accessible. When Catskill Mountain House was first established in 1824, visitors would ride steamboats up the Hudson, disembark at Catskill (or at Kingston, after the Civil War), and take a stage coach up a rough mountain road for 4-6 hours at a high cost (Figure 5). Transportation was limited, expensive, time-consuming, and exhausting; however, the separation offered a retreat experience. At the top awaited a white, neo-classical hotel on a cliff ledge – small in 1824, with 10 rooms, which grew to over 300 rooms by the end of the nineteenth century. The resort promised accommodations and luxuries comparable to any found in New York City – for elite on retreat from the city.

The Catskills were not simply geographically linked to the city; the resort culture that developed was dependent upon New York City tastes and expectations. The reflection of urban culture in the woods

Figure 5. “The Catskill Mountain House, in the midst of grand and peculiar scenery, on the verge of a rock two thousand and five hundred feet above the Hudson – seen with its various fleets at a distance from its long colonnade – is thronged even more than West Point.” From “A Glance at the Watering Places.” The International Monthly Magazine of Literature, Science and Art, August 1851.
also meant that as socioeconomic trends changed in the country, and transportation technologies were developed to more fluidly bring culture to nature, the socialization structures of the resort coalesced.

What did people come to see at Catskill Mountain House? Who were the audiences and what were they creating and experiencing? Why was this space created, and why at this place and time? With the Erie Canal near completion in 1824, a small association of investors created the Catskill Mountain House, and Thomas Cole began his famous landscape paintings there the following year. Cole provided the foundation for a school of romantic artists, which, in tandem with literary giants such as Irving, Cooper, and Bryant, glorified the beauty of the region, imbuing it with spiritual significance. They depicted “a true wilderness”, the defining and unique feature of the new nation (Figure 6). The natural resources, and the American desire to cultivate them, were the basis of collective goal and identity, and pervaded intellectual media through the well-to-do circles in New York City. Societal expectations in turn shaped the artists’ renderings – creative interpretation with a realistic appearance.

Visitors sought this domesticated wilderness, a picturesque and static viewscape. The irony is that the ideal views that visitors sought were unknowingly often the damaged remains of tanneries and blue-stone quarrying. These clearings and fires were sometimes what made these views possible. In fact, compared to other early tourist spectacles in the United States, the Catskills and the Hudson River Valley below were refined landscapes, demonstrating agricultural progress and a pastoral ideal. This representation and panorama of American evolution was responsible for the attraction to the region.
Part II: Hotel Constructions of Social Space

In considering the plausible class interactions and dynamics established at Catskill Mountain House, we must examine the physical landscape—not only the natural resources and their cultural representations, but the resort complex itself. What is Catskill Mountain House’s place in the larger national hotel movement? What can we deduce from the structure’s layout and circulation? And centrally, what do these distinguishing features suggest about a concept of “public domesticity”?

Hotels in the United States fulfilled a unique role, different from nations without a colonial past and without massive amounts of unexplored territory. These institutions became communities in a constant state of transition and transformation, a temporary home for new guests and new ideas, a microcosm of greater American trends. They raised awareness and provoked questions of people’s relationships to place and to each other, acting as social centers for a migratory people: “Americans lived in a new realm of un-certain boundaries, in an affable, communal world which, strictly speaking, was neither public nor private…The classic locale of this new American vagueness, for this dissolving of old distinctions, was the hotel.” The hotel restructured and redefined boundaries—of privacy, of class, of gender, and

Figure 7. “Sketch Plan. Growth of the Catskill Mountain House. Prepared by Roland Van Zandt from rough plans drawn by Claude Moseman in the 1940s, Drawn by Karen Waldauer.” In Van Zandt’s The Catskill Mountain House, p. 262.
near the end of the nineteenth century, of race. In order to approach these social structures, we must examine the spatial structures that hosted and encouraged them.

The neoclassical choice of architecture for Catskill Mountain House may seem anachronistic or jarring to the natural scenery. However, this fails to take into account the hotel’s growth. First, when the resort was originally constructed in 1824, it was a small rectangular Federal building; it was not until 1845, with the third of four additions, that the iconic neoclassical façade was constructed (Figures 7-8). Second, luxury hotels in cities were frequently monumental, built in the neoclassical style to be recognizable as public spaces. The architecture of Jacksonian democracy was the main driving force in this choice for legibility.

While extant floor plans of Catskill Mountain House are minimal, we can note some indications of an inflexible floor plan. Much of the interior deferred to small, highly delineated spaces. From the time Catskill Mountain House was initially constructed, through its enormous growth over the nineteenth century, the resort remained in dormitory style, with comparatively small private rooms and shared bathrooms. There were two courtyards that became enclosed, and suggest exclusivity for hotel guests in later years when tourism increased. A large dining room is also present; however, a second one was built later on for people who could not afford to stay in the hotel. We can also see that a large part of
Figure 9. Piazza of the [Catskill] Mountain House. 1897. Catskill Archive.
the first floor interior is dedicated to services of the privileged—servants’ quarters, kitchen, and casino. According to the floor plans, we must conclude that the resort throughout the nineteenth century was constructed specifically to maintain guest privacy inside, and to encourage socialization outdoors—the featured attraction of the mountain resort.

There was, however, an in-between space, a borderland: the verandah. The piazza, as it was called, was added to the hotel in 1844 and served as the primary space for socialization. It was a feature partially open to the elements, encouraging promenade and other physical activity; it framed the wilderness, creating a separation yet also a sense of belonging (Figure 9). The piazza also framed the entrance into the resort and served as an impressive beacon. It was on the piazza that guests and visitors gathered to experience the natural and cultural collectively.

While the neoclassical porch may be perceived as an English cultural import from the picturesque movement, there are stronger ties and significance to the Catskills region. The Hudson Valley Dutch were leaders in establishing the domestic porch in America. Respect for Dutch architecture increased drastically in the mid-nineteenth century, due to the influence of the picturesque and a desire to identify American remains. The piazza was a complex and paradoxical symbol of domesticity. It welcomed guests and announced the site as a public institution, but simultaneously modeled the porches of private homes, particularly those of new middle class America designed by AJ Downing. Therefore the piazza, by making public use of a private architectural feature, created a space associated with recognition of wealth and status, though simultaneously claiming to represent democratic ideals.
Figure 11. “Birds-eye View of the Mountain Resorts of New York State and how to Reach them.” Delaware & Hudson Canal Co.’s R.R. www.catskillmountaineer.com.
Figure 12. Transportation system. Van Loan’s Catskill Mountain Guide (New York, 1909), p.6.

Figure 13. Two Maids from the Twilight Inn. 1910. Catskill Archive.
Part III: Technology and Diversification

What, then, took Catskill Mountain House from an exclusive resort to an American pilgrimage site, where people from disparate classes could enjoy the spectacle of Cole’s romanticism as imposed on the Catskills? How did people outside of the New York society circles learn of it? And once Catskill Mountain House became accessible to people of different spheres, how did these groups co-exist, or possibly integrate?

Due to the mid-nineteenth century boom in mass printing, images of geographies became more and more common. The development of tourist guidebooks interpreted America’s resources for a larger public, and American spectacles were no longer limited to the upper class (Figure 10). Diversification at Catskill Mountain House was a result of the emergence of a middle class in urban settings. Beginning in the Jacksonian era and strengthening in post-Civil War America, a new middle class arose that did not adhere to the standard Marxist construction of profiteers and laborers. It created a new culture of working professionals – “white collars” – who were financially dependent upon their non-manual trade, but could afford leisure activity. During the last quarter of the nineteenth century, members of New York City’s emerging middle class would often visit Catskill Mountain House just for the day.

The idea of day visitation – of tasting and participating in the resort culture without paying for the hotel itself for extended periods of time – was made possible by the railroad. The first railroad was constructed by the Ulster and Delaware Railroad Company in 1866, and ran through Kingston. Charles Beach, the proprietor of Catskill Mountain House for most of the nineteenth century, was consistently astute regarding transportation technology and its potential benefits for his establishment; thus, by 1882 there was a rail line that went to the town of Catskill. As though this was not direct or dramatic enough, Beach also installed an Otis Elevating Railroad (essentially a funicular) in 1892, connecting the resort to the town below. While the increased accessibility was protested by surrounding hill towns and Romantics, the middle class took advantage of this rapid and reasonably priced transit (Figures 11-12).

The possibility of commute also changed the gender implications and family structure at Catskill Mountain House, allowing male professionals to come for the weekend and return to work in the city during the week. As such, some middle and upper class families arranged for the women and children to stay in the Catskills for weeks at a time while the male household heads were working. As a result, the resort area in the late nineteenth century became more the woman’s domain, one where gender roles were less stringent. Not only was there a more flexible consideration of what constituted appropriate...
behavior, but it brought questions and awareness of the definitions of “ladyhood” into hotel public spaces, reshaping the hospitality industry.23

But where did the middle class visitors stay during their vacations in the Catskills, since the prices at the resort were so outlandish? Those who could not afford to stay at the resort predominantly took up temporary residence in boarding houses. Surrounding farm communities, which had predated the resort’s establishment in the 1820s and wisely looked to profit from it, frequently converted their farmhouses into boarding houses. Some were actual inns, capitalizing on the local mythology, such as the Rip Van Winkle Inn; others were simply a few rooms for single people or families who were willing to live in close quarters. For these visitors, a trip to the Catskills was not necessarily luxurious; but it perpetuated a romantic view of rural culture, still gave the opportunity for outdoor wonders, and allowed for day access to Catskill Mountain House.24

For wealthy patrons who found class integration intolerable, there was opportunity for segregation at newly developed resorts, which had cottages and gated communities. The discrimination that had been excused by the upper class under the guise of luxury became more and more blatant; the more diverse the vacationland grew, the more self-conscious the segregation became.25 Yet, during the day, people of various economic and living situations would all spend time at Catskill Mountain House (Figure 13). On the piazza and among the outdoor organized sports on the lawn, middle and upper classes forged methods to share space and interact. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, Catskill Mountain House received 70,000 daytime visitors annually.26
While the daytime visitation at Catskill Mountain House grew to encompass a diversity of classes, it remained exclusive in race and ethnicity. The discrimination resulted in the formation of Jewish establishments (called the Borsch Belt) in the early twentieth century, and African-American establishments in the mid-twentieth century (Figure 14-15). While the economic depression and frugal mentality of the World Wars and Great Depression was the ultimate reason for the closing of Catskill Mountain House in 1942, the discrimination was likely a contributing factor.

**Decline**

After the closing, the hotel was hit by a hurricane in 1950; the owner attempted a restoration of the structure in 1952, but the cost and labor proved overwhelming for an individual. The site fell into major disrepair and was purchased by the New York State Conservation Department in 1962 (Figure 16). Rather than invest the restoration efforts in the once-famed structure, the state burned it at 6am on Jan 25, 1963, claiming that the structure was incompatible with state article 14 that the Catskills should be “forever keep as wild forest lands” – a decision reflective of the time period’s own hierarchy of preservation values. A landmark for over a century, the Catskill Mountain House helped define Americans’ understanding of environment – naturally, culturally, socially, and in many other ways. As one of the early spectacles, the resort served as a model for collective formation of place, and of learning how to share space with people of different economic backgrounds, who were eager to participate in that process of group identity and site attachment.

**Endnotes**

4Ibid 71-100.
5Schuyler 97; James Fenimore Cooper, *The Pioneers* (Charles Wiley, 1823); William Cullen Bryant, “Catterskill Falls,” (1836).
6Stradling 23-25.
7Ibid 28-45.
8Sears 49.
12Flad 362.
15Flad.
17Ibid 224.
21Van Zandt 225-241.
22Stradling 96.
23Brucken 203-204.
26Van Zandt 289.

**Contributor Biography**

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Brookwood Point: The Evolution of an Estate from Private to Public

Michele Palmer, Cornell University

Located on the western shore of Otsego Lake, in Cooperstown New York, Brookwood Point is one of the few remaining historic estates on the lake and can be considered as an example of how social changes and economic pressures have influenced an estate’s ownership and continued existence as a coherent landscape. The overall landscape of the property is significant due to its location and long history of association with prominent families of the area. A remarkable record of images and documentation, both written and oral, exist for Brookwood Point and this paper is the distillation of a Cultural Landscape Report that was prepared by the author in 2013. It will highlight the history, evolution and present challenges to preservation of the property.

The landscape design styles of the property span several time periods but fall into two broad categories: the Romantic/Picturesque and the Country Place Era. The 19th century landscape of the overall property falls into the Romantic/Picturesque tradition of Andrew Jackson Downing. The later designed landscape of the Brookwood Garden is a fine example of the Italianate style of the early 20th century Country Place Era.

Brookwood has long been seen as a special place with exceptional scenic beauty. Originally part of a several thousand acre tract, the property has gradually decreased in size to the present condition where only a small portion of the original property remains as a coherent site, with the Italianate garden particularly maintaining its integrity. A privately owned family estate from the mid-19th century, the site was placed into a trust in 1985 and was ultimately transferred to the Otsego Land Trust (OLT) in 2011.

Site History

It is unknown when the property was first called Brookwood Point, but certainly the name was in use by the mid-19th century. Brookwood Creek bisects the partially wooded land which slopes gradually towards the residence and gardens, close to the lake shore. The site contains one of the earliest houses on Otsego Lake, believed to have been built in 1832 by Cyrenus Clark, the builder of Hyde Hall.1 The property passed through the ownership of many famous local families, including Judge William Cooper, for whom Cooperstown is named, and father of writer James Fenimore Cooper and Elisha Doubleday.2 One of several local legends, it is been theorized that some of the earliest games of baseball may have been played on fields at Brookwood Point. Brookwood Creek is described by Ralph Birdsall in The Story of Cooperstown as being the stream in a scene from The Deerslayer. Cooper described a creek:

“Here Hetty performed her ablutions; then drinking of the pure mountain water, she went her way, refreshed and lighter of heart.”3
Brookwood had been a farm but when acquired in 1855 by Dr. George Maynard, a wealthy inventor, the property was transformed into a gentleman’s estate or summer retreat. The residence was altered from what was most likely a simple Greek revival house. The earliest photographs of the residence are from Maynard’s ownership in the 1860’s and contain views of the east facing facade (Figures 1-2). An additional view depicts the landscape closer to the lake (Figure 3). The images provide the only evidence available regarding the landscape and site circulation in this period, showing gravel walkways, a cast iron urn, a bench and minimal landscaping around the residence with the rustic fence to the far right which appears in the second view. The distant view portrays an open lawn with scattered mature trees.
Figure 2. East Facing Facade, Brookwood Cottage c.1860, NYSHA Archives.

Figure 3. View to North from Two Mile Point, 1860’s, NYSHA Archives.
and a rustic fence. These views illustrate the Picturesque design tradition, typical in the Upstate New York and the Hudson Valley, popularized by Andrew Jackson Downing.

Brookwood Point and the surrounding lands were purchased by Elihu Phinney in 1876, the owner of a successful publishing company. He transformed the house into an eclectic Victorian style, sometimes described as Italianate, and further enhanced the property but maintained the older picturesque landscape style. Phinney mortgaged the property to James Jermain who took control of the estate in 1880. He and later his granddaughter, Katherine Jermain Savage Townsend, proved to be the wealthiest owners of Brookwood. The family retained the property from 1880 until 1944, longer than any other owners, leaving an indelible mark on the site.

Jermain, known as a philanthropist and financier, was a one of the wealthiest residents of Albany, and perhaps the United States. Brookwood served as a summer residence for the family and under his own-
ership the property became a more formal estate. A photograph from the 1880’s shows minimal plant-
ings around the residence which is set in a very open, tree and lawn landscape with a sweeping drive
and tear-drop shaped drop-off loop in the older Picturesque style (Figure 4). The landscape was further
enhanced with Gothic influenced details included the bridges and fencing, the house was enlarged and
outbuildings such as sheds and an ice house were constructed. The known images support the account
in the Freeman’s Journal describing improvements to the carriageway made by Jermain:

“Brookwood Pt. This beautiful spot, the property of Mr. James B. Jermain of Albany has
lately been made still more attractive by several marked improvements. A new carriageway
intersects the old one about 600 feet from the main entrance, which is widened from 11 feet
to 15 feet. A common road for rough traffic has been constructed from the highway through
the old Pearson lot to the cottage on the Point. The cottage itself will be enlarged by a com-
modious addition on the south, for servants, dining, and sleeping rooms. … this locality will
be more noted than ever for its peculiar attractiveness.”

Figure 5. Brookwood Estate, George W. Waters, 1888-89, McLean Gallery, Albany New York.
By the turn of the century, the region had become a popular location for the summer estates of wealthy society families, especially New Yorkers. Within easy travel distance from New York City and Albany, whole families decamped to Cooperstown for the summer, a practice that continues today. These seasonal retreat properties were important and allowed families respite from city life to experience country life in a natural, lakeside setting.

The Brookwood Point property was particularly scenic and attracted several well-known artists including Edward Gay who was in the area painting the source of the Susquehanna River in the early 1880’s. Two of his paintings of Brookwood are located in the Fenimore Museum and feature two views, the first looking towards the Village of Cooperstown and the second, looking north with a long view of the lake. A later painting, c. 1888 by George Waters, a Hudson River School artist, renders a view from near the entry looking east towards the residence (Figure 5). In this painting and in a photograph taken from nearly the identical location, the landscape appeared more mature while it retained its tree and lawn Picturesque character.

