

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

historic name Lady Tree Lodge

other names/site number Lone Star Cottage; Belo Cottage; Rustic Cabin

related multiple property listing N/A

2. Location

street & number 21 Loon Over Lane

N/A

not for publication

city or town Saranac Lake

N/A

vicinity

state NY

code 36

county Franklin

code 33

zip code 12983

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

[Signature]
Signature of certifying official/Title

12/26/17
Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official

Date

Title

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register

determined eligible for the National Register

determined not eligible for the National Register

removed from the National Register

other (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private
- public – Local
- public – State
- public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
4	0	buildings
0	0	sites
1	0	structures
0	0	objects
5	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: Camp

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: Camp

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

OTHER: Adirondack Rustic Style

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: STONE
walls: WOOD: Split log and shingle

roof: ASPHALT
other: _____

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Narrative Description

Summary Paragraph

Lady Tree Lodge was built in 1896 at the Saranac Inn, Franklin County, New York, and is one of the oldest remaining structures on the Upper Saranac Lake. The exterior was designed in the Adirondack rustic style and exhibits many signature details associated with Saranac Lake architect William L. Coulter, though no attribution can be proved. Its monumental gable screen and double porches overlook the lake and are derived from William West Durant's 1877 Swiss chalet at Camp Pine Knot. Its interior reflects contemporary suburban design with rustic elements and, functionally, shows a dependency on the Saranac Inn for meals and accommodation of guests and servants. Lady Tree Lodge consists of a complex of five buildings: large house, boathouse, two storage sheds, and pump house. The property was originally part of a complex of hotel cottages, but was commissioned for an independent owner and has been independently owned since the 1930s. It is accessed by its own driveway from the Saranac Inn road. After an exceptional restoration, it beautifully demonstrates the golden age of Adirondack camp architecture.

Narrative Description

SITE

Lady Tree Lodge is located on Upper Saranac Lake on the grounds of the historic Saranac Inn (destroyed by fire, 1978) in the Town of Santa Clara, Franklin County, New York. The Upper Saranac Lake is the sixth largest lake in the Adirondacks and one of a chain of three lakes feeding the Saranac River, which eventually drains into Lake Champlain. Lady Tree Lodge (and the remaining cottages associated with the inn) is located on a peninsula that juts into the north end of the lake, overlooking one of its widest parts with a distant view of the Adirondack High Peaks. The main building sits on level land, backed by thick wooded acreage filled with massive trees. The site of the inn is southwest; small cottages that originally housed help for the inn are north; and a swampy, wooded area historically called the "Deerpark" is located to the northeast.



Figure 1. Lady Tree Lodge and secondary resources.

The facade faces south onto a generous lawn with a large white pine to the south. This pine is said to have inspired the building's name; before it became storm damaged, it had drooping limbs that the owner was told resembled "the skirts of a lady."¹ The rest of the property is vegetated with mature spruce, pine, birch, hemlock, and scattered mountain ash. Due to foraging deer, understory growth is modest but includes blueberry, spirea, Jack-in-the-pulpit, forget-me-not, ferns, and some viburnum. The vegetation frames the back and sides of the house, providing privacy from neighbors. The short waterfront slope on the south is lined with mature white pines, some scotch pine, and a few white birches with an undergrowth of spirea, blueberry, and fern.

¹ A second option is that the building was named after a 1904 poem by Bliss Carman, "The Wind and the Tree," which talks about "lover Wind" and "lady Tree." Or, perhaps, given the site, both the appearance of the tree and the poem came together in the name.

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EXTERIOR

The form of the front-gable building is practically square – approximately 45 by 45 feet – with a square service addition covering a third of the rear of the house. The current main entrance is on the west elevation, through a small porch with an overhang. The original main entrance was from the first-floor porch on the façade (south) into the living room. It remains, along with another entrance on the east elevation into the service corridor connecting the service wing/rear addition and original dining room, and a door at the rear (north) elevation from the stair hall onto a small porch on the west elevation of the wing. A second entrance from this porch into the wing itself has been closed.

The house was first roofed with cedar shakes, but is now covered in cedar-colored asphalt shingles. Two brick-faced chimneys service four fireplaces. The building now stands on a half basement with areas dug out to accommodate a furnace and other utilities. However, the original stone piers have been retained.

