

BUILDING-STRUCTURE INVENTORY FORM

DIVISION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION
NEW YORK STATE PARKS AND RECREATION
ALBANY, NEW YORK (518) 474-0479

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY
UNIQUE SITE NO. 03347.000018
QUAD _____
SERIES _____
NEG. NO. _____

YOUR NAME: Marlene Dupre' DATE: 11/3/82
YOUR ADDRESS: 19 Jenkins St. TELEPHONE: 891-1112
ORGANIZATION (if any): Historic Saranac Lake

IDENTIFICATION

1. BUILDING NAME(S): Old Enterprise Building
2. COUNTY: Franklin TOWN/CITY: Saranac Lake VILLAGE: _____
3. STREET LOCATION: 74/76 Main St. Saranac Lake *now 77 MAIN ST.*
4. OWNERSHIP: a. public b. private
5. PRESENT OWNER: Alicia Paolozzi ADDRESS: 1 King St. Charleston S. C.
6. USE: Original: retail Present: Apartments & Storefronts
7. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Exterior visible from public road: Yes No
Interior accessible: Explain Apartments & Stores entrances in the front

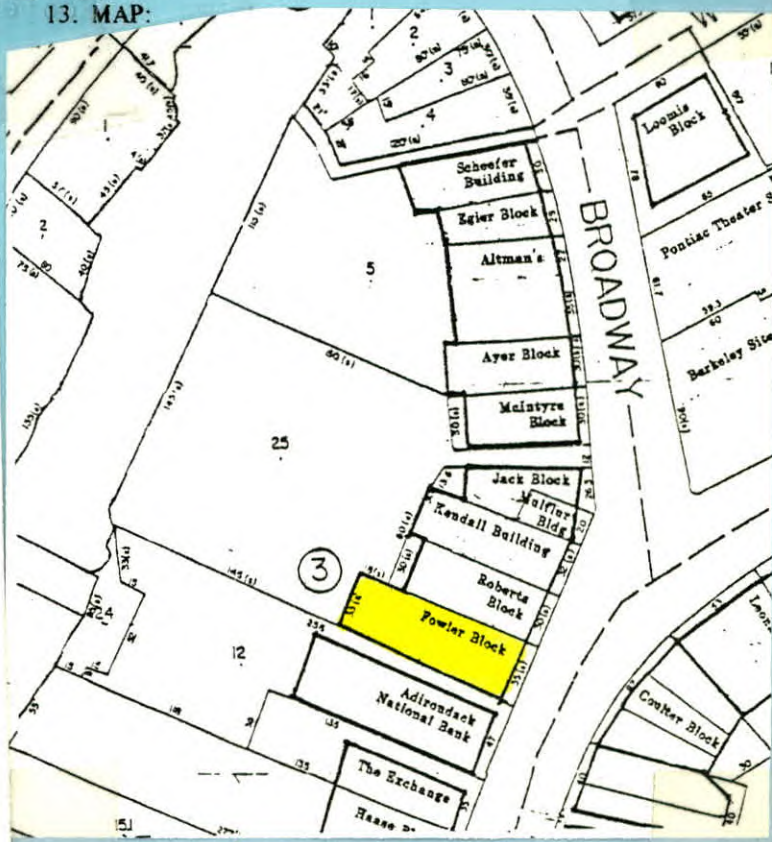
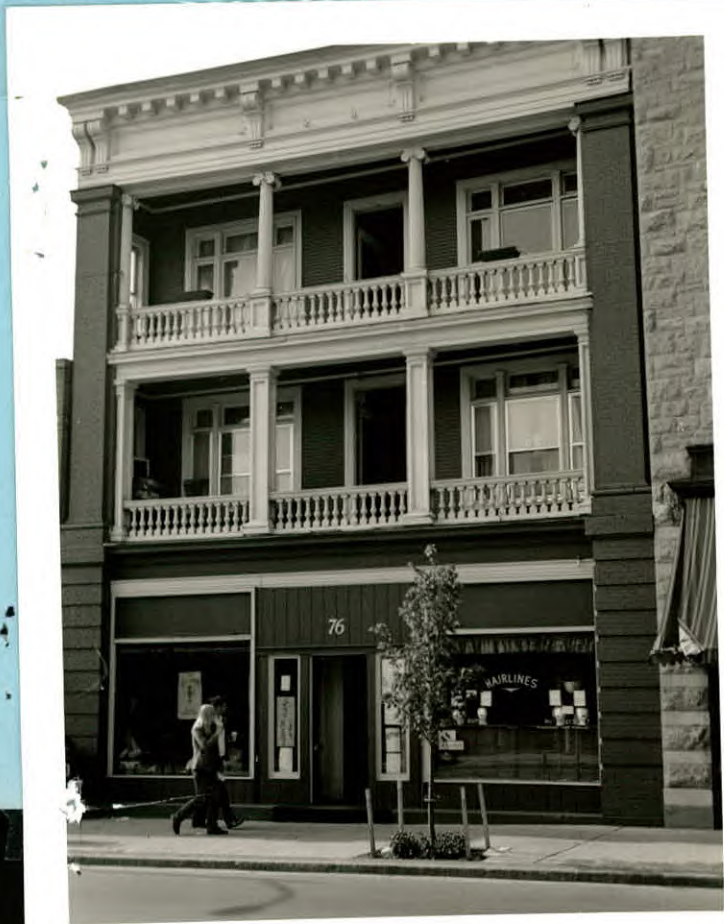
DESCRIPTION