Upon Jermain’s death in 1897, Brookwood Point was left to his granddaughter, Katherine Jermain Savage Townsend who had married Frederick de Peyster Townsend in 1895. Frederick and Katherine would spend summers at Brookwood with their seven children until WWI. The Townsends were responsible for creating the formal Italianate garden which includes the existing garden terraces, garden house, sculpture, and furnishings.

During this period, the original Brookwood house had further evolved into an eclectic, mostly Victorian appearance. While it is likely that the Townsends augmented the existing Picturesque landscape of the wooded estate, it appears they largely maintained the improvements installed by previous owners. Several oral histories recorded in 1974 and archived in the NYSHA library, will be referred to and describe the lifestyle of the Townsends at Brookwood. They entertained and hosted musical and theatrical events while enjoying a less formal lifestyle in a rustic setting that they seem to have viewed as Arcadian. Several photographs depict boating, tent camping and images of the children of the family portrayed as woodland sprites. The informant Mrs. Frederick Townsend Jr., wife of the Townsend’s oldest son, stated that Katherine kept the interior Victorian and refused to have electricity installed. Other informants described a high society life, which included servants and a cook, even as part of this less formal summer residence.

**Frederick de Peyster Townsend**

Frederick de Peyster Townsend, a pre-eminent landscape architect, was both owner and designer of additions to the estate property. He was born in Medford, MA in 1871, to an affluent family, attended Williams College and studied at Harvard. He practiced full time as a landscape architect until WWI and on a limited basis after the war.

It is believed that the Townsends moved to Buffalo after their marriage in 1895 and Frederick must have received professional training in offices there. Buffalo was the eighth largest city in the United States at the turn of the century, was experiencing rapid expansion and with its prosperous economy, would have been an ideal location for a landscape architect embarking on a practice. It was also a center for culture and the arts.
It appears that Townsend went to Harvard in 1898 and 1899 to augment the training he had received from professional practice in Buffalo. At Harvard, Townsend would have been exposed to the Beaux-Arts Style that was popular at the time. For the remainder of his career, Townsend’s work would be characterized by this style. Taking inspiration from European Beaux-Arts design style, the “Country Place Era” style became popular in residential design in America.

The Country Place Era extended from approximately 1880 until 1940 and was characterized by large formally designed estates in a variety of eclectic styles, but most often in a Beaux-Arts style.

“Characteristic design features include formal garden styles, such as allées, terraces, fountains, and garden sculpture. Designers worked in close partnership with clients to create extravagant gardens inspired by European and Asian precedents in order to lend a sense of tradition, age, and affluence to what, in many cases, was ‘new money.’ Taking inspiration from European Beaux-Arts design styles, there was a return to symmetry and more formal geometries.
Prominent designers included Charles Platt, Frederick Law Olmsted, and Beatrix Farrand. Instigated in part by the vast fortunes industrialization created for the wealthy, for most this era ended abruptly with the onset of the Depression.9

After Harvard, Townsend continued to live and work in Buffalo and served on the architectural team for the Pan-American Exposition held there in 1901. He partnered with Bryant Fleming in 1904, better known for establishing the landscape architecture program at Cornell University. Townsend and Fleming established a highly successful practice from 1904 until 1915 when they dissolved for unknown reasons. The vast majority of their work was residential and they were known as some of the best landscape architects of the Country Place Era style. Townsend’s social connections with the elite of New York State would have contributed greatly to the success of the practice.

**Influences**

Key figures who influenced Townsend at the time included Charles Adams Platt and the writings of Edith Wharton.10 Platt in fact worked in Cooperstown and provided designs for additions to Fynmere, the residence of James Fenimore Cooper II, in 1910-1911.11 Edith Wharton was an important figure in popularizing the Italianate style in America. In her book, *Italian Villas and Their Gardens*,12 she argues that the style is very applicable to estates in America and advocated an adaptation of villa concepts. She believed the spirit of the great villas could be brought to estates in the United States without directly copying places in Italy. We see this in the design of the Italianate garden at Brookwood described below.
Figure 8. Analysis Diagram Overlaid on the 1915 Plan by Frederick de Peyster Townsend, drawn by Michele Palmer and Elizabeth Kushner, 2013.

Figure 9. Fountain with Pan, photographed by Jim Kosinski, 2005, OLT Archives.
The Design of Brookwood Garden

The dating of the construction of the entire garden is not exact, but clearly fell between 1915 and the early 1920’s. The Craftsman style garden house dates to 1919 so the major terracing was likely completed by this point (Figure 6). Townsend’s plan for the garden and terraces, dated 1915, is a skillfully crafted technical drawing which includes the plan layout of the garden (Figure 7). When overlaid on the site survey of 1996, it shows remarkable accuracy with what was actually constructed. The plan included descriptive labels for materials with hedges and beds shown but contained no notation of plant materials. No technical planting plans have been found.

In an unusual move for a landscape architect at the time, Townsend chose to separate the new garden and terraces from the residence. Townsend’s drawing shows that he planned all of the garden and terraces on the south side of the creek as a zone apart from the rest of the site. It was typical for gardens of the Country Place Era to have a high level of integration with the house. Brookwood’s eclectic Victorian appearance may have led to the decision to keep the Italianate garden separate since it would have been difficult to incorporate into Townsend’s favored garden style with the sitting of the existing house, featuring a broad flat lawn sloping down to the lake. He also may have wished to preserve the lake views from the residence as more naturalistic and drainage may have played a role as well. Since lake levels have been incrementally raised since the time of the house’s original construction, the lawn has become increasingly wet between the residence and the lake shore.

The location for the garden emphasized exceptional views to the south along the lake towards the Village of Cooperstown, reminiscent of the framed views favored in Italian villa gardens. The design consisted of a series of interconnected garden rooms with axial and cross-axial connections along with terraces in a formal Italianate style, enclosed by hedges and walls. Likely due to the existing features, Townsend created geometries which were not perfect and certain rooms were asymmetrical. However, the overall design had pleasing proportions. Figure 8 is an analysis diagram highlighting the elements of the Italianate garden and the spatial relationships within it. The garden is locally sometimes termed a ‘secret garden’ and it was clearly intended to be enclosed and separated from the rest of the property. The garden and garden house played important roles in the social life of the family with many references to garden parties, theatrical events and of the family spending a great amount of time in the garden. The garden house was also used as schoolroom on the upper level with a bathhouse below. The whimsical sculptures and decorations of the garden would have appealed to children (Figure 9).

The earliest photograph of the garden terraces illustrated a “victory garden,” planted on the upper terrace with “Brookwood Garden WWI” in pen on the reverse (Figure 10). The overall garden design were incomplete but the terraces in place with vegetables growing where the lawn panel will be on the upper terrace. This would date the photograph at just after the war as the garden house was built in 1919. Since both Frederick Sr. and Jr. were in the Army, it seems likely that the vegetable garden was a patriotic statement as well as a source of food production.

World War I clearly played a role in the evolution of the estate. The building of the garden was disrupted while Frederick was away and the couple became estranged shortly after he returned. Thus the planned design for the entire garden was never completely realized. American society was changing and upper class society life became less tenable, further breaking down during the Great Depression. After the Townsends divorced in 1924 it appears that no further implementation of the 1915 plan occurred. Katherine retained ownership of the estate and in 1927 married Edgar Chapman, an Albany Attorney.
Figure 10. Brookwood WWI, circa 1919, OLT Archives.

Figure 11. View of Lower Terrace c. 1940’s, OLT Archives.
The Chapmans lived in New York City for a large part of the year after their marriage but Katherine continued to spend summers at Brookwood, apparently much in the lifestyle that she and Townsend shared. In photographs from this time period the garden appeared well tended and continued to mature into the 1930’s and 1940’s (Figure 11).

**Subsequent Ownership**

By 1944, Katherine had apparently lost the fortune she had inherited and was forced to sell the 36 acre Brookwood property, along with other properties she owned. Katherine’s financial situation was due to the stock market crash and the subsequent Depression, but it was believed that she mismanaged her personal finances as well. Mrs. Frederick Townsend Jr. noted that her husband had expected to inherit the property, was upset at the sale and that Katherine had apparently kept her degree of financial difficulty somewhat hidden. Another informant, Mr. Charles Byrnes, describes Katherine in her reduced circumstances as “brave in defeat.” He believed she sold the property to the Cook family because as owners of the local car dealership, they were outside her social circle. She would not have attended social events at the property which she could have found embarrassing. The result was that Brookwood was sold to an owner who, while comfortable, eventually did not have the financial resources to maintain the property.

It was clear that Katherine still had a strong attachment to the garden. When Katherine sold Brookwood Point, she retained lifetime use of the garden and garden house until her death in 1962. The new owners, “Harry” and Robert “Bob” Cook (father and son) both resided at Brookwood through 1964 when the property was conveyed to Bob Cook, making him the sole owner. The relationship between the Cooks and Katherine seemed generally cordial but letters describe differences over the maintenance of the garden. In a letter dated 1949 she expressed disinterest in maintaining the garden house for Bob Cook’s use. In a letter dated 1957, to Frederick Jr., Harry Cook explained the situation as one in which Katherine failed to perform any maintenance on the garden. It appears that this sort of ‘limbo’, where the Cooks owned the property but Katherine retained use, resulted in little change to the garden and may have in fact contributed to its preservation.

In the 1970’s Bob Cook took an interest in replanting the Italianate garden which had become quite overgrown, apparently planting perennials and installing small flowering trees. In the 1980’s, Cook investigated other ways to restore the garden and to develop the site as a public park. Cook never married or had children and was the last individual owner of Brookwood. He also had financial difficulties and in particular, high taxes – lake front property is taxed at a much higher rate, and maintenance on the property had become burdensome. He sold several parcels at the edges of the property reducing the estate to its current 22 acres. Cook could have easily subdivided the property further or sold it to a developer, but he, like Katherine, had great affection for the property and wished to see it preserved. He established the Cook Foundation for the Preservation and Beautification of Otsego Lake in 1985 and gifted the estate to the Foundation. Bob Cook died in 1999.

The Cook Foundation continued to maintain the garden and garden house through volunteer labor and grants. Capable gardeners have generally tried to maintain the loose planting style that would have been part of the original garden and the overall estate was essentially preserved except for minor repairs. However, the structures on the site suffered with the greenhouse and carriage house decaying
to the point of collapse. The main house was poorly maintained and its future is in jeopardy. The Cook Foundation managed the estate until its donation to the current owner, the OLT, in August of 2011.

Of the once many historic estates that existed in the Cooperstown area, few exist intact. Estates with notable residences such as Glimmerglen, Fynmere, Fernleigh and others are altered or structures have been demolished so that they retain little of their historic character. The remains of the Brookwood Point estate do retain essential quality and constitutes the core area where the families who lived there focused their attentions, retaining a high integrity though spatial relationships have become difficult to read because of the deletions mentioned. Lack of funding on the part of the Cooks and the Cook Foundation may have ironically led to the preservation of the garden and the house since no major renovations ever took place that would affect the historic integrity of the site. This benign neglect condition, while saving the estate from changes in fashion and misguided renovation, has resulted in a slow deterioration that is now threatening the garden and site. The OLT, a non-profit organization, understands the legacy that they hold in trust but the costs and logistics are daunting. Its scale and condition pose substantial financial challenges since no endowment was left with the gift of the property.

Design decisions made by Townsend may be inadvertently affecting the preservation of the residence. While the garden is much beloved by the local community, the residence is seen by some as somewhat irrelevant to the garden and the cost of renovating and maintaining the residence is formidable. There is no program or tenant for the house and no means of financing the necessary repairs are available at this time. In the current situation where funding is not available at the required levels, preserving the garden is the less costly alternative and is currently, by necessity, a priority over the residence.

In encouraging news, in 2012, the OLT obtained an $188,000 Scenic Byways Grant to fund the initial costs of providing public access to the site. The OLT has successfully raised the required $62,000 matching funds though contributions from donors both large and small in what is hoped to be just the beginning of an investment in the future of Brookwood Point. The legends, the stories, the scenic beauty and the people who have been involved over the years make Brookwood Point a remarkable place and it is hoped the community will continue to support efforts to preserve this exceptional property for future generations.

Acknowledgments

I would like recognize the assistance of many members of the Cooperstown Community who contributed to the preparation of this paper including Harry Levine, Joseph Homburger, Gilbert Vincent, Connie Tedesco, Pat Thorpe and Martha Frey. In particular, C.R. Jones was kind enough to answer endless questions and e-mails. His personal knowledge of the garden, his dedication to preserving the documents related to the garden and his guided tour through the archives at the NY State Historical Association Library in Cooperstown were critical for helping us understand and interpret all of the archival materials available in many different locations. Prof. Daniel Krall also kindly acted as reader.

Endnotes

1 Begun in 1817, Hyde Hall, was built by George Clarke (1768-1835). Now a National Register property, the house is considered one of the finest examples of the neoclassical country house in the United States.

2 The original abstract of title is held the Otsego Land Trust archives. It appears to have been prepared for Mrs. Katherine Jermain Savage Townsend around the time she inherited Brookwood from her grandfather James B. Jermain in 1897. It was prepared by her attorney and describes all of the changes in the title to Brookwood, beginning with Croghan’s acquisition from local Native
Americans as part of a patent that included thousands of acres of land in the 1760’s. Elisha Doubleday is believed to have been a cousin of Abner Doubleday, reported founder of the game of baseball.


2The Freeman’s Journal, November 11, 1882.

3Gay, Edward B. *Otsego Lake Looking South and North from Two Mile Point*, 1882, located in the Fenimore Art Museum.


6Laskovski, and Mathes.

7The Cultural Landscape Foundation http://tclf.org/content/country-place-era-garden


9NYSHA Library, Cooperstown, New York. Fynmere estate plans, 1881-1961 (bulk 1911-1916). Maps and blueprints of Fynmere, the estate built by James Fenimore Cooper, II, on Estli Avenue, Cooperstown, N.Y., from 1911 to 1916. Includes sketches by Frank Whiting and revisions by Charles Platt, both architects. Also contains landscape architectural plans by Ellen Shipman.


11Letters held in the Otsego Land Trust Archives.

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New York State Historical Association Archives – Cooperstown, NY, Deeds, Letters and Photographs related to Brookwood.

Fynmere estate plans, 1881-1961 (bulk 1911-1916). Maps and blueprints of Fynmere, the estate built by James Fenimore Cooper, II, on Estli Avenue, Cooperstown, N.Y., from 1911 to 1916. Includes sketches by Frank Whiting and revisions by Charles Platt, both architects. Also contains landscape architectural plans by Ellen Shipman. James Fenimore Cooper, II, was the grandson of novelist James Fenimore Cooper (1789-1851).


**Contributor Biography**

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The Mohawk Valley: New England Extended
A Field Trip Through Landscapes of Economic and Cultural Change and Diversity

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Introduction

Physical Setting
The geology of the Mohawk Valley is a story of several mountain-building episodes along with deposition of sediments in shallow inland seas. The formation of the super continent Pangaea uplifted the sedimentary rock deposits that created the Allegheny Plateau and the Catskill Mountains. To the north of the Mohawk Valley is the ancient pre-Cambrian rock of the Adirondacks. The sedimentary rocks include layers of sandstone, shale, and limestone along with commercial deposits of halite (salt) in the Syracuse area. The current landscape was shaped by the recurring advance and retreat of ice sheets during the Pleistocene leaving behind features such as glacial troughs, swarms of drumlins, glacial till, and the hummocky topography of recessional moraines. Most significant is the tremendous amount of water released when an ice dam blocking drainage of Lake Ontario failed, forcing water to flow through the Mohawk Valley to the Hudson River.

People
This region was settled around 12,000 years ago by the Haudenosaunee peoples, commonly known as the Iroquois. The Iroquois League may have formed as early as 1200, and was originally composed of the Seneca, Cayuga, Onondaga, Oneida, and Mohawk nations. A sixth nation, the Tuscarora, was admitted after 1720. The League found itself well situated in an area that transcended the waterways which allowed passage into the interior of the continent.

In 1609 Henry Hudson traveled up his namesake river to Albany. The Dutch liked what they saw, established Fort Orange in Albany, “purchased” a strip of land from the local natives, and established New Amsterdam in 1626. The colony attracted a diverse group of people and was fairly disorganized before the English arrived (1664). With their gun-boats, the English took the colony away from the Dutch and renamed it New York as a birthday gift for the Duke of York, the future King James II.

During the colonial period the Mohawk Valley was broken up into large manors which were contested by both Native Americans and the French. In the resulting conflicts between the French and English, the Six Nations sided with the British. Starting in 1754, the Mohawk Valley was the setting for many significant battles between the French and British known collectively in North America as the French and Indian War, and in Europe as the Seven Years’ War. The Six Nations remained loyal to the British, allowing the British to build Fort Stanwix and helping them defeat the French in 1763.

The post-war peace was still new when British migrants arrived in the area. The Boundary Line Treaty of 1768 attempted to settle disputes between the settlers and Native Americans. The treaty that was
signed at Fort Stanwix by the Six Nations delineated European and Native American settlements to the south and west of the Mohawk Valley to the confluence of the Tennessee and Ohio Rivers. The new settlers did little to honor the boundaries set out in the treaty.

The War for Independence split the Six Nations; the Oneida and Tuscarora sided with the Americans. The Six Nations signed a treaty in 1784 that was not honored, and the war left them divided and weaker. They were not left much land in New York, but recently the Oneida Nation has opened the Turning Stone Casino and Resort, on land that was re-acquired from a private land-owner located just west of Fort Stanwix. The casino has become a popular destination, but has had its share of legal battles including the question if re-acquired native land can be considered the same as “reservation land.”