Lady Tree Lodge appears to have a wooden frame. Shingles are applied to the second floor, and horizontal split logs with tight mitered corners are applied to the first floor to simulate whole log construction. Documentary sources suggest that the first-floor trim originally had bark, but is now peeled. Bark-on logs remain in the overhang above the second-floor porch and in the entire front gable screen. The building is currently painted black with red trim.

All windows are true divided-light double-hung sash. Top sashes consist of a series of diamonds, squares, and triangles framing central panes over single larger panes below. The first and second-floor porches have original Dutch doors with similar window pane details.



Figure 2. Façade, showing lake-facing porches with screen above, 2016.



Figure 3. Mitered corners of log trim, southeast corner, 2017.

Façade (South Elevation): The front-gable façade faces the Upper Saranac Lake and consists of full-length

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porches at the first and second floors, roof overhangs with substantial bracing, and an ornate rustic screen. Both floors have three bays; however, a large picture window – thought to have been added to the living room in the 1940s – reduces the symmetry of the first floor.

On the first floor, there is a central Dutch door flanked by windows with ornamental panes in the upper sash. The picture window connects the door to a single window on the left; a stand-alone window on the right provides light to the den. The second floor consists of two Dutch doors (both flanked by windows) with a single window in the center under a window into the attic.

The roof projects boldly over the second-floor porch and contains the rustic screen, so that the attic window is entirely obscured. The screen is supported by five log posts, with side braces, resting on the porch and tied to the house with horizontal braces; below, the porch is supported by five replacement posts without side braces or horizontal ties. The screen retains its bark and consists of a king post with mirror-image geometric designs that follow the horizontal plane of the porch and the diagonal planes of the roof. Inside the screen, log rafters and purlins also retain their bark, and a horizontal tie acts as an extra purlin to support the edge of the roof.

The second-floor porch railings are simple, with regularly-spaced vertical balusters; they replace identical rotted railings. Similar railings have been removed from the first floor. The deck of both porches is fir, stained clear.

West (Side) Elevation: The west elevation consists of four bays on the first floor and two bays on the second floor. On the first floor, the first bay holds the main entrance under a shed porch roof; the second bay holds a bay window with two windows on the front and a single narrow window on each side; bays three and four hold single broad windows providing light to the living room. On the second floor, there is a double window above the bay window on the first floor, and another double window evenly spaced between the windows in bays three and four on the first floor.

Simple diagonal braces support the roof overhang along the entire length of house – including the extra purlin behind the rustic screen.



Figure 4. West (side) and north (rear) elevations of the main house and west and north elevations of the addition, 2016.



Figure 5. East (side) elevation, 2015.

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North Elevation: On the first floor, the four bays of the rear elevation consist of the service wing/rear addition in the first bay, stair hall door, short window (into a bathroom), and single window into the mudroom. On the second floor, there are windows above bays two through four of the first floor; the first window provides light into the central corridor. An attic window is centered in the gable.

East Elevation: The east elevation is much like the west elevation with diagonal braces supporting the roof overhang and a bay window and side entrance on the first floor. However, it includes two additional bays on the first floor and one on the second floor because the service wing/rear addition is flush with this elevation.

In bay one, a single window provides light to the library; bay two holds the bay window for the dining room, with a small, attached, later window lacking ornamental glass on the south; bay three holds the side door into the service corridor; and bays four and five hold small windows into the service wing/rear addition. The second floor has four bays with three sets of doubled windows lighting a front bedroom, back bedroom, and the stair hall. A small window has been inserted between the front and back bedrooms to light a newer bathroom; it lacks ornamental glass, like the window directly below it. A single window provides light to the bedroom in the service wing/rear addition.

Service Wing/Rear Addition: The two-story service wing is lower than the main house and may have been built in two parts. The two-story section directly attached to the house holds a bedroom upstairs and what used to be the kitchen (now a media room) downstairs; to the north, a one-story section with a bump-out is now a laundry room. The bump-out and a small porch on the first floor are visible on the west elevation; the porch door used to be the main entrance to the kitchen but is now permanently closed. The second floor of this elevation holds a single window into the bedroom. The north (rear) elevation has a hipped roof over the one-story section. On the first floor, there is a centered window with a second window into the bump-out; there are no windows on the second floor. (The east elevation is incorporated into the description of the east elevation of the house.)