8. BUILDING MATERIAL: a. clapboard b. stone c. brick d. board and batten
e. cobblestone f. shingles g. stucco other: _____
9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM: a. wood frame with interlocking joints
(if known) b. wood frame with light members
c. masonry load bearing walls
d. metal (explain) _____
e. other _____
10. CONDITION: a. excellent b. good c. fair d. deteriorated
11. INTEGRITY: a. original site b. moved if so, when? _____
c. list major alterations and dates (if known):

1926: two-story rear extension, designed by William G. Distin, Sr., and built to withstand the weight and vibration of hot-type, newspaper printing equipment.

12. PHOTO:

13. MAP:



14. THREATS TO BUILDING: a. none known b. zoning c. roads
 d. developers e. deterioration
 f. other: _____
15. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS AND PROPERTY:
 a. barn b. carriage house c. garage
 d. privy e. shed f. greenhouse
 g. shop h. gardens
 i. landscape features: None
 j. other: _____
16. SURROUNDINGS OF THE BUILDING (check more than one if necessary):
 a. open land b. woodland
 c. scattered buildings
 d. densely built-up e. commercial
 f. industrial g. residential
 h. other: _____

17. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS:
 (Indicate if building or structure is in an historic district) The building is in the downtown section of Saranac Lake.
In the Berkeley Square Historic District.

18. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING AND SITE (including interior features if known):
Two large porches with wooden railings and pillars. The carved cornices are made of wood.

SIGNIFICANCE

19. DATE OF INITIAL CONSTRUCTION: 1898-1899
 ARCHITECT: William H. Scopes
 BUILDER: Same, for owner W. S. Fowler.

20. HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE:
This was the first building in Saranac Lake that he designed and built.
This was the site of the first daily newspaper, The Adirondack Daily Enterprise.

SEE ALSO ATTACHED.

21. SOURCES:
Mrs. Arthur Wareham
Franklin County Clerk's records, Malone, N.Y.
22. THEME: Saranac Lake: Pioneer Health Resort

Anna Miller Homestead

Anna O. Miller, grandchild of Captain Pliny Miller, was Van Buren Miller's sister, and, like her brother, took great interest in the development of Saranac Lake -- specifically in the improvement of its school system.

Her home was on a 65 x 256 strip of land where now stand the buildings numbered 76 and 80 Main Street. This was called the "Annie Miller Homestead Lot" to distinguish it from other holdings that she had between Broadway and Main Street and the river.

Over a period of years, Anna Miller sold the rear portion of the Homestead and most of the other land to W. Smith Fowler, a liveryman and blacksmith who was also a quite active real estate speculator and developer.

After her death, the executors of Anna Miller's estate sold the remainder of the Homestead Lot in two parts. The southern part went to Fowler and the northern part to William F. Roberts. The transfer took place October 30, 1899. Almost simultaneously, a building was erected on each lot. These are the Fowler and Roberts Blocks.