The Dutch
Between late 1792 and early 1793, agents working for the Holland Land Company, an unincorporated syndicate of investors based in Amsterdam, purchased roughly 3.6 million acres of land in central and western New York. Most of this land was in Genessee County, but the group also made purchases elsewhere, including in Oneida County in what is today the township of Trenton.

The first Dutch settlers came to Trenton (then called Oldenbarneveldt) in 1793. However, the lands were open to purchase by anyone, and the area soon was overrun with New England Yankees from Connecticut and Massachusetts. Although a few houses from the period of Dutch settlement remain in the village of Barneveld, the sheer number of Yankees at an early period made them, and not the Dutch, the region’s “first effective settlers.”

Palatine Germans
The area that now includes Little Falls, Fort Herkimer Church, and German Flatts was settled by Palatine Germans beginning in 1723. These migrants came originally from the Electorate of the Palatinate, a German region near the French border. In the late 1600s and early 1700s, this region was repeatedly invaded by France. The resulting famine, poverty, and high taxes, combined with an extraordinarily harsh winter and advertising by proprietors of English colonies in North America, caused thousands to Palatine Germans to migrate to England – many with the hope of finding passage to the Colonies – beginning in 1709. But the arrival of poor, uneducated, German-speaking peoples in England was controversial, and Parliament wanted to get rid of them, though the government had no desire to spend the money necessary to send all of them to North America. As a result, Parliament attempted to resettle them in Ireland and uninhabited areas of England, while only a small number headed for Newburgh, New York. When the migrations to Ireland and England failed and Palatines returned to London, the British government acquiesced and sent additional German migrants to New York.

Many Palatines settled along the Hudson River, where the Crown felt they would be useful in providing a buffer against the French and in producing stores for the British navy. Those settlements failed, and in 1723 the Colonial Governor of New York, William Burnet, allowed 100 heads of household to settle west of what today is known as Little Falls. Those families established scattered farms and communities such as German Flatts, Frankfort, and Palatine Bridge, and the German language remained prevalent in the region for about a century after initial Palatine settlement.
New England Extended

Both before and after the American Revolution, and especially after 1790, New England “Yankees” swept through the Mohawk Valley, many of them continuing westward through what geographer Donald Meinig called “the one great natural breach westward through the mountains.” A number of them remained in the Mohawk Valley, swamping many Dutch and German settlements. Royal grants allowed Massachusetts to claim large portions of New York, eventually forcing a compromise (1786) that allowed Boston speculators to sell the land, mostly to Yankees. But the land remained part of New York.

The Yankees who arrived in the Mohawk Valley brought with them the landscapes they had known in New England. Generally, these included townscapes that included Cape Cods, New England Larges, and Yankee Upright-and-Wings. Typically, one also found a meetinghouse set on common lands (in some places, these commons were later cleared of their buildings), English barns, and Greek Revival architecture. In some parts of New York the settlers built stone walls as well, though generally such features did not become part of the New England landscape until after the Revolution.

The Burnt-Over District

As Yankees extended their frontier, many kept their traditional religious beliefs. But for others, the freedom to experiment resulted in new religions and a fervor so great that this region is referred to as the Burnt-Over District. The most common goal of these new religions was to eliminate the hierarchy of middlemen and find a direct connection to God. Congregational and Presbyterian sects lost many members to Unitarianism, and even larger numbers to Methodist and Baptist congregations.

The more adventurous followed more radical offshoots of Christianity. William Miller, raised on the Vermont frontier, predicted the second coming of Christ in 1843 and again in 1844. His followers ended up quite disappointed, but to this day, a million persist as Seventh-Day Adventists. Vermont native Joseph Smith, Jr., found a set of golden plates near Mormon Hill, a drumlin north of Manchester, New York, forming the basis of the Mormon religion. Possibly the most interesting group is the Oneida Community, which we will be visiting on our trip and about which we provide additional information below.

Erie Canal

Native Americans used the Mohawk River to transport themselves and trade goods in canoes with several portage locations, including Little Falls and the “Great Carry” near Rome. European traders also used this route to Lake Ontario. The 200-mile trip took weeks and was limited to small boats. The first evidence of improvement came in 1730 just west of Utica with the digging of a 200-foot ditch through a meander to save a mile of river route.

Many interesting characters – too many to list here – helped build the Erie Canal. Dewitt Clinton did not conceive of the idea, but he was an early and dedicated promoter of it. Although Clinton held major political offices in New York, he was not a particularly adept politician. Clinton was not aware of the shifting winds and whims of a democracy, often finding himself at odds with the public. Despite his arrogance and political shortcomings, he was personally honest beyond reproach and for the most part ruled New York State. Clinton played the biggest part in the canal’s creation by financing it through a
combination of private money and state-held bonds and promoting the political will necessary for such a huge project.

Ironically, the canal was not supported by any of the politicians in New York City, which was to be the greatest beneficiary of the completed project. Once the venture finally commenced on July 4, 1817 near Rome, it took only eight years to complete. This is an impressive feat given that the United States had no professional engineers. The construction of the Erie Canal set the pattern for future large construction projects by contracting out sections of the canal to local citizens, most of them farmers who hired necessary workers. Construction came in under budget, aided by new inventions for moving excavated material (improved wheelbarrows) and pulling large stumps with large wheels and pulleys that that cut down on labor costs. That the canal was constructed during a recession that also lowered labor costs, thereby reducing overall costs even as canal bonds remained a safe and dependable investment by the wealthy.

We will crisscross and see the Erie Barge Canal (completed in the early 20th century) and remnants of the nineteenth-century canal at different points along the trip. This area is somewhat unique because no locks were built from Herkimer to Oneida. It was the first part of the Erie Canal to be completed, thereby generating revenue to help finance the construction of the rest of the canal, and is the section that is referred to as “Clinton’s Big Ditch.” It also gave inexperienced engineers time to determine how the more difficult parts of the canal would be completed and experience to get it done.
Barneveld and Holland Patent

Barneveld and Holland Patent were settled in 1793 and 1797, respectively. Both communities were part of the original Holland Patent land grant that also includes much of the township of Trenton.

The first settlers in Barneveld were from the Netherlands. Holland Land Company agent Gerritt Boon settled first, in 1793; from his early experiences there, he believed he could create a successful year-round maple-syrup business. This venture failed when he found that sugaring is not possible by late spring. In 1798, with sagging land sales, Boon was succeeded as Holland Land Company agent by Adam Mappa. Under Boon and Mappa the company built a saw mill, a grist mill, a store, and an inn, and by 1810 Barneveld had become the center of trade in northern Herkimer County and parts of Oneida County. But the community grew slowly, from around 200 in 1804 to only 300 by 1876.

Migration from New England, particularly Connecticut, accounted for most of the settlement’s early population growth. In 1806, two years after the establishment of the Unitarian Church, Reverend John Sherman (grandson of Connecticut’s Roger Sherman, signer of the Declaration of Independence) became its pastor. Sherman created one of the early tourist spots in the region in 1822 when he opened the Rural Resort, which accommodated visitors wishing to see the local waterfall. The Octagon House (Figure 1) in Barneveld Village was built by Jacob Wicks in 1852. Previous to this, Wicks lived in Newport, where another octagonal house was constructed in 1849-50. His oldest son, William, grew up to be one of the early professionally trained architects in this area.

Holland Patent Stone Churches Historic District

Like Barneveld, Holland Patent began as a holding of the Holland Land Company. The community was settled four years after Barneveld, mostly from Connecticut. As the settlers established saw and grist mills, they also set aside a 7.5-acre parcel of land for use as a public square. Like many New England greens at the time, this one was intended for the public’s use in education and religious observance. As a result, the first meetinghouse was constructed on the square in 1799. Because the meetinghouse was dominated by Presbyterians, the Baptists built their own church in 1812. The Presbyterians built their own church at the common’s center eleven years later.

The current village layout emerged after 1840. First, Unitarians built a Greek Revival church on the north side of Main Street on private property overlooking the green. This structure was home to St. Leo’s Roman Catholic Church from 1888 to 1965, and was converted to a residence in 1972. Then, a new stone Baptist church was constructed on the site of the old one in 1844. Built by local stonemason Charles Ackley in the Greek Revival style, the limestone church still stands on the northwest corner of the green, separated from the rest of the green by a road.

In 1843, Presbyterians constructed their own stone church to compete with the Unitarians and the Baptists. The church was built by Andrew Rockwell, a local builder known for designing and constructing stone bridges in the area. Built just south of the Baptist Church, the structure is still used as a Presbyterian Church. In fact, both buildings have been owned by the First Presbyterian Church of Holland Patent since 1949, and were connected by a classroom annex in 1965.

Finally, in 1858 a group of Congregationalist Welsh immigrants purchased a stone building south of the Presbyterian Church along Main Street and remodeled it as a church. The building is old for this area, having been built by one of the first landowners in the village and later used as a shop. It was used as a church until about 1950, and in 1970 it was remodeled into a residential property.
After the construction of the most recent Presbyterian Church in 1843-44, the village green was cleared of all of its buildings, including the earlier Presbyterian building and the old meetinghouse. By 1890 it resembled the idealized version of New England Extended – village green as park – that many people now associate with the region. Grass, trees, and shrubs were planted, and in the 1890s the community added a bandstand.

Northwest of the village green is the Holland Patent Railroad Station (Figure 2). Built between 1886 and the mid-1890s in the Eastlake/Stick style, the depot served the Utica and Black River Railroad and its successor, the New York Central, until 1960. This was an important rail line for local farmers, who used it to access regional and national cheese markets in the nineteenth century. Improved access to Holland Patent resulted in the community becoming a tourist attraction in the late nineteenth and early 20th centuries.

**Oriskany**

On the way to Rome we will pass over an aqueduct that once carried the Erie Canal over Oriskany Creek and which is now used to support the road bridge (Figure 3). The village was founded in 1811, and developed both because of the location of the canal through town and as a result of the growth of the textile industry locally along the river.

**Oriskany Battlefield**

The Oriskany Battlefield, located west of town, is the site of a Revolutionary War battle that pitted a group of Loyalists, Oneidas, and British troops against a militia group led by Nicholas Herkimer and composed mostly of Palatine German farmers and some Oneidas loyal to the Revolutionaries. Herkimer hoped to relieve the siege of Fort Stanwix. But his forces were ambushed, resulting in a large loss of life on both sides. The British brought in reinforcements, but the Americans countered this move when they sent reinforcements from Fort Stanwix, forcing the British side to disengage. The Americans lost 200 men while the British had an estimated 150 to 200 killed; this is believed to be the highest ratio of death to combatants of any Revolutionary War battle. The British technically won this battle, but ultimately it resulted in an unsuccessful siege of Fort Stanwix and an eventual British withdrawal. Herkimer was wounded during the battle and died soon after, but he was memorialized in the name of a town and a county. A monument was erected in 1884, and in 1962 the site was recognized as a National Historic Landmark. In 1964 it was added to the National Register of Historic Places.

**Rome Railroad Station**

The New York Central Railroad built the Rome Station (Figure 4) in 1912 on the outskirts of town when the right-of-way was changed and elevated to accommodate the construction of the Erie Barge Canal. Amtrak ceded the station to the City of Rome in 1988 and proposed to stop rail service in 1996, but the city was able to secure federal monies to refurbish the station. The renovation project was completed in 2004.

**Rome**

The location of Rome was long important as the western end of the navigable portion of Mohawk River. Here, Native Americans portaged their goods and canoes to nearby Wood Creek, which flowed to the west and was referred to as the “Great Carry.”
Figure 2. Holland Patent Railroad Station - The Holland Patent Railroad Station was built between 1886 and the mid-1890s in the Eastlake/Stick style. The depot served the Utica and Black River Railroad and its successor, the New York Central, until 1960.

Figure 3. Oriskany Creek Aqueduct – The remnants of an aqueduct that carried the Erie Canal over Oriskany Creek.
The British arrived in the area in the 1750s, building Fort Stanwix and Fort Bull to protect the area from French encroachment and Native American activities, particularly after the start of the Seven Years’ War. Fort Bull was destroyed in battle in 1756, and was replaced by Fort Stanwix two years later. The British abandoned Fort Stanwix sometime after the war’s conclusion in 1763. It would not be repopulated until 1776.

Rome’s early settlement was inhibited by Dominick Lynch, who purchased the land that would become Rome between 1786 and 1800 and refused to sell any of it to settlers, preferring to lease it instead. By 1819 the village at the center of Lynch’s property, Lynchville, was large enough to be incorporated as the Village of Rome – a name which was consistent with an early nineteenth-century trend to name places for classical people and locations. Rome did not become a city until 1870.

According to local legend, Governor De Witt Clinton symbolically turned the first shovelful of dirt for the Erie Canal in Rome in 1817. In reality, he was in New York City, celebrating the Fourth of July. And like Clinton, the canal itself never actually came to Rome, passing instead to the south of the community. As a result, Rome did not grow significantly until after 1839, when the first rail line was built through the village, and 1844, when the canal was relocated through Rome. The city became the site of the first successful cheese factory in 1841 (or 1851, depending on the source), and subsequently,  

Figure 4. Rome Railroad Station - The New York Central Railroad built the Rome Station in 1912. The renovation project was completed in 2004.
businesses whose products ranged from textiles to a variety of metals and metal products called Rome home. Griffiss Air Force Base opened after 1942, further diversifying the economy.

The city fell on hard times in the 1960s. As the economy became more service-oriented, the city embarked on an ambitious plan of urban renewal. This plan resulted not only in the construction of a new shopping plaza and reconstruction of Fort Stanwix, but also in the destruction of many historic downtown structures.

Today, Rome’s economy is primarily white-collar. Even Griffiss Air Force Base has closed; in fact, the base was used for the ill-fated Woodstock ’99 concert. However, since the 1990s a number of local groups and residents have worked to save what is left of the town’s architectural heritage, and to highlight the town’s history in an attempt to improve the city’s sense of community.

**Fort Stanwix**

Fort Stanwix was built in 1758 by the British to protect a crucial transportation portage called the Oneida Carry, which connected the Mohawk River and Wood Creek, and named for British Commander General John Stanwix. After the end of the French and Indian War the Boundary Line Treaty was negotiated and signed at the fort. The British abandoned the fort, and during the American Revolution the structure was repaired and re-named for General Philip Schuyler. In August 1777 the British, along with loyalists and Native Americans, lay siege to the fort for 21 days, without success. The Americans abandoned the fort in 1781, and by the mid-nineteenth century warehouses and industrial buildings covered the site.

In the early 1920s the combination of a declining local economy and the realization of the importance of the site led local citizens to establish the legacy of the fort. The sesquicentennial anniversary of the

*Figure 5.* Rome Mural – Much of downtown Rome was torn-down during urban renewal. What remains is parking and a mural.
siege was celebrated in 1927. President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Fort Stanwix Act in 1935 to recognize the site as an important part of United States history and establishing it as National Monument. Urban renewal in the 1960s cleared the area of commercial buildings, and the City of Rome donated the property to the National Park Service which started archeological investigations in the early 1970s. The looming Bicentennial of 1976 ensured that the fort was rebuilt in time for the celebration. Fort Stanwix and Fort Necessity are the only two sites from the French-Indian war that are maintained by the National Park Service.

Urban Renewal and Remaining Downtown Structures

As in much of the Mohawk Valley, urban renewal made its mark on Rome in the 1960s and early 1970s (Figure 5). The reconstruction of Fort Stanwix was a unique development, but urban renewal also stripped much of downtown Rome of its historic structures in the name of convenience. Between 1960 and 1979 the city and private companies constructed parking garages, a new city hall, a shopping plaza, three new bank buildings and other commercial structures, and elderly housing. Among the few older buildings remaining and restored in the old downtown are the Capitol Theater (1928), a 1700-seat performing-arts center operated as a movie house until 1974; the Sears Gas Station (1930), constructed by the Sears Oil Company and functioning as a museum since 2005 (Figure 6); the Oneida County Courthouse (1851); and the Rome Post Office Building, home to the Rome Historical Society since 1980.

Oneida

Oneida is the only city in Madison County. Unlike Rome, Utica, and Little Falls, the city was not a victim of urban renewal in the 1960s and 1970s, and so retains a much greater proportion of its historic architecture than the aforementioned cities.
Americans of European ancestry first settled the area when it was part of the town of Lenox. The first store is believed to have been constructed near here in 1818; the name of the store owner, Van Epps, suggests a Dutch presence. The area remained sparsely settled until the 1830s, when the construction of the Erie Canal feeder and the establishment of a railroad stop there led to an expansion of industry and the incorporation of the Village of Oneida in 1848. Subsequent years of friction between Oneida and Lenox led to the establishment of a new Town of Oneida in 1896, which became the City of Oneida five years later.

Oneida became a significant manufacturing center in the late nineteenth century. Subsequently, the Barge Canal and the later New York State Thruway both bypassed the city, rail service ended, and manufacturing plants closed or moved away. Retail business has moved from downtown to Route 5, where shopping centers have sprung up since the early 1960s. As a result, Oneida is primarily a residential community that functions as a central place for shopping, health care, and financial services. And while many local residents commute to Utica and Syracuse for work, local businesses continue to employ local residents as well.