A non-historic stockade fence at the back of the service wing blocks the view of utility meters and the wood storage rack from the parking area.

INTERIOR

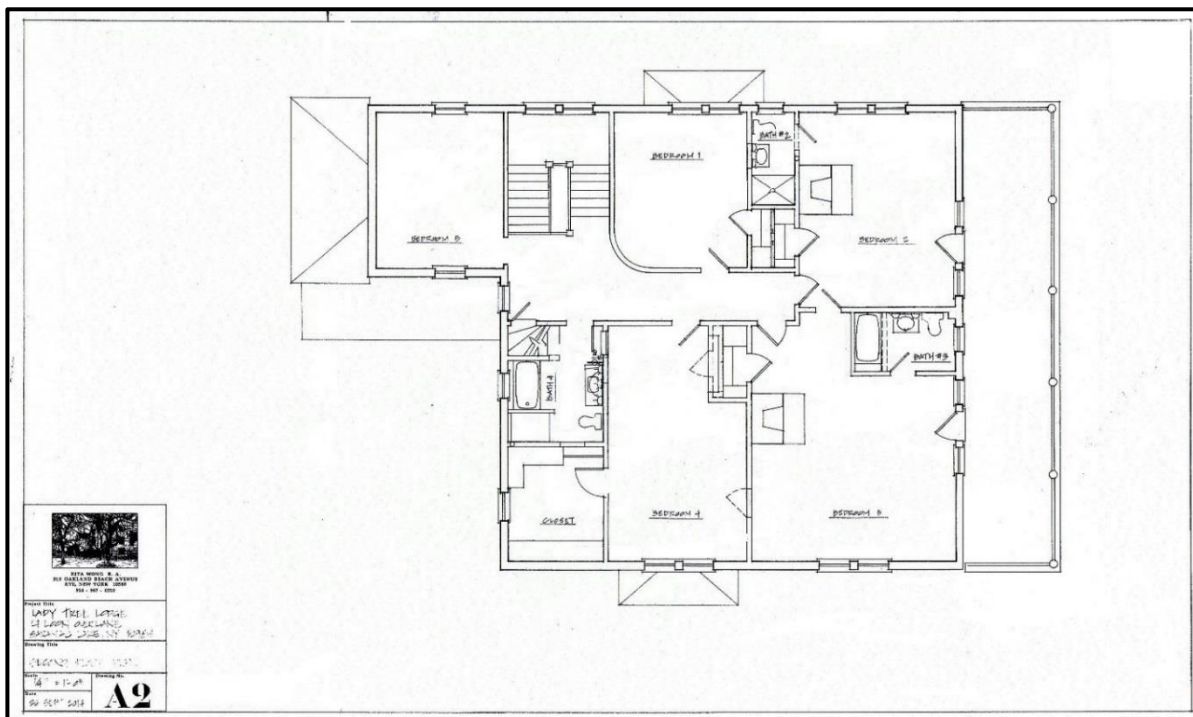
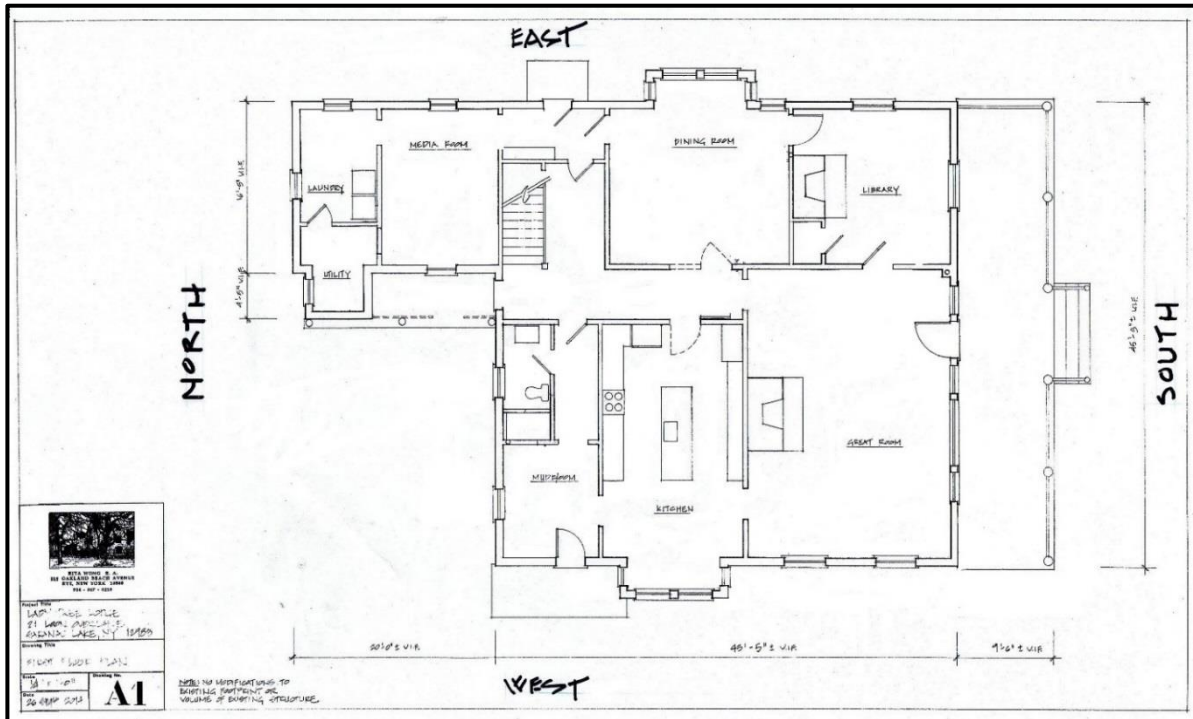
Unlike the thoroughly rustic exterior, the interior and floorplan of Lady Tree Lodge are very similar to those of a late-nineteenth century four-square residence. The rooms are large and occupy the four corners of the house. There is a two-story stairhall with an elegant stair at the rear of the house and a central passageway on both floors. A private service corridor leads from the service wing/rear addition to the dining room. The ceilings are 10 feet high. The library fireplace is smooth brick. The walls have chair railings and picture moldings. Floors are clear varnished spruce. As mentioned, almost all the windows have a decorative series of diamonds, squares, and triangles framing a central pane in the top sash over a single undivided pane in the bottom sash.