The Fowler Block

Built by W. S. Fowler in 1900, this building at 76 Main St. was the first structure in Saranac Lake designed by architect William H. Scopes. (For more detailed information on Scopes and the firm of Scopes and Feustman, see the discussion of the Harrietstown Hall.)

In October, 1909, W. Smith and Jessie Fowler sold the Fowler Block to William J. and Matthew M. Munn.

On the groundfloor of the building, these two Munns, with their brother Albert, opened the Munn Brothers' Grocery. It was a large and successful business -- so much so that most older residents call 76 Main Street the "Munn Block".

The Munns' was the first grocery in the village to have walk-in coolers, and they had a fleet of three delivery trucks.

In June of 1925, the Munns sold the Fowler Block to John S. Ridenour, publisher of the Adirondack Enterprise, who

bought the building as an investment.

John Ridenour, born in Bedford, Pa., was a 1908 graduate of the Cornell School of Engineering with a deep interest in the newspaper business. He had taken a year off from college in 1907 to work on the Philadelphia Evening Bulletin. After graduation, he worked for other newspapers and eventually bought one in his home town, The Bedford Inquirer. This he improved through managerial and technical innovations until it became a very successful and efficient operation.

During World War I, Ridenour sold the Inquirer and joined the service. When he returned to civilian life, he wanted to buy the newspaper back but could not -- due to the fact that it had been making its new owners too much money.

So the young publisher looked elsewhere and thereby arrived in Saranac Lake. He liked the area, and he liked the potential he saw in its semi-weekly newspaper, The Adirondack Enterprise. (There was also a weekly, called The News, being published at the time.)

On May 1, 1918, John Ridenour purchased the Enterprise from Kenneth W. Goldthwaite. In little more than a year, this newspaper, first published in 1894, became a thrice-weekly and absorbed The News. In another year, it was being issued five times a week from its plant at the old Harrietstown Hall.

It had been Ridenour's plan to build a new building on Woodruff Street (behind the Downing Block and just off Broadway) to be the headquarters for the Enterprise. He had intended to complete the project in 1928, but the events of the morning of July 26, 1926, intervened. The old Town Hall burned to the ground. Everything was lost, including the only complete collection of the newspaper's issues.

Ridenour responded to this disaster with characteristic swiftness and resolve. Publication of The Enterprise continued uninterrupted courtesy of The Malone Evening Telegram; and, the day after the fire, ground was broken by contractor Thomas P. McCormick on a two-story, rear extension to the Fowler Block.

This extension, designed by William G. Distin, Sr., was of brick and steel construction with a poured concrete foundation and built to withstand the weight and vibrations of hot-type,

newspaper printing equipment.

On Monday, November 25, 1926, The Adirondack Enterprise began operation as a true daily (six issues a week) from its new offices and plant at 76 Main St. That address would be synonymous with the word "Enterprise" for the next 47 years.

Interestingly, the Munn Brothers' involvement with the Fowler Block continued indirectly long after their ownership ended. Matt Munn's son, Jim, trained as a reporter with the Enterprise and went on to work for the Associated Press. Will Munn's grandson, Dave, was a linotype operator and typesetter in the old hot-type process and retrained when the transition to offset was made. He is with the newspaper today as is his daughter, Kathy, who works in the advertising department, though the address is no longer 76 Main St.

John Ridenour was an avid advocate of the "Time and Motion" approach to management. The concept was simple: since motion took time and time was money, the operation that required the least motion would make the most money. Assiduously followed, this unsophisticated philosophy had a profound effect upon the "Enterprise".

First, the press room and composing room (on the lower and upper floors, respectively, of the addition) were filled with the most modern equipment available and in the most efficient arrangements.

Because of his success in Bedford and his background as an engineer, as well as his adherence to "Time and Motion", Ridenour was approached by manufacturers of newspaper production equipment to test their latest designs. Thus, the Enterprise composing room became a laboratory for production prototypes and for production systems, as well. Manufacturers such as Intertype and Ludlow would send their experimental models to Ridenour. If they worked at the Enterprise, they were usually considered suitable for mass production. Furthermore, since Ridenour was always looking for an arrangement of machines and workers that would be more motion efficient, big city newspapers looked to the Enterprise as a text book of the

best production systems and usually adopted its latest procedures.