The Oneida Community Mansion House

Upstate New York has been referred to as the Burnt-Over District to describe the religious fervor generated there during the first half of the nineteenth century. The site we will visit is the Oneida Community, which was founded by John Humphrey Noyes and his band of New England transplants. Their commune was based on the premise of Perfectionism, that one could lead a life free of sin. Perfectionism was practiced by several groups, but starting in the 1830s Noyes aggressively pursued and codified his own version of it. Noyes initially set up shop in New Haven where he teamed up with a dismissed pastor to publish his version of Perfectionism. He traveled widely, but eventually he ended up in his hometown of Putney, Vermont, where he converted his sisters and brother to his ideas. In 1838 Noyes married, and within two years he set up his first commune consisting of family members and a small group of converts. Noyes and his converts, who called Noyes’s philosophy “Bible Communism,” were convinced that he was an agent of God.

By 1845 Noyes became convinced that the final resurrection will come about more quickly if the commune adapted “complex marriage.” In this system, commune members could choose multiple partners so long as Noyes approved. To avoid unwanted pregnancies and illegitimate children he enlisted the male members to practice “male continence,” or the skill of not ejaculating during sex. Noyes was arrested in 1847 when the authorities in Putney got word about what is going on. At first he viewed the trial as an opportunity to espouse his philosophies, but a trusted legal advisor convinced him to get out of Vermont before a mob meted out their form of justice to the commune. Wisely, Noyes moved his operation to Oneida, New York, in 1848.

For the most part the Oneida Community, as it came to be known, was left alone and flourished. Noyes maintained firm control over complex marriage and added the practice of mutual criticism, which allowed members to air their grievances with any other member. Noyes also implemented practices whereby the young women were introduced to sex by the older men who have perfected male continence, while the young boys who had not mastered this technique were introduced to sex by post-menopausal women. Noyes and his trusted allies approved the “interviews,” as these liaisons were called, as well as whether or not women would have babies. Over time Noyes became enamored with
eugenics and implemented a program that he called stirpiculture that paired people chosen for their spiritual accomplishments, not physical attributes.

With around 300 members at its peak in 1878, one might say that this experiment was successful. But the system became heavily bureaucratic, with over 20 committees and almost 50 administrative sections. The Oneida Community was able to franchise the operation and set up communes in Connecticut, New Jersey, and two in Vermont. All of the branches were closed by 1854 except for the one in Wallingford, Connecticut, which closed down when it was damaged in a tornado in 1878. When a professor at nearby Hamilton College clamored to arrest Noyes for statutory rape, Noyes fled to Canada, catching his escape train in Holland Patent. Noyes had been grooming his son to take over for him, but the younger Noyes was an off-and-on agnostic and did not possess the organizational skills of his father. Perhaps as a result, many in the community were against his leadership. The community dissolved in 1881. Noyes suggested in 1879 that complex marriage should be abandoned and the couples sorted themselves out and entered into conventional marriages. The community built a house in Canada with a view of Niagara Falls for Noyes to live out his final years with trusted allies and visitors.

Prior to the Oneida Community’s breakup, the group set up manufacturing interests to support it. The community began by producing animal traps, and eventually branched out to silverware, cane hats, silk, and leather bags. These interests generated income, a fact which allowed the community to have such a long run. During the World Wars, Oneida Limited thrived making ammunition casings and
surgical instruments. By the late 20th century it focused on flatware, for which it is famous to this day. Today, however, the organization outsources all of its production.

The Oneida Community Mansion Building (Figure 7) was constructed from 1862 to 1914 and reveals the different architectural styles popular during this period. It was listed as a National Historic Landmark in 1965 and houses the Oneida Community Museum along with apartments.

**Vernon Center**

Vernon was settled in 1798 by migrants from Winchester, Connecticut. The six-acre Vernon Center Green was laid out in 1799, and like the green in Holland Patent, it reflects the New England-based settlement ideals of the community’s founders: it was to be held for public use, as well as the erection of buildings for Protestant religious worship and education.

From an early date, the green was the site of two churches, the last of which was removed in 1858 as a “new” ideal – that of the central-green-as-park – swept through the region. In the 1860s, after all buildings had been removed, trees were planted on the green, and in 1901 a gazebo was constructed on the property. The two churches at the north end of the green were constructed in Federal and Greek Revival styles in the 1820s-30s, but remodeled in the 1880s to reflect Romanesque and Gothic Revival styles popular at that time.

**Clinton**

The Village of Clinton was established in 1843 and named after George Clinton, De Witt’s uncle. The village was established by Yankees who placed a great importance on education. By the early 1800s many schools were established and Clinton was known as a village of schools. Just outside of Clinton is Hamilton College, which was established in 1812. Two major fires in 1862 and 1884 destroyed the business districts, so many of the buildings seen here today were built after the canal shut down in 1878.

The Chenango Canal was completed through Clinton in 1837, connecting Binghamton and Utica. The canal allowed for the transportation of iron ore mined near Clinton to be taken cheaply to the nearby Franklin Springs furnace to be smelted into pig iron. It also encouraged the establishment of woolen textiles and Clinton became a port for the export of local produce including fruits, vegetables and hops. In the mid-1800s hops were grown throughout this region and by the Civil War this region produced 90 percent of the hops grown in the United States. A specialized barn to store and process the hops was developed with a distinctive high pyramidal roof used as kiln (or two, one at each end). By the early 20th century much of the hop production shifted to the West Coast were the picking was mechanized, resulting in lower prices. At the same time the New York crop was hit hard by mildew (1909) and aphids (1914), which effectively brought hop production to an end in this region. Unfortunately, few of these distinctive barns still exist.

**Utica**

Utica was founded before the completion of the Erie Canal. A sand bar that formed from deposits from Reall Creek created a shallow crossing for fording the Mohawk River which gave this location an early locational advantage. Fort Schuyler was constructed in this location during the French and Indian War in 1758 and Utica was incorporated as a village in 1798. Roads were constructed to connect Utica in all directions including the Seneca turnpike which ran through the village.
The completion of the middle section of the Erie Canal in 1819 spurred growth that only accelerated with the full completion of the canal in 1825. The creeks that drained into the Mohawk provided water power for early industry. The completion of the Chenango Canal in 1837 brought the transport of coal from Pennsylvania, thereby allowing Utica to grow as a transportation and industrial center. The building of the railroads in the middle and late nineteenth century fueled the growth.

Utica incorporated as a city in 1823 and by 1850 was the 29th largest city in the United States. The population peaked at over 100,000 in 1930, remained stable until 1960, and then declined with the closing of the industry and the growth of the suburbs. Utica experienced a small increase in population to 62,000 in 2010.

Transportation and industry attracted many migrants to Utica: New Englanders, Welsh, Irish, Germans, Italians, and Polish. The story of the ethnic groups that settled in Utica is well documented by Allen Noble. In the late 20th century Utica became a destination for many migrants from conflicts and political upheavals including Vietnamese, Cambodians, Laotians, Burmese (Karin), Russians, and the largest group Bosnians. These migrants now comprise 12 percent of the population and were attracted by available refugee relief and the low-cost and available housing.
Union Station
The Utica Union Station (Figure 8) was built in 1914 in the Beaux Art Style and by the time it was added to the National Register in 1975 it was in bad condition. Oneida County obtained ownership of the station from Penn Central in 1978 and secured funding to refurbish the station. In 1979 the station was designated as the official terminal for the Lake Placid 1980 Winter Olympics. A series of staged remodeling projects have successfully restored the station that you see today.

German Flatts
German Flatts was settled in 1723 by Palatine Germans. The area north of the river was originally known as German Flatts, and featured the original Palatine German village. Much of the area south of the river was owned by the Herkimer family and was the location of Fort Herkimer. However, when the lands were surveyed, a misunderstanding led to the mislabeling of the survey map, and the names were switched. Today, German Flatts, which was established in 1788 and laid out in 1791, is south of the river, and Herkimer is to the north.

Although agricultural for most of its history, German Flatts saw several villages grow into important industrial centers. Among these is Ilion, home of the Remington Arms Company since 1816, and which grew in part because the Erie Canal made distribution of firearms easier after 1825. As it grew, the Remington family branched out into other areas, including the manufacture of typewriters, sewing machines, and agricultural implements. Mohawk, too, became an important manufacturing center, known mainly for its knit goods.

Fort Herkimer Church
Fort Herkimer Church (Figures 9a and 9b) is one of the oldest churches in the state of New York, and the oldest building in Herkimer County. Construction by Palatine German settlers began in 1753. The limestone structure was only partially finished in 1754 when war broke out, as a result of which the church was fitted with over 30 gun ports and with buttresses projecting from its corners. It is the only remaining structure from the Fort Herkimer complex that once occupied the site.

Construction resumed in after the war ended in 1763, and the structure was completed in 1767. From 1812 to 1814 the church was extensively remodeled; it grew to two stories with a gallery on three sides, the pulpit was moved from the north to the east end of the building, and the entrance was relocated from the south to the west end. At some point during its history the gallery was closed off and a ceiling installed, but the ceiling was removed during a period of extensive renovation that began in 1976. The building was listed to the State and National Registers of Historic Places in 1972, and today is owned by the Montgomery Classis of the Reformed Church in America.

Little Falls
Palatine Germans settled in Little Falls in the 1720s. The area soon became a portage stop for travelers wishing to get around the 40-foot-high falls, and in 1795 the Western Inland Lock and Navigation Canal opened.

In the early nineteenth century Little Falls sat in the midst of the North American “breadbasket,” though that designation disappeared after the opening of lands in the West and the completion of the
Figure 9 a and b. The exterior (a) and interior (b) of the Fort Herkimer Church.
Erie Canal. By the 1840s, cheese had become an important commodity, resulting in the construction of milking barns throughout the region. In 1861 the city’s first open-air cheese market opened near the Herkimer County Bank, and a decade later the Board of Trade established the Cheese Market, which essentially controlled the price of cheese in the United States.

Grist, paper, and textile mills, taking advantage of the abundant waterpower afforded by the river, arrived in the early nineteenth century. But the construction of the Erie Canal (Figure 10) and the coming of the railroads caused industry to expand, and with this expansion came ethnic diversification: Irish and German immigrants arrived in the mid-1800s, followed by those from eastern and southern Europe.

In 1912, several states – including New York – enacted legislation to reduce the workweek in textile factories, a move which typically also reduced the amount of each employee’s weekly take-home pay. As a result, the year saw many strikes across the United States, including one at Little Falls, where employees worked 60 hours per week for very low wages. And like in other cities in the Northeast, the predominantly immigrant workforce from eastern and southern Europe sought help from the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), or “Wobblies.” Founded in 1905 by “Big Bill” Haywood, Eugene Debs, and others, the IWW hoped to organize workers into “one big union” – rather than into “locals” based on occupation, as the rival American Federation of Labor had done. In fact, the IWW hoped to reorganize the entire world along socialist-anarchist principles, taking power and wealth out of the hands of the few and redistributing it equally among workers.

Figure 10. Erie Canal Lock Remnant at Little Falls – East of Little Falls an Erie Canal Lock can be found.
Figure 11a. Downtown Little Falls – A section of business fronts has been restored in downtown Little Falls.

Figure 11b. Downtown Little Falls – The other side of the main street in Little Falls fell victim to urban renewal to be replaced by a shopping center, which itself was demolished in 2013.
In Little Falls, laborers walked off the job in the Phoenix Mill on October 9, 1912. Soon, more than 2,000 workers were on strike, aided by IWW organizers including Bill Haywood. Radicals congregated on Bleecker Street, organized strikes and demonstrations, and solicited donations and organized relief efforts for strikers. Strike leaders were arrested and jailed, and local police attacked picketers on several occasions. The walkout finally ended on January 3, 1913, after mill owners acceded to worker demands for a 54-hour work week at the previous 60-hour pay.

**Downtown Little Falls and Urban Renewal**

From 1962 and into the 1970s, Little Falls undertook a major urban renewal project which covered 73 acres of the central business district (Figures 11a and 11b). In 1969, the completion of a $1 million shopping center and a $1 million public housing high-rise building for elderly residents marked the end of the first phase.

A second phase commenced in 1970 with the construction of a motel-restaurant complex, an automotive center, a commercial center, and an industrial development. The city also opened two new arterial roads through town, one of which resulted in the destruction of houses on Hancock and West Main Streets. These links were connected to the New York Thruway with the opening of an interchange in the early 1970s.

**Herkimer County Bank/Little Falls Historical Society**

Herkimer County Bank was the first bank in Herkimer County. Constructed in 1833 at a cost of $3000, this Greek Revival building (Figure 12) became the center of the national cheese trading market in the 1870s. In 1964 the building was slated for demolition as part of the proposed urban renewal of the area – apparently, the new bank building constructed nearby needed even more parking than what eventually was allotted. In response, a group formed to save the building, resulting in its listing to the National Register of Historic Places in 1970 and its purchase by the Little Falls Historical Society in 1977. After a seven-year renovation, the building re-opened in 1985 as the Society’s museum.

**Little Falls Historic District**

Perhaps in belated reaction to the loss of a large portion of the downtown, in 2011 the community saw the listing of the Little Falls Historic District. The district consists of 347 contributing structures over more than 90 acres. It includes buildings constructed in Early Republic/Federal, Greek Revival, Italianate, Italian Villa, Second Empire, Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, Classical Revival, Tudor Revival, and Bungalow/Craftsman styles.

**James Sanders House (546 Garden Street)**

Erected in 1827, the two-story, brick, Federal-style, center-hall-plan house was constructed at the head of North Mary Street, overlooking the business district. It was constructed for James Sanders, a building contractor who worked on the construction of the Erie Canal in 1823. The canal created a building boom in Little Falls, and as a builder, Sanders was able to take advantage of that condition. He is responsible for the construction of numerous mills, residences, and public buildings in the city.
Canal Place (South Ann Street-Mill Street Historic District)

The mills, depot, and business blocks that make up Canal Place are all that remain of a complex that emerged along the old Western Inland Lock Navigation Canal (1795). The extant buildings include a four-story, stone-masonry woolen mill constructed in 1839 (Figure 13a) which is the oldest industrial building in Little Falls; a stone-masonry textile mill built in 1855 as part of the Mohawk Mills; two brick commercial blocks on Mohawk Street (1870 and 1885); and a three-story brick factory and connected wood-frame carriage works. The steel bridge dates from about 1920, and the former New York Central Railroad passenger station from 1894. The district also includes a brick apartment building containing Greek Revival storefronts, constructed in 1835 and which lined the Little Falls canal basin and aqueduct (Figure 13b). This feature is rare, and attests to the influence of the Erie Canal on local architecture and commerce.

Walking toward the south, if you stand on the bridge over the Mohawk River, you may see a tall pile of stones (Figure 13c). These stones are all that remains of a 214-foot-long aqueduct, or “bridge for boats” that once carried water and boats over the river between the Erie Canal to a boat basin northeast of Canal Place. The 16-foot-wide aqueduct was built in 1822-27, and consisted of a 70-foot arch with two smaller arches on either side. After the walls of the aqueduct burst in 1881, it was abandoned. The central arch – which was all that remained of the original structure after 1928 – finally collapsed in 1993.
**Figure 13a and 13b.** Canal Place in Little Falls – Former textile mills in Little Falls are now used for retail and residences (top). Commercial buildings on Mohawk Street (bottom).
As we return to Utica, we will drive along the north side of the river. Before we arrive in Herkimer, you may catch a glimpse of a Russian Orthodox cemetery and church (c. 1964), the latter constructed by descendants of Russian and Carpatho-Rusyn migrants (Figure 14a). We will pass through an early 19th century village in which much of the development occurred during the automotive age, and we will see the post-New York Thruway decline as seen in the adaptive reuse of a motel as a church.

By 1797, Herkimer village could boast a courthouse, a jail, and a population of about 250. In the early nineteenth century, the community served as a relay station on local stage coach lines, and also developed a handful of small industries. The completion of the Erie Canal near Herkimer in 1825 improved the local economy significantly, and the subsequent construction of the Herkimer Hydraulic Canal in 1833 provided waterpower for local industries.

In Herkimer village, the jail (1834), county courthouse (1873), post office (1934), Suiter Building (1884), and Reformed Church (1835) are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Also notable is Crazy Otto’s Empire Diner (Figure 14b), a 1952-model prefabricated diner (serial number 330) constructed by Mountain View Diners Company in New Jersey.

Outside the village in the town of Herkimer, the Palatine German Frame House (built after 1750) is also on the National Register as an early surviving example of Palatine German architecture.
Figure 14a. Russian Orthodox Church near Herkimer – This structure was built in the 1960s to serve the local Carpatho-Rusyn migrants.

Figure 14b. Empire Diner – A 1952 Mountain View Diner in Herkimer.
References


No author. n.d. “A Brief History of the Fort Herkimer Church.” Pamphlet, courtesy Donald Fenner.


**Contributor Biographies**

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Sterling Reputation? Representation and Commemoration in the 1893 World’s Fair Souvenir Spoons

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Abstract: The purpose of this paper is to unpack the cultural meaning of souvenir spoons produced to commemorate the 1893 Columbian Exposition. We argue that these spoons represent a form of commemoration and memory that can also be used as forensic evidence of lifestyles at the turn of the 20th century.