These features resemble those in many suburban residences of the period, but with a rustic touch. All rooms, on both the first and second floors, are paneled with narrow spruce beadboard on both the walls and the ceilings. The living room fireplace is stone with a three-quarter round opening and an unpainted wooden mantel resting on massive brackets. But the beadboard is laid entirely in the vertical without the contrasting horizontal and diagonal patterns found in many contemporary Adirondack camps. And the brackets of the fireplace have a

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classically-inspired ogee profile.

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The following floorplan shows the circulation pattern of the house which, unlike most Adirondack camps, contains all functions under a single roof.



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Since Lady Tree Lodge was constructed, there have been some changes. Additional bathrooms were inserted into the house (along with two additional windows); the building was winterized with a half-basement to hold utilities; the current kitchen was repurposed from a room used by the previous owners as a bedroom (once, perhaps, a second parlor); the historic kitchen in the service wing/rear addition has become a media room; and the corridors on the first floor have been opened up, with a wider door into the dining room and a door into the stair hall from the service corridor.

The bedroom over the service wing/rear addition may also have been reconfigured. Although Governor Hughes is known to have brought a maid, nurse, private secretary, and messenger with him to the house, there appear to be no servants' quarters in the house. The nurse may have slept in one of the back bedrooms with the youngest child, but the rest of his retinue was probably put up at the inn.



Figure 8. Living room, first floor front (southwest).



Figure 9. Library, first floor front (southeast).



Figure 10. Stair hall, with new door into service corridor, first floor rear (northeast)



Figure 11. Master bedroom (one of two), second floor (southeast).

The second floor holds five bedrooms, entered from a central corridor that runs north from the stair to the front of the building. The bedrooms vary in size. The two master bedrooms at the front of the building each have a

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brick fireplace with an original mantel, Dutch door to access the second-floor covered porch, and a private bath. The back bedroom on the east side of the house has a curved wall (where the stair-hall opens into the corridor) and a large double window. The back bedroom on the west side of the house has only a single window and a large storage closet used for linens; this feature suggests it may have been used for live-in servants or as the children's nursery. The fifth bedroom is on the second floor of the service wing/rear addition and opens onto the stair hall.

The attic is accessed from a short circular staircase in the northwest corner of the second-floor stair hall. The roof has been framed without a ridgeboard, and the rafters have internal braces, presumably for the snow load.