In the press room was the pride of the Enterprise mechanical department. It was the Wood Bee-Line Press, an experimental, high-speed, single-unit, rotary printing machine with a capacity of 12,000 newspapers per hour. It was a magnificent machine that frightened, awed, or seduced those who saw it in operation. When running wide-open, it put out newspapers faster than they could be gathered and so was never run at more than half-speed. It was one piece of equipment which its builder, the Wood Press Co., deemed not suitable for mass production because the market for such a machine was too small. The principles of its design, however, were incorporated into the huge, multi-unit presses used by the big newspapers.

During the 31 years of the Ridenour era, the Enterprise excelled not only technologically, but totally. Its captain was a strong man of strong principles strongly promulgated. The result was a strong business.

In 1949, John Ridenour retired from the newspaper business. He sold the Enterprise and the Fowler Block to the Saranac Publishing Company, which was financed by Dorothy S. Kury of St. Lawrence County, N.Y., and run by her second husband, Frederick. The transfer took place on April 28.

Less than three years later, Saranac Publishing sold business and building to Marjorie Carey, a New York City ballerina whose father and husband had been involved with a newspaper in Ames, Iowa. The husband, Dean, came to Saranac Lake and ran the Enterprise until June 1, 1953, when the newspaper was sold to Roger Tubby, Harry Truman's Press Secretary, and James Loeb, then Ambassador to Peru. The Careys, however, retained the building until January, 1965, when they sold it to Tubby and Loeb's Adirondack Publishing Company.

In 1970, William Doolittle purchased the A.P.C. and, in 1973, converted the Enterprise to the photo-offset process and moved the operation to an old A & P store at 61 Broadway. The

marvelous Wood Bee-Line Press, one of only three ever built, was offered to the Adirondack Museum in Blue Mountain Lake, but the Museum reportedly balked at paying the cost of the 50 mile transfer; and the press was sold to a Tupper Lake scrap dealer whose men came in and broke it up with sledge hammers and carted the pieces away.

The Adirondack Daily Enterprise is now printed five times a week and is owned by the Ogden Group of West Virginia.

The Fowler Block was sold October, 1973, to John Wojcik of Saranac Lake, from whom it was purchased, October, 1978, by Alicia Paolozzi of Charleston, South Carolina. It currently houses a beauty salon and a cobbler's shop. Apartments are upstairs while a youth center occupies the old press room.

The glory of the three-story, brick, clapboard, and stucco Fowler Block is a set of recessed galleries on the second and third stories, front.

The side walls of the building terminate at the facade as massive, brick piers. Between these piers on the ground floor are the two storefronts and the central, trapezoidal entry recess giving access to the storefront doors and the stairway to the apartments on the upper floors.

Above the storefronts, the second and third story galleries open between the piers. Each has three bays. Dividing the bays of the lower gallery are two square pillars with recessed panels, and dividing the bays of the upper gallery are two ionic columns. Reflecting the pillars and columns are matching engaged columns and pillars against the inner faces of the piers. Running between these vertical elements are balustrades. Their balusters are thick, curvacious and tightly packed and slightly taller on the third floor than on the second.

Above the third story gallery, from pier to pier, runs the span of an eclectic but rewarding entablature. The cornice portion of this is supported, at each end, over the pier-heads, by a pair of scrolled consoles, and over the column capitals by one such console each. All the consoles have three dependent guttae. Between the consoles, supporting the cornice

over the bays, are fifteen modillions--five above each bay.

All of this work -- pillars, columns, balustrades, entablature -- is in wood.

Behind the galleries in an inner clapboard facade pierced by central doorways opening onto the galleries. Flanking the doorways are transomed, triple, sash windows, the middle sashes being twice the width of the outer sashes.

The entire face of the building, including the inner facade, is painted a deep, hemetite red while all the woodwork and trim is painted a rich cream. Although the entryway has been enclosed and the display windows abbreviated; the Fowler Block exterior is in basically original condition.

by Phil Gallos

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