A Brief History of the Souvenir Spoon

The spoon in general and the souvenir spoon in particular was not always a banal and utilitarian object of material culture that it has sometimes become today. Rather, during the Middle Ages and the time of artisanal guilds, silversmiths produced spoons that were highly sought after and collectible, especially coronation/anointing spoons used by royalty (Kahn 2013). The apostle spoons of the Elizabethan period were one of the most highly prized collectibles of the age and because of the cultural capital they engendered, allusion to their worth even made it into Shakespeare’s plays (Stutzberger 1971). It may have been during this period that the phrase “he/she was born with the silver spoon in his/her mouth” came into fashion. The collection of expensive souvenir spoons was a de rigueur experience for the cultural elite, especially for the coming-of-age young graduates of Oxford and Cambridge who went on their post-college Grand Tour of Europe during the Gilded Age, particularly in the period starting with the first London World’s Fair of 1851.

With the coming of the Industrial Revolution and mass production techniques, the silver souvenir spoon became affordable for the masses as the whole production system shifted from what Bourdieu (1993) labels restricted production for a knowing intellectual and worldly elite to the mass production of a item of popular culture that is embraced by the bourgeoisie. Thus the silver souvenir spoon takes on an increasingly middle-brow status in his theory of cultural distinction and acquired tastes (Bourdieu 1984).

The Distinction Between a Memento and a Souvenir

The OED defines souvenir as “a thing that is kept as a reminder of a person, place or event.” Although often used synonymously, there is a difference and an asymmetry between a souvenir and a memento. All souvenirs are mementos, but not necessarily vice versa. One of the authors possesses, for example, a pair of salt and pepper shakers made from the burl of a redwood tree. They were prominently displayed along with about 200 other pairs of salt and pepper shakers in his grandmother’s collection proudly exhibited in a glass dining room breakfront and, as a young boy, he admired them so much that his grandmother gave them to him as a memento. They have little monetary value, but to him their intrinsic value is priceless because when he looks at them, a flood of wonderful memories of his dearly departed grandmother come to mind. Anyone else looking at those objects might shrug and wonder why they reside in a place of honor in his house. A souvenir, on the other hand, is usually tied
Figure 1. The souvenir spoons in this display case have special meaning to their owner and are thus displayed in a glass-fronted shadow box rather than serving any utilitarian function. (Source: Authors)
to travel or tourism; not all mementos have such a geographically related connection. Souvenirs can be perceived of as tokens of memory during the moment of acquisition. Because they are acquired when one is removed from life’s usual activities, they are accorded status in the home. Spoons acquired on vacations can serve as mnemonic devices; the owner need only to glance and them and remember when and where they were purchased. That is why souvenir spoons are often shelved and displayed in special cases rather than used in everyday life (Lasusa 2007) (Figure 1).

Souvenirs are essential pieces of evidence; proof of one’s travels. Souvenirs are an extension of that travel experience or location. And travel is valuable as a means to acquire cultural capital which, in turn, can increase one’s social status (Bourdieu 1983).

**Souvenir Spoons in the United States: A Johnny-Come-Lately**

Collecting silver souvenir spoons became very popular in Europe in the mid 19th century and by the late 19th century the fad, thanks in part to the popularity of the world’s fair in Paris (the Exposition Universelle of 1889) with its centerpiece of the Eiffel Tower, had finally diffused and taken hold in the United States (Larson 2003, 14-15). As was the case in Europe, the craze started first with wealthy Americans visiting Europe and eventually filtered down the social hierarchy to the bourgeoisie. These mementos “marked the names of foreign cities and famous landmarks they had visited” (Nebraska State Historical Society 2011).1

The first American souvenir spoon was produced by Galt and Bros., Inc. in Washington, DC in 1889 and included a profile of George Washington created to mark the centennial of his presidency (eBay Guides 2012). A matching spoon bearing the likeness of Martha Washington soon followed. As a newspaper article in the May 10, 1891 edition of the Omaha *Daily Bee* noted:

> The season of summer traveling, so near at hand, will give a new impetus to the spoon fad. So great has been the demand the past season for souvenir spoons that all the larger cities of the United States…manufacture a spoon characteristic of the place or of some object of peculiar interest to the people of that place.

A year later, spoon collecting really took off when Seth F. Low, an American jeweler who had studied German souvenir spoons, created the Salem Witch Spoon for his father’s company, the Daniel Low Co. (Figure 2). Low described the spoon as featuring “the raised figure of a witch, the word Salem, and the three witch pins of the same size and shape as those preserved in the Court House at Salem.” Several thousand were sold and thus the era of the souvenir spoon as a representation of place and not just person began in earnest. An example of such a geographically specific souvenir spoon is this one from Davenport, Iowa (Figure 3).

**The Silver Age of Souvenir Spoons and the Chicago World’s Fair**

We discuss here in detail only a few of the estimated 503 souvenir spoons that were produced to celebrate the Columbian Exposition of 1893, the famous Chicago World’s Fair. But thanks to the publication of an illustrated volume by an avid Fair spoon collector, an overview of all the extant spoons is integrated into this article as well (McGlothlin 1985).

The timing of the Fair coincided with three other fortuitous events for souvenir spoon collectors: the drastic drop in the price of silver that started with the opening of silver mines in the West a couple of
decades earlier (e.g., the Comstock Lode); the Panic of 1893 that kept the price of silver low even when the Western mines began to peter out; and the souvenir spoon collecting craze that started in Europe in the late 1880s, swept the nation during the Chicago World's Fair and continued until WWI when the craze died out and silver prices began to escalate.

Although there was an opening day ceremony in October 1892 to coincide with the 400th anniversary of Columbus’s landfall in the Americas, costly delays led to a rather inauspicious beginning to the Fair that opened in May 1893 for a six-month run. But, by the end of October, the Fair was such a success that it was considered “to possess a transformative power nearly equal to that of the Civil War” (Larson 2003, xi). On Chicago Day designated by Mayor Harrison in early October 1893, city employees were given the day off and attendance at the Fair topped 700,000, the greatest peacetime gathering in the history of the city. In all, 27 million visitors attended the Fair at a time when the population of the United States was only 65 million and that of Chicago had just barely surpassed one million. Although Chicago had only a few thousand more residents than Philadelphia, it made Chicago, by 1890, the
Figure 4. The Carl Rohl-Smith sculpture of the Massacre at Fort Dearborn that took place in 1832. One year later, Chicago was incorporated near the site of Ft. Dearborn. This statue, completed the same year as the Fair (1893), served as the model for one of the souvenir spoons that was declared the “official” spoon of the Chicago World’s Fair. (Source: http://indiana.typepad.com/fwob/2007/03/no_safe_passage.html).
second largest city in the country. Still, the Fair developers and Chicago suffered from an inferiority complex. Despite its size, Chicago was still viewed as a parochial cow town by the elite in the East, especially in New York which had lost out in its bid to host the World’s Fair to that hog butchering frontier upstart. Until the time that daily attendance surpassed the world’s fair in Paris, Daniel Burnham and all the other architects involved with creating the White City – even Frederick Law Olmstead who designed the landscaping of the Fair – felt inferior to their European counterparts.

**An Interpretative Analysis of the Fair’s Official Spoon: The Exotic Other**

There is disagreement in the literature about which of the 503 spoons produced for the Fair was the “official” one (Stutzenberger 1971; McGlothlin 1985). Stutzenberger (1971), in a book that uses the souvenir spoon to illustrate significant events in American history, suggests that the official souvenir spoon of the Fair somewhat puzzlingly depicts the 1832 Massacre at Fort Dearborn of white settlers by a small band of rogue Potowatami in all its bloody and gory detail. On this spoon is a depiction of the Carl Rohl-Smith statue of the Massacre commissioned by George Pullman in 1893 (Figure 4). Despite the bravery of a tribal chief named Black Partridge to save some of the settlers, a spoon in his honor did not appear until the second Chicago World’s Fair, the Century of Progress, in 1933 (Figure 5). Such was the uninformed populist view of “Indian savagery” at the time, and the hugely popular acts of the contemporaneous Buffalo Bill Wild West Show that were performed just outside the official Fair site did nothing to disabuse Fair visitors of this negative stereotype.

The view of the foreign and exotic “other” was even more prone to stereotyping and exaggeration. Fair officials failed in their attempt to find recently discovered Pygmies from the Congo but they did manage to create a whole village of “cannibals” from Dahomey in the Midway area. Connecting Jackson Park, the square mile Fair site, with the more established and frequented Washington Park was a mile-long corridor known as the Midway Plaisance or simply the Midway. Some representations of the non-formal attractions of the Midway such as the Streets of Cairo and the African village exhibits were represented on souvenir spoons but these few spoons paled in comparison to the vast number that were produced to depict the formal buildings of the White City and to commemorate famous people and events, especially Christopher Columbus and his landfall in the Americas in 1492.

**Figure 5.** Chief Black Partridge of the Potowatami, brave defender of the settlers who were massacred while attempting to leave Ft. Dearborn for safer habitations, was finally honored with a commemorative spoon. But the spoon was produced for Chicago’s 1933 Century of Progress, not the earlier Columbian Exposition of 1893. (Source: www.etsy.com).
The Visage of Columbus Himself

There is great variation in the portrayal of Columbus on Fair souvenir spoons as there were no known portraits of him at the time of his voyage to the New World. In addition to Columbus himself, several spoons depicted important aspects of his landfall including the ships that brought him and the place from which he departed. In keeping with the cultural stereotype of the age, the Indians that Columbus and his landing party encountered were depicted as either cowering in the presence of the Conquistadors or offering tribute to Columbus as befitted his supposed status as conquering hero. Although the depictions of the landing party on the souvenir spoons varied between four and nine men, they were invariably outnumbered by the Indians in the motifs. The Indians appear cowed by the appearance of the cross and the sword conspicuously depicted on many of the spoons. The mottos on two of the spoons summarize the prevailing attitude of the age – “Taking Possession of the New World” (spoon #127) and “Westward the Course of Empire Takes Its Way” (spoon #218) (McGlothlin 1985, p. 82 and p. 126).

An Edifice Complex: The Great White City

Many of the spoons (172 of 503) displayed representations of some of the more than 200 buildings constructed for the Fair including the largest building ever constructed at the time – the enormous

Figure 6. An image of the largest structure under one roof at the time of the Chicago World’s Fair, the enormous Manufacturers and Liberal Arts Building of the White City, the main subject of at least 15 commemorative spoons struck for the Fair. (Source: www.fineartamerica.com).
Manufactures and Liberal Arts Building that appeared on 15 different spoons (Figure 6). The building depicted most often on souvenir spoons was the vertically oriented Administration Building that appeared on 31 spoons, perhaps because it was easier to depict in the spoon’s bowl than the other more horizontally oriented buildings of the White City (Figure 7). Surprisingly, the second most commonly depicted building was the Women’s Building that appeared on 24 of the spoons despite the fact that the building itself was rather peripheral to the main White City structures that surrounded Olmstead’s lagoon water feature (Figure 8). One explanation for the Women’s Building popularity as a spoon theme is that assumption that a great majority of souvenir spoon purchasers were women and such spoons were readily available for sale there.

**The Sacred and the Profane? The White City and the Midway**

The geographic and cultural juxtaposition of the public buildings of the White City in the Beaux Arts classical tradition appealing to an elite, or at least a bourgeois, culture of the Gilded Age stood in stark contrast to the honky-tonk, faux exotic exhibits and concessions of the Midway Plaisance that appealed more to a mass culture. The geographer Barbara Rubin (1979) has previously discussed the disparity between those two cultural aesthetics. The lion’s share of the souvenir spoons commemorated either...
people, especially Columbus or his patron Queen Isabella, or buildings that comprised the White City. There were only four spoons of the 503 total that displayed scenes from the Midway, with the exception of the Ferris Wheel that appeared on ten spoons and came to represent the Chicago World’s Fair in the same way that the Eiffel Tower represented the early Paris Exposition (Figure 9). There are probably numerous reasons for this disparity between the many spoons depicting the formal areas and the paucity of those representing the more informal areas of the Fair. Silversmiths knew what the formal buildings looked like (or were to look like), but it would have been more difficult to capture in silver the frenetic energy of the Midway with its exotic cultures, foods, sights and smells. Visitors who were buying the souvenir spoons were certainly willing to view Buffalo Bill’s Wild West Show just outside the Fair’s boundaries or the exotic belly dancing on display at the theatre in the Streets of Cairo exhibition area, but less likely to want to share those images with friends and neighbors for whom they were either buying the spoons as presents or wishing to recount their visit by relying on the spoons they had gathered.

We argue that the 24 Women’s Building souvenir spoons represent a transition between these two cultural worlds. Interestingly, the “official” Women’s Building spoon was topped not by Queen Isabella, but rather by the image of Mrs. Potter Palmer, wife of the owner of the famous Palmer House hotel
Figure 9. An image of the giant Ferris Wheel constructed for the Fair. The Wheel appeared on at least ten souvenir spoons; far and away more than any other representation of Fair features on the Midway Plaisance that was not directly associated with the formal buildings of the White City. The same Ferris Wheel was later used for the St. Louis World’s Fair (The Louisiana Purchase Exposition) in 1904. (Source: www.pinterest.com).
and doyenne of Chicago society whose patrician cultural tastes in the fine and decorative arts were on display for those who wandered over to see them (Figure 10). More populist creations by women artists of the period were not included in the building that was designed by the only woman architect employed on the Fair’s staff – Sophia Hayden of Boston.

Another clue as to the nature of gender relations at the time was the fact that two commemorative medals were struck for the Fair – one of Columbus and the other with the image of his patron Queen Isabella (Figures 11 and 12). Neither medal sold particularly well, but the Columbus half dollar, sold for the price of one dollar at the Fair, was legal tender (now worth about $450 depending on condition to a coin collector). The Isabella “quarter dollar” medal, on the other hand, was not designated as a “coin of the realm”. To add further insult to injury, the Harriet Hosmer-sculpted statue of Queen Isabella that was designed to offer a female counterpoint to the emphasis on Columbus, was placed rather inconspicuously in the California State Building and viewed by few of the Fair goers (Figure 13).

**The Ferris Wheel: America’s Answer to the Eiffel Tower**

Ten souvenir spoons tried to capture the enormity of the centerpiece of the Fair – the Ferris Wheel. Though its completion was delayed for almost two months after the Fair was officially opened in May, the Ferris Wheel was eventually an imposing revenue generator for the Fair. It stood 265 feet high, with 36 cars each weighing 13 tons and carrying 60 persons each which, when operating at full capacity, carried 20,000 passengers on the twenty-minute ride per day (Larson 2003, 261). The Ferris Wheel as a Fair icon was one of the few things on the Midway that was commemorated with a spoon. The Ferris Wheel was eventually disassembled and reconstructed for the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition (i.e., the St. Louis World’s Fair) before being scrapped.

**Spoons That Leave One Wondering ‘Why?’**

There are some souvenir Fair spoons that can only be classified as oddities such as representations of Leif Ericson, Joan of Arc, the Mormon Tabernacle and Egyptian pharaohs. In fact, the image of Leif Erickson appears on several spoons, one of which is purported to be the Fair’s most valuable collectible spoon. By 1893, it was common knowledge that Leif Erickson had arrived in North America more than 400 years prior to Columbus’s landfall, and the Mormon Tabernacle choir performed at the Fair, but why the images of Joan of Arc and Egyptian pharaohs? The latter may reflect the classical architectural revival of the period as well as the fascination with the exotic for those without the means to travel abroad and down the Nile. The reason of why Joan of Arc was commemorated is a bit of a mystery.
Spoons, Transformation and Commemoration

We have examined the souvenir spoon within the growing geographic literature on commemoration and memorialization (Dwyer and Alderman 2008). Souvenir spoons could be examined as well from the perspective of the cultural studies literature on the transformation of utilitarian objects (Basalla 1983; Bourdieu 1984). There are several categories of transformed utilitarian artifacts and the souvenir spoon would fall under the rubric of commemorative object. The means by which the transformation from utilitarian to commemorative object took place in the case of souvenir spoons is through the addition of ornamentation that resulted in the transfiguration of the artifact (Basalla 1982). Once transfigured, the souvenir spoon could no longer be considered banal.

The ornamentation added to a standard spoon form in order to create a souvenir can also be couched within the psychological theory of cognitive dissonance (Festinger 1957). From that psychological perspective, the souvenir spoon is a form that suggests utility. The disparity between the spoon as a common, merely utilitarian, object and the decorative souvenir spoon as a manifestation of the silversmith’s artistry creates cognitive dissonance that makes the transformed object distinctive. The disso-

Figure 11. A half-dollar coin with a representation of Christopher Columbus struck as legal tender in honor of the Chicago World’s Fair of 1893. The coin did not sell well at the time of the Fair. Some were even incorporated into the bowls of souvenir spoons. (Source: www.coinquest.com).

Figure 12. A “quarter-dollar” medal with the visage of Queen Isabella, Columbus’s patron who bankrolled his voyage of exploration of the New World. Unlike the Columbus medal, the Isabella medal was not deemed to be legal tender. It was available for sale in the Women’s Building but it did not sell well during the Fair. (Source: coinweek.com and www.ha.com).
nance is resolved by separating the artifact from the utilitarian domain and reserving it for some higher purpose. Most souvenir spoons are, therefore, displayed and venerated and not used on a daily basis.

The souvenir spoon, therefore, acts simultaneously as a trigger to remember journeys past and present, a way to enhance one’s cultural capital and gain insider’s knowledge, and as a forensic marker for the cultural geographer interested in representation and commemoration. We think it is sad that many of the silver souvenir spoons from the 1893 Columbian Exposition that come up periodically for sale on e-Bay are often priced on the basis of the grains of silver they contain rather than on their craftsmanship, the images they contain, the dioramas they display and vital forensic clues to the mindset of fin de siècle Chicago that they represent.