Additional Buildings

Boathouse: The boathouse exterior is slightly different from that of the main house, consisting solely of peeled horizontal split logs without the upper shingle trim. Boats are taken into the lake by way of sliding barn doors on the south façade that open onto a covered porch. The interior is unfinished.

The current owners have added a decorative screen to the front gable façade that is derivative of the one on the main house. The building was originally roofed with cedar shakes but is now covered with dark green asphalt shingles.

There are references in historic newspapers to the construction of boathouses in front of the cottages at the beginning of the twentieth century. The boathouse was probably added when the Belos had the cottage constructed, or within fifteen years when the bark trim was replaced on the main house. Its siding is the same (tightly-mitered peeled logs) as the house, and there are similar bark-on log rafters under the projecting roof.

Sheds: The two 12' x 22' sheds behind the house were added later, perhaps as early as the 1930s, when Lady Tree Lodge was individually purchased. They are detached, stained brown, and sit on concrete blocks. Each is accessed through a wide, side-hinged double door. The interiors are unfinished and fitted with shelves to be used as workshops for general camp maintenance.

Pump House: A very small structure sits behind the service wing/rear addition and the sheds, rising about four feet above grade and consisting of a five-by-five foot pitched roof with a small hatch sitting on concrete blocks. Inside is the pump that supplies water to a pressurized storage tank in the house basement. It appears to be contemporary with the sheds.

Restoration

The current owners completely restored the house in 2016-2017, starting with emergency stabilization and repairing damaged areas, adding the basement, upgrading all utilities, and carefully refinishing windows, doors, beadboard woodwork, and flooring.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

SOCIAL HISTORY

RECREATION

ARCHITECTURE

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Period of Significance

1896 – 1962

Architect/Builder

N/A

Significant Dates

1908, 1909

Period of Significance (justification): The period of significance encompasses the construction of the camp in 1896 and extends to 1962 when the breakup of the Saranac Inn severed the remaining relationship between Lady Tree Lodge and the inn.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary): N/A

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

Lady Tree Lodge, at Saranac Inn on the Upper Saranac Lake (Franklin County), is locally significant under **Criterion A: Social History** and **Recreation** and under **Criterion C: Architecture**. The building was built in 1896 and is historically associated with the Saranac Inn, one of the premier hotels of the early twentieth century, but it also served as the summer home of two prominent individuals: Texas newspaperman Colonel Alfred H. Belo (1839-1901) and New York Governor Charles Evans Hughes (1862-1948). Colonel Belo set journalistic standards for approach and accuracy that were widely accepted into the mainstream press in the early twentieth century. Governor Hughes resigned three months before the end of his term as governor to join the Supreme Court (1910-1916), resigned as Assistant Justice to run for the Presidency against President Woodrow Wilson in 1916, became U.S. Secretary of State (1921-1925) for President Harding, returned to private practice for five years (with intervals on the Permanent Court of Arbitration and as Judge of the Permanent Court of International Justice), and was appointed by President Hoover as the 11th Chief Justice of the Supreme Court (1930-1941). Eventually, Lady Tree Lodge was bought by Frederick E. Altemus, a later manager of the Saranac Inn, and has remained in private hands to the present as an important recreational property. The architecture of Lady Tree Lodge (originally known as either the Lone Star or Belo Cottage) is a rich blend of Adirondack elements mixed with contemporary residential style. Its four-square floor plan, with attached service wing at the rear, reflects its first owners' expectations for domestic comfort, but its exterior styling clearly reflects the influence of William West Durant's 1877 Swiss chalet at Camp Pine Knot. Its rustic log screen, in the front gable of the building, is highly decorative and may link the building with William L. Coulter, Saranac Lake architect and designer of other buildings on the National Register (Moss Ledge, 1898; Knollwood, 1899-1900; Eagle Island, 1902; Prospect Point, 1902; and others). Overall, its history and design stamp it as an unusual type of Gilded Age recreational property associated with one of the premier destinations in the Adirondacks – the Upper Saranac Lake and Saranac Inn.

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CRITERION A: SOCIAL HISTORY and RECREATION

Since it was constructed in 1896, Lady Tree Lodge has had at least four names. It was built as the Lone Star Cottage; known simultaneously as the Belo Cottage; popularized as the Rustic Cabin in 1908 when occupied by Governor Charles Evans Hughes; and renamed Lady Tree Lodge by 1912. Often earlier names persisted. However, since the building has been known as Lady Tree Lodge for more than a century, this is its primary name for the following discussion.