Concluding Remarks
Collecting souvenir spoons is still a niche hobby and those spoons still have stories to tell about people, places and things of memory and enjoyment. We argue that many of these spoons represent a form of commemoration and memory that can also be used as forensic evidence of lifestyle preferences. Designs on the spoons produced for the Chicago World’s Fair distinguished between the elite and bourgeois appeal of the Beaux Arts “white city” and the spatially separate and decidedly more working class Midway. There were many representative images on the spoons in addition to those of the formal buildings of the White City, such as a few of the Midway attractions and many visages of Columbus and/or his landing party in the New World. The points of purchase within the Fair site for spoons depicting women were somewhat peripheral and marginalized. This gender bias was evident whether the woman being honored was the image of the phoenix-like mythical Miss Chicago designed to memorialize the Great Chicago Fire of 1871 (Figure 14), the grand dame of Gilded Age Chicago society, Mrs. Potter Palmer, or a depiction of Queen Isabella. The treatment of female subjects by souvenir spoon silversmiths suggests a great deal about the marginalized role of women and gender relationships of the period in general.

Likewise, the massacre of white settlers at Ft. Dearborn in 1832 by Potawatomi Indians as the featured tableau one of the “official” Fair commemorative spoons is indicative of status accorded to Indians at the end of the 19th century. The exotic “others” of the foreign exhibits on the Midway were accorded even less representation on Fair souvenir spoons than were Indians.

Three interrelated themes were stressed in this article — 1) an interpretation of the meaning of a sampling of the souvenir spoons produced specifically for the World’s Fair; 2) an examination of the difference in the cultural aesthetic of the two main areas of the Fair — the formal White City and the informal Midway as represented on the spoons produced for the Fair representing each milieu; and 3) cultural, geographical and psychological interpretations of the meaning of souvenir spoon collection and its importance for travel and tourism.
Figure 14. An image of the mythical Miss Chicago with a crown on her head that reads “I Must”. This image was created after the Great Fire of 1871 and symbolized Chicago’s Phoenix-like rise from the ashes to become, by the time of the World’s Fair, the second largest city in the United States. The flames from the Great Fire are visible in the bowl of the spoon (Source: http://www.nlcspooncollectingclubs.org/NSCG/).

We hope that this article piques interest in the souvenir spoon as an element of material culture worthy of further study. Even though the faddish craze to collect souvenir spoons ended at the beginning of World War I, souvenir spoons collection is still a viable niche hobby. We would argue that modern souvenir spoons – mass-produced, kitschy, made of base metals and plastic rather than precious metals and often collected in representative sets – have lost most of the cultural capital their collection once engendered. Still, modern souvenir spoons are artifacts that are indicative of a different market segment than the spoons that appealed to the Chicago World’s Fair attendee and should still be examined as a forensic object of material popular culture.
Endnotes

1 The knowledge gained by travel even for the middle-brow crowds that attended the Fair is respected by their peers for two reasons – it is seen as “insider” (privileged) information about the elusive and mysterious “other” even if that “other” is as artificial/inauthentic as the Egyptian, Turkish or Dahomean country exhibits represented on the Midway Plaisance at the Fair. In the mid 19th century it was the elites who picked up souvenirs to memorialize their visits and thus acquire cultural capital in the process. Middle-class tourists of today travel and collect souvenirs for similar reasons – an attempt to outrank their peers (MacCannell 1976). Thus souvenir collecting can tell us something both about ourselves and our world.

2 At an especially offensive formal affair involving Fair officials and representatives from all the cultures represented at the Midway exhibits and villages, the menu included Roast Missionary a la Dahomey, west coast of Africa; Boiled camel humps, a la Cairo street; Hard boiled potatoes, a la Irish Village; and Fricassee of reindeer, a la Lapland (Larson 2003, 314).

References


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The Distribution and Forms of Rural Gasoline Stations in South-Central Pennsylvania

Paul Marr and Claire Jantz, Shippensburg University

Introduction

As the number of automobiles increased in the post-WWII era, businesses that serviced automobiles spread across the landscape. In particular, petroleum companies scrambled to meet pent-up demand and built gasoline stations or leased franchises at a tremendous rate. Road improvements and the development of the interstate highway system fundamentally altered mobility patterns, and it is no surprise that the location of gasoline stations mirrored these changes in accessibility. One of axioms of locational theory is that supply will follow demand, and as the new age of automobility altered the demand landscape, gasoline retailing followed suit, concentrating heavily in the urban centers and developing suburbs. There is, however, a third segment of the demand landscape – rural populations.

Unlike their urban / suburban counterparts, rural populations cannot rely on concentrated demand to ensure supply. Their diffuse nature makes servicing rural populations particularly challenging for companies and frustrating for residents. In a situation such as this tried and tested service strategies fall short and new or hybrid strategies are often adopted. We believe that this was the case with rural gasoline stations, with new and unique forms of gasoline retailing occupying the dominant role in rural servicing. Our intent in this study has been to document the distribution and forms (e.g. the physical s of the station) of rural gasoline stations in a small number of counties in south-central Pennsylvania. While gasoline stations were most highly concentrated in the urban setting, stations outside of the cities and towns formed an important part of the rural landscape. It is these rural gasoline stations that are of particular interest to this research, and we believe these stations form an important subset of American gasoline stations that merit investigation. Our goal here, then, is to determine how these rural station types fit into the broader station form categories proposed by Jakle and Sculle (1994) in their book The Gas Station in America. Placing rural gasoline stations within this broader context is important in helping us understand their role in the larger motor transport system, as well as their specific role in servicing rural populations.

Study Area

Our study area encompasses three counties (Adams, Cumberland, and York) in south-central Pennsylvania (Figure 1). The study period chosen were the decade of the 1950s and 1960s. These three counties are fairly representative of peri-urban environments found elsewhere in the mid-Atlantic region, with a mixture of well-developed urban centers transitioning to small communities and rural residences. The largest urban centers within the study area, in descending order of population are York, York county (43,718); Carlisle, Cumberland county (18,682); Mechanicsburg-Camp Hill, Cumberland county (16,869); and Hanover, York county (15,289). Adams county has no large urban centers, its largest towns being Gettysburg (7,620) and New Oxford (1,783), and Littlestown borough (4,434) (2010 U.S. Census QuickFacts).
We chose this three county region of south-central Pennsylvania as our study area because it had (and still has) a mixture of both rural and urban environments and a relatively large population. These characteristics would allow us to see the interplay between urban and rural systems with regard to gasoline service stations at a time when personal energy consumption was at its peak (Zelinsky and Sly, 1984). It was also during this period that gasoline retailing was undergoing a significant transformation, where small volume mixed-use operations were giving way to large volume single-use operations (Jakel and Sculle, 1994). Very detailed spatial data were also readily available for the area for this time period in a digital format which allowed us to put together a fairly comprehensive database of gasoline service station locations and types.

**Data and Methods**

Rural service station data were derived from digital historic maps available from the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (online at http://www.dot.state.pa.us/Internet/Bureaus/pdPlanRes.nsf/infoBPRHistoricCountyMaps) for Cumberland, Adams, and York counties in Pennsylvania (Figure 2). The maps date from the early 1940s to the middle 1960s and are very detailed as to the types of structures depicted (Figure 3). Several types of gasoline service station are depicted on these maps, along with any other building use, to form various combinations of gasoline retail (Station), residential use (Dwelling), some form of commercial/retail use (Business), and local post office (Post). So, for example,
Figure 2. A section of the 1957 York county Department of Highways map showing 5 rural gasoline stations (red arrows).

a structure could be depicted as a dwelling, business, and gasoline station or a post office, business, and gasoline station. After the maps were georeferenced, all gasoline stations were digitized by county, year, and form (e.g. business, station). Additional information on the site and situation of each station was also compiled. This information included distance to the nearest intersection, distance to the nearest town, the number of competitor gasoline station close by, and the type of road (e.g. 2 versus 4 lane).

Within our three county study area there were over 300 rural gasoline stations in the 1950s and over 280 in the 1960s. It was clear from the map legend that rural gasoline stations took a wide variety of physical forms, most of which were not purpose-built. To better understand these forms, we visited a
Figure 3. The legend taken from the 1953 Adams county Department of Highways map showing the level of detail in the classification of mapped structures.

Figure 4. Keck’s store, the only operating station visited. The only gasoline pump is visible just behind the grey automobile.
random sample of 88 station locations from across the study area. These visits allowed us to compare the forms across the various types of stations, and get a better idea of their current condition.

Our first foray into our broader goal of rural gasoline stations is to describe the types of structures used and how these physical characteristics are related to the types of activities and services provided, as well as how they relate to the more general rural setting.

**Gas Station Forms in the Study Area**

Perhaps the most important characteristic of the rural gasoline stations in our study area is that purpose-built gasoline stations during the study period were fairly uncommon, never being above 4% of the total stations (Table 1). The most common form of gasoline station were the business, station and the dwelling, business, station. Although their percentages changes slightly over the study period, these two forms of gasoline station accounted for approximately 94% of the total stations throughout the 1950s and 1960s, while purpose-built gasoline stations accounted for less than 4% of the total. An example of the business, station form can be seen in Figure 4. Keck’s Store is the only rural gas station visited that is still operating and selling gasoline. Keck’s Store’s closest competitor during the study period was over 1.5 miles distant, and no gasoline station operating then is still open. Keck’s current competitor is a newly built Sheetz station across Interstate 81 3.5 miles to the north along PA route 11.

Most of the gasoline stations that existed during the 1950s and 1960s have been removed. Of the 36 business, station locations visited that had not been removed, all tended to share a basic characteristic: gasoline sales was not the primary activity and the pumps were likely added after the construction of the building. Although the type of business was not specified on the maps, based on our survey it is likely that the most common business associated with rural gasoline stations would have been a convenience / food store. Approximately half of the business, stations found a new lease on life after they had stopped selling gasoline. Since these were often designed primarily as businesses, converting them for reuse would have been straight-forward. A typical example of business, station reuse is seen in Figure 5. This example was reused as a television repair shop, and the pump island was removed to increase parking space, although it is still clearly visible in the pavement in front of the building. However, the interior layout and shelving suggest that the building was used as some sort of convenience store at some point in its lifetime. The building is currently for sale, but it has obviously been quite some time since the last tenants moved out.

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Figure 5. Paul's TV Repair, a business, station that was reused after gasoline sales ceased.

Figure 6. The building on the left was a multi-family dwelling, business, and station. The upper floors housed apartments.
Figure 7. Gasoline pump impression left in the concrete in front of the building shown in Figure 6.

Figure 8. Single-family station type, currently used as storage. The remains of a pump island were barely discernable under the gravel drive.
Figure 9. An example of a post office, business, station that has been converted to a garage.

Figure 10. This side of the structure is too shallow to accommodate an automobile.
The second most common of form was the dwelling, business, station, and thirteen of this station type were visited that were not removed. This station type typically came in two basic forms: single family and multi-family. The general characteristics of this station type are that the businesses occupied the ground floor, the dwelling occupied the upper floor(s), and the gasoline pumps were a secondary function (Figure 6). In several cases it was difficult to verify if a structure had indeed been selling gasoline, since this form was often reused as a dwelling and all traces of station activity had been removed. In a few cases the outline of the former pump locations were visible in the concrete in front of the structure (Figure 7). Single family dwelling types were somewhat less common within our sample. As with the multi-family forms, the single-family forms rarely displayed any evidence that gasoline was sold (Figure 8). Often the only way to verify that gasoline had been sold was through interviews with neighbors.

Another common station type was the combining of gasoline sales with postal services. In all cases these two functions were accompanied by a third, or even a fourth, function. Post office and stations were combined with dwellings (single or multi-family), businesses, and occasionally both. These station forms, while easily identifiable on the maps, were very difficult to identify in the field, either because they had been removed or substantially modified through reuse. We were only able to locate and verify a single example of this station type (Figure 9). The right side of the structure with its gable-end roof was clearly added on to the hip-roof structure on the right. The garage door on the left side of the building is obviously an afterthought, since this part of the structure is simply too shallow to accommodate an automobile as the depth of the building is slightly over 8 feet (Figure 10). The post office function could be easily accommodated with an existing business or dwelling without any significant alteration of the building, and was common in rural areas. This station type, therefore, is based more on function than physical form. In no case was the post office function paired solely with gasoline sales.

The final station type in the study area was that of the purpose-built gasoline station. This type displayed the least variation in physical form. Whereas the other station types took on a wide range of styles and shapes, the purpose-built gasoline station rarely strayed from the oblong box type identified by Jakle and Sculle. The house type station was also represented, but was much less common. Within the study area no shed or small box types were found (although we know of two shed type stations still standing in nearby Franklin county), and in no case did we find any of these stations with a canopy. The oblong box type structure also had a relatively high rate of reuse, especially those structures that were constructed of cinder blocks. The former Amoco station seen in Figure 11 is typical of the type found in our study area. While the layout of this type of station varied considerably, the overall design was consistent: 1 to 2 garage bays, no canopy, and a small office (e.g. Figure 12).

Nearly all of the purpose built stations were reused in some manner, although none of the surveyed stations still sold gasoline. Among the surveyed stations all that were purpose built were constructed of masonry block. This substantial construction material resists decay, while the oblong box form can be easily converted to other uses. While this type of station was rare within the study area, a disproportionate number of them survive and are being reused. For example, the neglected masonry-box station seen in Figure 13 is currently used as storage for a lumber mill. The old Amoco pump is still visible (Figure 14), confirming its former use, and a particle-board addition has been added. This particular station was once along a PA Route 34, a busy highway connecting Adams and Cumberland counties in the north. At some point after the study period Route 34 was adjusted near Goodyear (Cumberland county) and this station found itself off of the main route on a less-travelled side road, which may well have contributed to its current state.
Figure 11. Typical oblong box purpose-built gasoline station. This former Amoco station is being used as a garage.

Figure 12. An oblong box station in Cumberland county. Subsequent widening of the road obliterated the service island.
Figure 13. Another oblong box station with a wood addition. Both structures are currently being used for storage.

Figure 14. The pump of the station in Figure 13 is still in place. The sticker on the pump is for an Amoco station.
While masonry block was the dominant material used in purpose-built stations, it was not the only construction material used. Although very few remain, purpose-built stations were also constructed of wood, but decay over the years has led to few surviving, with only one example found in our survey (Figure 15). This station was well off of the main routes, and during the 1950s (when we think this station was built) this area would have been lightly populated. Today, however, exurban growth has dramatically changed this area. Rural suburban housing has become the dominant land use in the area, and this example of a wood purpose-built station has been converted into a garage for working on mid-1960s Plymouth Barracuda Fastbacks.

**General Observations**

Within our study area gasoline stations appear to have been much more evenly distributed in the past, and while we have no direct evidence, this was probably true of other rural areas of the country as well. What was striking about rural gasoline retailing in the region was the number of retail outlets operating during the study period. There is some suggestion that a portion (unknown) of these gasoline outlets were primarily geared towards the agricultural sector, supplying fuel for farm equipment, and that their sales to individuals for personal transport (e.g., automobiles) was limited. We feel that while this may indeed be the case, it is immaterial to our central thesis and in fact constitutes a unique form of gasoline retailing found only in rural settings. There is ample evidence in that the purchase of lower order goods, such as gasoline, is driven primarily by location (e.g., Amanor-Boadu, 2009). Consumers are more likely to purchase low order goods closer to home, which in a rural setting would result in a large number of small gasoline retailers. The diffuse nature of rural populations, therefore, resulted in an
equally diffuse distribution of gasoline retailers. In a situation such as this, where each retailer served a relatively small population, gasoline sales would have been a secondary service and retailers would have adopted a strategy were additional sources of revenue would have been necessary. To meet the need in a dispersed setting, gasoline retailing would only be viable as an addition to a previously existing business or as part of a multi-use structure. This would have led to the multi-use gasoline outlet forms that we found to be so prevalent.

Additional evidence for the above processes is seen in the number of purpose-built gasoline stations observed. Very few stations in our study area were purpose-built, and those that were designed and constructed solely as gasoline stations tended to locate along high traffic routes. Gasoline-only retailers would have been at a significant disadvantage, as their service areas would have had to have been quite extensive and would have brought them into direct competition with the more advantageously situated multi-use stations.

It is our contention that, at least in rural south-central Pennsylvania, hybrid forms of gasoline retailing developed, and developed quite early. The gasoline retailing forms that Rutters, Sheetz, and Turkey Hills now typify – the multi-use form where gasoline is only a part of the larger retailing scheme – was well established and widespread by the 1950s. This form of gasoline retailer has escaped notice largely because gasoline sales were secondary, easily adopted with the addition of a fuel tank and pump, but also easily removed with little physical evidence left behind.

Perhaps the most interesting question that arises from this research is why so few of these rural gasoline retailers still exist? The processes that led to their development are still operating, so what has changed? It appears that several factors may have led to their disappearance. Changes in environmental regulations have made it much more difficult to operate a small volume gasoline retail outlet, as several of the people we interviewed noted. Consolidation of gasoline retailing may also have played a role. But perhaps the most important factor may be people’s perceptions. As automobility has matured, we have come to rely more heavily on our automobiles. We drive more often, for longer distances, and with less concern than ever before. The size of our lower-order-goods purchasing zone has increase, and we think nothing of driving farther to get groceries, clothes, and gasoline. The expectations of rural residents are falling more in line with their urban / suburban counterparts, and it has been the Rutters, Sheetz, and Turkey Hills, with their new and more modern outlets, that were poised to take advantage of these changing expectations. The older multi-use rural retailers simply removed the tanks and pumps, leaving little evidence behind of their existence.

References


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Staple Anew: The Potential of an Adaptively Re-Used Gasoline Station in Powell, Wyoming

Keith A. Sculle, Illinois Historic Preservation Agency

Adapt a gasoline station for a community arts center? Just the sight of the incongruous turn about in Powell, Wyoming, a small town (6,314 in 2010), raises questions in this author’s mind of why it was done, who did it, and what potential, if any, might it have as a general future practice in towns and cities of any size. Service to a community’s artistic sensibilities seems such an unlikely re-use for a building born of commercial interests and trademark, not artistic design. Its intended public benefit, however, overcame the usual opposition to disclose the plans behind the facade which private owners maintain. Public managers in Powell were glad to make their plans public.

Introduction

Gasoline stations were long known in the United States as service stations, the adjective “service” referring to the work of the attendant who checked oil levels and filled gasoline tanks for customers’ cars. These stations came of age in the twentieth century with mass automotive transportation. Although seldom revered for their architecture and, in fact, often denigrated as low quality sheds with shabby utilitarian surroundings, they also resonated as proof of a town’s viable economy. Neither like a palatial hotel catering to their town’s social life nor, in an earlier time, like a railroad depot proving connectivity to the world beyond, gasoline stations were nonetheless secure fixtures imbedded in every growing town’s street grid. Uncelebrated but surely mundane symbols of the good life taken for granted: that was the twentieth century gasoline station.

Today, thousands of gasoline stations stand idle, their underground tanks awaiting removal to secure healthy environmental standards in keeping with new understandings for the good life. The convenience store inside selling small personal items, newspapers, and simple foods and drinks, and outside offering self-service gasoline has replaced the service station, moved by expedience to entitle itself “full service”. Should this new version, the convenience store with minimal automobile service be singled out for discussion, it is infrequent and reduced to uncomplimentary characterization as just another contributor to roadside sprawl. Now a remnant of another age, the old service station yet can survive in an architectural shell adapted to contemporary service refitted for environmental responsibility, and be embraced as an asset serving a vibrant community.

Studies of the automobile’s adoption and development have given comparatively little place to the utilitarian elements enabling it, except for the history of highways and interstates. Such as the gasoline station are usually viewed from the perspective of the origins of their trend-setting architecture and spatial influences (Longstreth 1999; Vieyra 1979). The few innovators of an expanded perspective include Annmarie Adams for her admirable study of how a photographer “implicates the individual gas station in a larger network of human activity” and Jim Draeger’s and Mark Speltz’s inclusion in one state of some stations whose newest different uses are a worthy part of each building’s history (2005, 38; 2008).
During the first quarter of the twentieth century, a very sophisticated and specialized architecture emerged to sell gasoline for what had begun in the 1910s as a heterogeneous collection of outlets for various consumer goods and services. Grocery stores, hardware stores, automobile repair and storage garages, even livery stables, added gasoline sales, wherever it fit, into their primary inventory. Gasoline pumps were the primary visual cue of availability to drivers of automotive vehicles in search of fuel. Pumps avoided the impurities of open containers and reduced evaporation of supplies in waiting. A specialized building whose pumps were available for use beside the street curb or in a drive-in mode offered greater commercial opportunity. Petroleum companies appreciative of the growing demand for automotive fuel also began in the 1910s to adopt trademarks, brand names, advertising slogans, and stations that looked alike in building design and layout on site. Their emergence symbolized the attractiveness of the new automotive petroleum technology; where gasoline stations sprang up, it could be inferred that the community was growing, was vital in adopting new ways. Uncelebrated but surely mundane symbols of the good life taken for granted: that was the twentieth century gasoline station. They signaled a coming of the automotive age. But, they were not necessarily visual assets. Corporate architecture grew with the functional accouterments of trademarks and such. It quelled widespread complaints about garish settings cobbled together and often fit into residential neighborhoods where stores had seemed fit but never originated in service to smoky and noisy automotive machines.

To adapt gasoline service in small towns, stations were built in a vernacular style like local houses (Sculle 1981). Big corporations with eyes upon big urban markets fashioned stations attractive to a market based in neighborhoods built in period-style architecture. Pure Oil Company and Phillips Petroleum Company first conceived and implemented this strategy for private profit in the late-1920s (Jakle and Sculle 1994, 163-182). Although corporate chains of stations were exercised in different ways to fit in big or little community-based markets, they shared the same commitment to private profit. Thoughtfully adopted at first as symbols of a community’s far sightedness and, by mid-century, assumed without residents’ regular assessments of their appropriateness, petroleum corporations carefully calculated their gasoline stations private profit and loss.

As the fortunes of technological changes often have it in a capitalistic economy and given the constantly disapproving murmur about automobility (Ladd 2008), however, gasoline stations became something of social as well as economic liabilities. They have become a bellwether for the economic fortunes of the places in which they were situated. By the late-twentieth century, decreasing demands for petroleum and rising environmental complaints about fossil fuels witnessed a significant decrease in the number of gasoline stations as well as their reputation for social service in the late-twentieth century. Between 1994 and 2012, their numbers declined from 202,878 to 159,141 (How Many Gas Stations Are There in the United States, 2012) and legal demands were laid down to remove the fuel tanks from the unoccupied stations (Recycling America’s Gas Stations 2002, 9).

Those extant gasoline stations presented opportunities. The major voice rose from historic preservationists who naturally encouraged re-use but that any adaptations be made consistent with original building designs (Randl 2006). The unorchestrated examples of the greater number of users, the private shop owners who acquired the unoccupied stations, simply addressed the question of how best to use the buildings regardless of alterations by what they did. A few of the idle buildings have been turned to public use and rarely both public and private use drawing on historical associations. Unfortunately, this author has learned that commercial owners of existing examples are reluctant to share much about
their place of business. Private property may have public implications but the secrets of success and operation regardless of success are carefully guarded. Their buildings are left to speak for themselves through drive-by interpreters, a subject for attention elsewhere. Powell, Wyoming’s community arts center brings attention to the work making it because it is such a well documented example whose history unto the very present is gladly shared by those with interests beyond private enterprise. The potential of adaptively re-used gasoline stations can be appreciated here in depth.

Case studies are the irreplaceable data on which reliable generalizations depend. Individuals do not act within general trends as if teleological agents. One of the founders of automobile studies wrote in his career-concluding monograph of 1988, after 28 years of research and writing: “history is the product of human choice, made by decisions of men rather than the inevitable result of impersonal forces, cultural or otherwise, . . .” Hence, “due attention is given to the contributions of individuals to the shaping of our car culture, . . . .” (Flink 1988, ix). A revisionist recently pointed out the need to understand the automobile within changes made since that landmark study of 1988 (Heitmann, 2009, 2). Committed to the belief in the free will of human agency, individuals as the force of historical trends, the gasoline station as a *sine qua non* of automotive culture, and the need to update scholarship, this case study is offered for a small contribution to what should become a growing field of knowledge about the adaptive re-use of one of the American car culture’s leading but proportionately less chronicled enablers (Sculle 2012).

### Plaza Diane’s History

Powell, Wyoming stands out for its remarkable achievements in the state’s extreme northwest corner where Cody generally garners the area’s urban attention as the gateway to the prestigious Yellowstone National Park. Theodore Roosevelt coined the phrase “the most scenic fifty miles in the world” for the road between Cody and the park and by the end of the twentieth century the road entered the select ranks of the National Scenic Byways Program. Twenty-four miles east and founded a few years after its illustrious neighbor, remarkable accomplishments, in fact, have long earmarked Powell’s historical emergence from the seemingly unpromising sagebrush surroundings. Since mid-twentieth century, the economy grew considerably due to the discovery of a nearby oil reservoir, the World War II-boom in agricultural production, construction of an internment camp for Japanese-Americans, and the University of Wyoming’s Northwest Center founding in 1956 (later Northwest Community College) (Koelling 1997, 75). This rally stunningly contrasted with the previous twenty years of agricultural depression which the following global depression had worsened. Shortly before his death in the 1930s, Powell’s leading banker lamented in a handwritten biography his “outstanding error of judgement being that of locating in this thinly-settled western country” (Koelling 1997, 55). Powell’s people, of course, were at the root of the city’s remarkable resilience. Many of its founders’ intelligence and industriousness were considered above the average for rural areas (Koelling 1997, 23). Its eighty-foot wide streets and 100-foot main street convinced outside observers, as similarly expansive dimensions when other western towns were founded, that ambitions were equally expansive (Koelling 1997, 21). When the Presbyterian church founded a retirement home in Powell in 1965, the economic diversification was welcomed (Koelling 1997, 84). Thoughts turned to downtown renovation in the early 1960s although the project stalled because business owners opposed its formulation as a pedestrian mall (Koelling 1997, 89; Bonner and Churchill 2008, 198). Powell’s leading bank offered economic development initiatives in the 1980s, encouraged area banks to get involved, Powell was designated an All-American
City in 1994, and Wyoming’s Governor and Secretary of State declared Powell’s work a model for the entire state (Koelling 1997, 99).

It was this entrepreneurial soil (Figure 1) and persistently community-minded geist that made feasible the Plaza Diane, originally a gasoline station but converted to a civic arts center representing Powell’s centennial (Community Center for the Arts, June 27, 2013). The completed explanation for Plaza Diane hinges on following the trail of the groups and individuals who brought off the final accomplishment. Plaza Diane would not exemplify an unchallenged ideological triumph. Powell experienced the preference for sprawl rather than downtown renewal, as did many cities and towns in the age of automotive vehicle popularity. It would have made improbable a civic accomplishment like a reused gas station in the old city center. On Powell’s west side in 1980 talk bloomed of building a shopping center and, in the following year, one on the east side, but both failed due not to overwhelming disapproval but sufficient concern that downtown commerce would suffer more. There the sixty-three year old Chevrolet-Buick auto dealership, the Chrysler auto dealership, Montgomery Ward, a member of a national supermarket chain, a half-century old dime store, and two hardware stores were shuttered, all in the early 1980s (Bonner and Churchill 2008, 242). The 1990s contrasted with this downward trend; for the early part of the decade witnessed the city chamber of commerce’s downtown revitalization. An outside consultant (from Colorado), Mariann Novak, hired by Wyoming’s Division of Community and Economic Development, worked to persuade downtown leaders that downtown investment would earn profits. Although they were not uniformly convinced, the downtown steering committee produced a $2.8 million design to achieve success and the local newspaper studiously promoted the solutions. Opponents numbered 40 percent of the business owners in the improvement district but, even with required funding reduced to $1.5 million, it still fell short of $70,000 private donations for completion. New sidewalks, curb, gutter, electrical, and water lines were finished in 1994 and the new lighting and trees at 50-foot intervals symbolized a renaissance (Bonner and Churchill 2008, 271-72). Government, business, and the schools included the downtown revitalization with several other projects in Powell in submitting their city’s name to the National Civic League contest for an All-American City and Powell was one of the winners in 1994 (Bonner and Churchill 2008, 272-73). Three years later, The Commons, a multi-purpose activity center downtown, was opened. It had originated as an auto repair garage in the 1920s, and when it closed the front of the building was redeveloped as a pocket park. The city of Powell eventually purchased the property (Bonner 2009, 31).

Enter the specifics of Plaza Diane. An ENCO gas station built in 1945 (Figure 2), a Community Development Block Grant to remove slum and blight funded remodeling it for a private business (Community Facilities Grant and Loan Program Report, 2008, 14). Thus, in 2001, a stage canopy was built, the building’s interior was gutted and remodeled, and – with an auspicious declaration of intent – was named the Plaza Diane (Figure 3) for Diane Bonner. In the long-tradition of community minded women in Powell, Bonner stood for many civic projects, wrote for the local newspaper, and was a city councilwoman, before she died in 2000. However, too cold in the winter and its exterior too hot in the summer (due to reflected sunlight off the concrete pavement), the building remained vacant during most of 2001, the city having failed in several attempts to win occupants (Bonner 2009, 31). Powell began using the site for outdoor concerts (Community Facilities Grant and Loan Program Report and Recommendations to the WBC Board of Directors, 2008, 14). By 2007, the city was no longer willing to pay taxes and maintenance on the building, turned to the prospect of selling the building to a private owner, but a group of about thirty people proposed a plan to convert the old gas station into a
community center, as a journalist for the local press wrote, complete “with gardens, gallery space, and, most important for many, shade” (Bonner 2009, 31).

In mid-May the following year, at two public meetings of the Plaza Diane Steering Committee, no one spoke in opposition and $944,012 was requested of the Wyoming Business Council for a Community Facilities Grant, nearly $190,000 anticipated from local contributors or roughly 15 percent according to state requirements (Bonner 2009, 31). The grant was given, Plaza Diane volunteers worked with the city, CTA architects, principally Anya Fiechti, from Billings, Montana, created the design, and Sletten Construction in nearby Cody completed the work. Work for these two area businesses won the project

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**Fig. 1.** In 1910, the location on the right side of the image that Plaza Diane would occupy a century later. Courtesy of Homesteader Museum, Powell, Wyoming.

**Fig. 2.** The gasoline station later adapted for Plaza Diane. Courtesy of Homesteader Museum, Powell, Wyoming.
Fig. 3. Architect’s view (looking west) of anticipated Plaza Diane. Courtesy of Toby Bonner, Powell Tribune.

Fig. 4. Plaza Diane looking northeast, 2013. Author’s photograph.
further acclaim. It was designed to be both environmentally friendly and, to be useful to the community for art shows, classes, meetings, and other local events, housed a splash pad for children, shade sails, moveable walls indoors to maximize versatility, and 220 square feet added outside for a public restroom and storage (Schweigert 2009, 1 and 3; Community Facilities Grant and Loan Program Report, 2008, 14). Numerous but not insurmountable difficulties emerged. It was a small space with pre-existing utilities and infrastructure (Schweigert, 2009, 3). Petroleum had saturated soil on site but it was determined safe to remove to a landfill. Before scheduled completion, problems arose including the wrong kind of gallery lighting and an inoperable splash pad – to the children’s dissatisfaction – after the first winter (Investment Ready Communities 2010, [pp. 4-5, and 7]).

Withal, Powell realized broad benefits. Beautification of the run-down station with new indoor opportunities achieved the aim of drawing people downtown for community activities with the residual benefit of more customers for downtown businesses (Investment Ready Communities 2010, [p. 2]). There followed enhanced quality of life, downtown rejuvenation, and faith that families and businesses would invest in Powell (Investment Ready Communities 2010, [p. 2]). On opening day, August 27, 2009, Mayor Scott Mangold pronounced: “Our history is right here, at this location.” Diane Bonner, for whom it was named, “knew this and wanted to keep it going” (Mathers 2009, 8).

Programming encompassed a not-for-profit organization to operate Plaza Diane with supplementary funds, as needed, from the City of Powell. The local school district and Northwest College were to provide art programming, especially for the young. Adult art shows, outdoor movies, meeting space, and a new location of the city’s Farmer’s Market on Saturday mornings comprised the original plans (Community Facilities Grant and Loan Program Report and Recommendations to the WBC Board of Directors 2008, 15-16.)

At the time of this writing (Figure 4), the project still looked forward to add a part-time coordinator, a tie with local businesses to promote the plaza, and grants for expanded programming to appeal to new audiences. Unfortunately, there was no proof that the operation either retained businesses or attracted new ones to Powell (Community Facilities Grant and Loan Program, Annual Report 2012).

**Conclusions**

Originating as private business enterprises, gasoline stations have from their inception at the start of the twentieth century also had important but mixed implications for the public life of the town where they located. The ENCO gasoline station at a key intersection in downtown Powell, Wyoming, whose shell of a building and wrap-around driveway were converted to Plaza Diane at the start of the twenty-first century for community life, education, and the arts testifies to a new public conception. This remarkable case deserves on-going attention in order to contribute to the larger study of public and private meanings through the auspices of adaptively re-used gasoline stations.

An adaptively re-used gasoline station stimulates thought of many potentials. Gasoline stations long languished among scholars as subjects appropriate for study, not only architectural students but landscape geographers. Now, even their adaptive re-use, not to mention their original conception, raises questions about their social potential as another expression of commonplace culture as vernacular architecture once did. Individuals stand out as agents of change, if not heroes certainly as the means by which further considerations about change can be traced. Examples of adaptively re-used gas stations...
strongly suggest that buildings with public use stand more likelihood of being understood from conception and, hopefully, will survive longer than those subject to changing commercial circumstances. Adaptive re-use is tied to saving energy needed in a future world wherein resources are believed more precious than they were in the early automotive era when great growth for the marketplace was the measure of success. Certainly, they reinforce the scholarly understanding that any building can be rendered meaningful, however apparently modest. Plaza Diane is not the only gasoline station reborn in public life that will deserve attention as scholarly hypothesis itself grows with numerous studied examples. More field work will yield other deserving cases. The author’s initial amazement upon first sight of Plaza Diane, reassures that looking at the landscape can raise essential questions that archival documentation can only assist in answering.

Acknowledgements
Rowene Weems, Homesteader Museum, Powell, Wyoming; Toby Bonner, Powell Tribune; and Shelby Wetzel, Plaza Diane Board of Directors.

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**Notes**

1 Regarding Virginia’s Eastern Shore, see: Bradley D. MacPherson and Mark DeSocio, 2013.


**Contributor Biography**

Keith A. Sculle, Ph. D., has concentrated especially on the development and meanings of the American roadside landscape and its contributing buildings for over 40 years. He is the retired Head of Research and Education, Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, Springfield, Illinois. ksculle@gmail.com
Student Research

Main Street Canandaigua Adapts to the Automobile: 1900-1930

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Abstract
All American main streets faced the prospect of accommodating the needs of the motor vehicle as the twentieth century unfolded. Canandaigua, NY, the seat Ontario County with roughly 8,200 residents in 1900, was no exception. The passing of the horse-and-buggy era and growing evidence of ‘auto-adaptation’ are apparent from a series of five City Directories and three Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps between 1904 and 1930. A common assumption that the operators of horse-dependent enterprises were apt to pioneer automotive lines of business is largely not borne out by Canandaigua’s experience. Some premises, however, did cross both eras, and logical conversions occurred too, such as blacksmiths’ shops that switched to automotive repair. The transition was surprisingly late. The first vehicle-related businesses had appeared by 1914, a delay attributable perhaps to Canandaigua’s electric inter-urban link to Rochester. The last horse-related businesses had disappeared by 1924. By then, Main Street’s dozen auto-enterprises were relatively clustered along a two-block segment on the West side of the road. Later decades of the twentieth century would see a diaspora from Canandaigua’s Main Street core to its margins, and to US Highway 20 and NY Highway 332 strip development.

Introduction
Automobiles exploded onto the American landscape around the turn of the 20th century. This fast, personal, convenient, and increasingly cheap means of transportation spelled catastrophe for other modes of transport. Particularly, the horse industry suffered. The horse and wagon or carriage modality went from being the means of local transportation to near invisibility as the strength of the automobile industry and motor vehicle adoption both grew. The horse industry encompassed several component firms, all of which suffered as a result of the shift to automobiles. My paper focuses on Canandaigua, NY, a small city and county seat just shy of 30 miles from Rochester. An evocative testament to this dramatic transition comes from an early Canandaigua city historian, “in the 1880’s and 1890’s, before there were horse-drawn streetcars, or buses, or automobiles, only the horse and buggy and hacks furnished transportation. Instead of garages and gas stations there were blacksmith shops and livery stables and feed barns.” (Ellis, 1972.) Canandaigua was selected as a case study because it had and has an exceptionally strong Main Street by the more common standard of Main Street stagnation or decline, because it was and is relatively affluent, and because it was and is within the orbital influence of nearby Rochester.

State Context
To better understand its impacts, it is useful to frame the timing of the horse to automobile transition in Canandaigua to that of New York State as a whole. In general, New York (as well as most New England states) was an early adopter when it came to the automobile. In terms of number of vehicle
registrations, New York ranked 5th among the states in 1900 and 1st in both 1905 and 1910. It is necessary, however, to normalize these data by the driving age population of each state. By that measure, New York ranked 12th among the states in 1910. (Flink, 1970.) It seems that New York adopted the automobile relatively early, although this ranking is likely skewed by the presence of New York City and the rest of the state likely exhibits a lower rate. By the end of the first decade of the 20th century there was one vehicle registration for every 100.4 driving age residents of the state (See Figure 2.)

Another factor that informs the transition to the automobile era in Canandaigua, but does not fit into this horse-to-auto industry study is the trolley service in the city. As stated at the onset, the advent of the
Figure 3. Map of the study area, Main Street Canandaigua (Route 332) from West Ave. to Routes 5&20

Figure 4. First data table, business type by address and year
automobile displaced multiple forms of transportation, not just the horse and carriage model. Canandaigua had a horse and mule-powered trolley system during the late 1800’s that travelled along Main Street. In 1894 the trolley was outfitted to use electricity, and a few years later, the trolley became part of a larger interurban network. The Canandaigua branch suffered declining ridership over the years and was suspended in 1930 (Paulson, 2013.) This phase of diminishing demand corresponds to the most vigorous period of Main Street Canandaigua’s automobile adaptation, which occurred between 1914-1924. In general, the personal automobiles afforded much greater speed (and eventually comfort) than the horse-drawn buggy, and far greater flexibility of movement than the trolley.

**Analyses**

In this paper I will address the following questions: What changes in Main Street businesses in Canandaigua represented a shift to the automobile era? Did new automobile-related businesses appear in the same location as horse-related predecessors or did they spring up elsewhere? Did new businesses have the same owners or not? Identifying shifts from the left to right column of Figure 1 will suggest the framework and timing of the transition. In general, there are two possibilities. The first is an evolution of the horse industry into its automobile counterpart, which would entail auto businesses replacing their horse counterparts in the same locations and with the same owners, suggesting a retrofitting of the horse industry and seamless adaptation to the automobile. The other possibility is a replacement of the horse industry by the automobile industry, characterized by businesses in new locations with new owners, suggesting that there was little reuse and that the horse industry merely dropped away as the automobile industry moved in.

**Study Area**

Canandaigua, NY, is the seat Ontario County and had approximately 8,200 residents in 1900 and lies within Rochester’s area of influence. Canandaigua’s Main Street remains vibrant in spite of external influences, such as suburban strip-mall development. Data were collected on a transect along Main Street south from West Ave. to Routes 5&20 (See Figure 3) which covers approximately 1.2 kilometers (or 0.75 miles). This stretch is significant not only as a popular main street setting, but also because it is an old part of Route 20, a transcontinental Federal Highway. As a main arterial across the country it brought a considerable amount of traffic into Canandaigua during this transitional era and is a prime candidate for study.

**Methods**

Data for the study were collected along the transect from both the field and from primary source. These primary sources were the Canandaigua city directories obtained from the Ontario County Historical Society and Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps obtained from the Ontario County Department of Records, Archives, and Information Management Services. Walking and sketching Main Street buildings supplemented this information. Horse-related businesses were recorded along with their addresses and owners. The same was done for automobile-related businesses. Data were taken for five years (1904, 1911, 1914, 1924, and 1930) and mapped for analysis.

**Results**

The data collected for this study is presented as Figures 4 and 5. The maps for 1904, 1914, and 1924 are also included as Figures 6, 7, and 8, respectively. The dramatic shift in the transportation industry
occurred during the second decade of the twentieth century. In the 1904 sample, only horse related businesses appear along the transect, but in the 1911 and 1914 samples, horse and auto related businesses coexist (with horse service industries being the majority.) By the 1924 sample, however, only auto businesses appear and the transition was complete. Indeed, this foundational transition in the transportation industry occurred quite quickly in Canandaigua, going from one extreme to the other in only about a decade.

Were the buildings designed for the car or did the car adapt to existing buildings? A clear pattern does not emerge. As an example, consider 253 South Main St. The Sanborn maps reveal that in 1904 this structure was a parsonage with a horse stable. By 1911 it was being used as an undertaker’s and in 1924 had become a gasoline station, in each instance the same building was repurposed. The opposite can be seen at 372 South Main St., which underwent significant structural changes between 1911 and 1924, when its use switched from a foundry to an auto garage. Of the 11 lots used for horse related businesses in the period studied, four were repurposed as auto service businesses and seven were not, evidently not desirable for the new demands of the industry. Additionally, the lack of automobile dealerships may be related to the relatively large number in nearby Rochester.

Did related auto businesses replace horse ones or were the new services offered different? In most cases they did, with the prime example being blacksmith shops transitioning to automobile garages (consider the example of 232 South Main St.) Seventy-five percent of the lots that were used for both horse and auto businesses saw these “logical” transitions as laid out in Figure 1 (e.g. livery to taxi, harness to auto accessories, blacksmith to garage.)

Was there continuity in business ownership across the transition or did replacement occur? The common assumption that ownership continued is largely not borne out in this case study. Consider 83 1/2
South Main St. M.L. Spencer was the longstanding owner of a livery at this location that appeared in 1904, 1911, and 1914. When the location became an auto garage by 1924, however, Mr. Spencer was no longer associated with the business. Born in 1842, Spencer was simply too old to transform his business with the changing industry and none of his three children elected to take up the reins (Ellis, 1972.) Instead of transitioning with his business into the new era, he simply left the Main Street business scene. The advertisements presented in Figure 9 illuminate this example.
Discussion
Canandaigua made a rapid transition to the automobile between 1914 and 1924. This was slightly behind the average for New York State. Determining whether the transition followed the evolution or replacement model described above is not so straightforward. Most of the locations from 1904 were still in use in 1914, and most of these had transitioned to automobile-related businesses. At the same time, most of the locations that were in use both in 1904 and 1914 had new owners at the latter date. For the next period, 1914 to 1924, most of the locations from 1914 were still in use in 1924, but they were all under new ownership, and many more locations had come into use. Between these years, logical transitions occurred, with a harness shop turning into an accessory shop and a livery service turning into a taxi service. It is difficult to classify the transition in Canandaigua as evolutionary or replacement. The frequent changes in ownership certainly suggest a replacement model. In terms of continuity of location, most were reused from one period to the next, yet the significant drop in total businesses from 1904 to 1914 and the multitude of new locations from 1914 to 1924 suggest that reusing space was not sufficient for the new industry, excess horse-related business had to be shed as demand for them fell between 1904 and 1914 and new businesses had to emerge in addition to reusing space as the demand in the auto industry rapidly grew. Perhaps the best conclusion is that Canandaigua adopted an evolutionary transition to the extent it was possible, but the inherent differences in the two industries necessitated replacement-like trends in several areas.

Summary
Today most of the automobile industry has clustered in the commercial strips located on NY 332 and US 5&20. There are, however, two remaining vestiges of this transitional era on Main Street. My father, who took over the business from his father who founded it in 1960, owns one of them. The site

Figure 8. Map of business location and type-1924
is one that first appeared as an auto garage in the 1924 sample. This dramatic revolution in transportation occurred throughout the United States and looking at it through the lens of studies like this can shed light on the present. Did Canandaiguans notice a transition was happening? Will we know when another such change is taking place? Is it already happening and if so, what are we moving towards, renewed interest in public transportation and biking, new types of automobiles with alternative fuel sources? If another transportation revolution is occurring, where are we in it? Looking to the past can help us better understand these questions.

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Canandaigua City Directories, Ontario County Historical Society.


Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Ontario County Department of Records, Archives, and Information Management Services.

Contributor Biography
Nathan Trombley is a resident of Canandaigua, NY. He is graduate of SUNY Geneseo in Geneseo, NY with a BA in Geography as well as academic minors in Geological Sciences and Economics. He is planning on attending graduate school in the fall of 2014 pending admissions decisions.
Introduction

In the summer of 2013 I started a project that will eventually take me along the whole length of Interstate Route 11 from the border with Canada at Rouses Point, New York (see Figure 1) to just outside New Orleans. The link below will take the reader to a map showing the route of interstate 11 (Last checked August 2014): [http://www fhwa dot gov/infrastructure/us11map cf m](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/infrastructure/us11map.cfm)

Over my lifetime I have traveled large portions of the 1780 miles, but never in a systematic, continuous, and consistent way. My interest in Route 11 started young when it was the main highway that went north/south near my hometown of Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. Most trips by the Brew family started on Route 11 prior to the completion of Interstate 81 in the late 1960s. My project goal is to document the landscape as it exists in the early 21st century, but also peel back the layers of history using the existing structures and United States Geological Survey (USGS) Historical Topographic Maps. The project is not designed to be a full historical assessment, but rather a selective study of the vernacular and commercial structures with a close eye kept open for the reuse of buildings.
In July 2013 I started at the Canadian Border and ended the first part of my journey at Scranton, Pennsylvania. My goal is to complete the rest of the journey over the next two summers, with any luck finishing in New Orleans in the summer of 2015. I travel with my digital camera, an old Boy Scout canteen, topographic atlases, my well-worn copy of Raitz’s Landform Map of the United States. I also pack my trained eyes, informed by Stewart, Lewis, Clay, Sculle and Jakle to name just a few.

Brief History
A good overview of the early history of the interstate highways can be found in the book Divided Highways by Tom Lewis. In the 1920s the clamoring by the public for improved roads along with a great technocratic advocate in Washington DC, James McDonald (Chief of the Bureau of Public Roads), lead to the building of the first numbered interstate system. It did not hurt that the federal government provided 50% of the construction costs. The goal of many of the early interstates was to use existing roads to connect county seats and in the process form continuous and improved (federal standards for paving and bridges) well-marked roads. Despite the generous federal funding the states were not always completely happy with the location of the routes. The link below provides some interesting details about Route 11 (Last checked August 2014): [http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/infrastructure/us11.cfm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/infrastructure/us11.cfm)

Peeling back the layers…
What makes traveling the original interstate highways interesting is viewing and documenting the structures built in different time periods. The structures built prior to 1925 existed before the road was designated as an interstate. Figure 2 includes examples of structures prior to Route 11 in New York. After the road was designated as an interstate you can find many examples of vernacular house styles built after 1925 (see Figure 3).

Changes…
It is also interesting to note the changes along the route. The USGS topographic maps can be a big help to document old routes that were used for Route 11 in the past in urban areas and by-pass upgrades. This is helpful so that one can follow the present route and the roads used in the past that are now by-passed. The website below is a great help to anyone who wants to figure out routes either before or after exploring them: [http://historicalmaps.arcgis.com/usgs/](http://historicalmaps.arcgis.com/usgs/)

One of the major changes that can be seen along Route 11 are after the completion of Interstate Route 81 that parallels much of Route 11, especially near interchanges that connect the two roads. A good example of this can be found just north of Sandy Creek, NY where the Route 81-11 Motel is located (see Figure 4). The historic USGS maps clearly show that this motel was built after Route 81 was completed.

Diners, Drive-Ins, and Dives
Throughout New York State I was not able to find any visual evidence of stainless steel diners, but did find a closed one just over the border in Pennsylvania (see Figure 5a). A wonderful drive-in (see Figure 5b) can be found just east of Malone, New York. I was not able to find any operating nor visual evidence of closed drive-in theaters in New York State. A survey of the USGS historical topographic maps reveal that several existed including ones outside of the towns of Malone, Canton, Syracuse, and Binghamton. (Continued on page 115)
Figure 2. A series of photographs showing structures that existed along the road prior to 1925 interstate status including a nice example of an octagonal structure (2d).
Figure 3. A series of images showing vernacular houses just prior or after the interstate designation including a nice example of a lazy T bungalow (3a); a nice mixture of New England Extended folk architecture with 1920s popular style.

Figure 4. The rustic sign (4a) and the motel (4b) that was built after Interstate 81 was completed.
Figure 5a. The first steel diner I found on my journey along Route 11. Figure 5b. The neon sign for Bokies along with directions and distances to other destinations. French Canadians are welcome here.
Figure 6. A series of motel signs in various states of repair. In some cases (6c) only the sign remains.
Figure 7. a.) a colonial style gas station in Pulaski, NY; b.) an Art Deco/Modern gas station outside of Syracuse, NY; c.) an interesting reuse of a gas station as law offices in Cortland, NY; and d.) a former gas station now dispensing ice cream outside of Binghamton, NY.
Figure 8. a.) the first of many Union Soldier Memorials found in most of the towns in New York; b.) I found this homage to southern culture far to the north and early in my journey. Both are near or in Malone, NY.

Figure 9. The term sub (submarine sandwich) was found throughout New York State. Mr. Sub (9a) is located in Pulaski, NY. The first ‘hoagie’ shop was found near Clarks Summit, PA, north of Scranton.
(Just as Interstate 81 brought new possibilities it also meant that many commercial establishments are no longer located well. Many of the motels that are still open (dives) have been updated (not necessarily for the better) and are used for apartments and temporary housing. Some of the original signs remain in various state of repair (see Figure 6).

**Gas Stations**

Many gas stations once lined Route 11, but most of the older ones are no longer in use or have been repurposed for other businesses. Figure 7 is a series of images documenting the different styles of gas stations along with some interesting reuses.

**Monuments and Language**

Most of the New York towns have memorials to the Union soldiers for the U.S. Civil War (see Figure 8a). I expect to find the first confederate soldier memorial in Virginia. I found an interesting vernacular memorial to NASCAR (southern) culture early in my journey (Figure 8b). In New York State and most of the rest of the U. S. lunch meat sandwiches on long rolls are called ‘subs’, but just north of Scranton, PA they are referred to as ‘hoagies’ (see Figure 9). The unique name used in Philadelphia (see link below) is not used very far outside of its place of origin. I look forward to when I see my first ‘po’boy’ as I get closer to New Orleans later in my travels on Route 11. Webpage link last checked in August 2014. [http://www.phillymag.com/news/2013/06/06/map-proves-philly-city-country-hoagie/](http://www.phillymag.com/news/2013/06/06/map-proves-philly-city-country-hoagie/)

**New Layers, New (Continued) Journeys**

I titled this essay the French Connection because Route 11 links Quebec with New Orleans. It was interesting to see the recent landscape additions of more recent Latino and Southeast Asian migrants along Route 11 which are shown in a series of photographs seen in Figure 10.

This concludes the first stage of my travels along Route 11. I look forward to reporting Stage 2 of the journey from Scranton, PA to Knoxville, TN in PAST 2015.
Figure 10. Recent migrants have added their own distinctive layer to Route 11. Hispanic influence can be found on display (10a) north of Syracuse NY. Asian influences run from the commercial (10b) to the sacred (10c). The ‘Rocket Center’ is south of Binghamton and the Buddhist Temple is located near Castle Creek NY. The lizard may be limp, but the rocket tells a different story.