Context

In 1808, John Porter and others in the western part of Clinton County petitioned the state legislature and asked for the creation of a new county, tentatively to be called Norfolk. They cited their distance from Plattsburg, the Clinton County seat, as a detriment to civic involvement and proposed Malone as the site of the new county seat as it was “very nearly central.” A bit more than a month later, Franklin County was created, composed of parts of two of the original land grants in New York State – the Old Military Tract and Macomb’s Purchase.²

The new county remained small and isolated. In 1810, the population was only 2,617 people and, in 1813, there were only four post offices. But by 1820, the population had almost doubled to 4,439 and, in 1860, it was 30,837 – an almost twelve-fold increase in fifty years. Some agriculture took hold, but most of the economy was based on potash production and lumbering. A few hotels opened for sport before the Civil War, but the Adirondacks had yet to become a tourist destination.

The area around Upper Saranac Lake was originally part of the town of Brandon, formed in 1828. This township was particularly isolated:

*The character of this locality is such that opportunity for money-making in a large way has never been present, except perhaps through extensive lumbering operations, which required larger capital than any early resident possessed.*³

However, the southern part of Brandon contained numerous lakes. After the Rev. William Henry Harrison Murray published *Adventures in the Wilderness* in 1869, tourism exploded. Murray identified the Saranac River as the best route into the Adirondacks, noting that one could leave Boston by train on Monday at 8 am, spend the night on a steamer crossing Lake Champlain, ride sixty-two miles in a coach over a plank road, and meet one’s guide on the shore of Lower Saranac Lake by 5 pm the following day. (An alternative route on the Ogdensburg & Plattsburgh Railroad brought one within thirty miles of the lake.)⁴ “Murray’s Fools” – the tourists who read his books – followed him into the wilds. Many found the region more primitive than expected, but soon tourist facilities were being built that fully met the expectations of city vacationers.

Appolus A. Smith – Paul Smith – opened a small hotel at St. Regis Lake in 1861. He understood his clientele and, by 1874, Seneca Ray Stoddard noted that he was “patronized extensively by a wealthy class of visitors, who prefer to rough it in a voluptuous sort of way.”⁵ One of Paul Smith’s early guests was Daniel S. Hough. In

² Franklin B. Hough, *A History of St. Lawrence and Franklin Counties, New York* (Albany, NY: Little & Co., 1853), 216-219.

³ Frederick J. Seaver, *Historical Sketches of Franklin County and its Several Towns* (Albany, NY: J. B. Lyon Co., 1918), 201.

⁴ William Henry Harrison Murray, *Adventures in the Wilderness* (Boston: Fields, Osgood, & Co., 1869), 41-42.

⁵ S.R. Stoddard, *The Adirondacks Illustrated* [Reprint of 1874 edition] (Bedford, MA: Applewood Books, [nd]), 80.

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1864, he decided to open his own hotel and bought land at the northern end of Upper Saranac Lake to build the Prospect House.

Hough, who knew little or nothing about the management of a hotel – even one that accommodated only fifteen people – soon found that it takes more than mere desire to be successful. Even though he brought silver, costly cut glass, expensive china and linen from his New York home and furnished the place lavishly, he and his wife still couldn't make a go of it. Moreover, since at that time it was off the stagecoach routes, he hardly had a sporting chance...⁶

Hough's operation failed, but his site was well-chosen and better management soon brought enduring success. His Prospect House grew into the Saranac Inn and its cottages – one of which is Lady Tree Lodge.

Upper Saranac Association

After Hough, the Prospect House was owned by Christopher F. Norton of Plattsburgh and operated by E. R. Derby of Bloomingdale. Derby seems to have acquired it in a tax sale after Norton went bankrupt, adding a wing and a log cabin to accommodate fifty guests.⁷ He died suddenly in 1884, and his wife sold the operation in 1886 to the "Upper Saranac Association" – a group of Albany and New York City investors led by Dr. Samuel Ward of Albany who sought to maintain and expand the hotel.

The Saranac area was becoming more attractive to tourists for two reasons. First, the village of Saranac Lake was gaining a reputation as a health resort as a result of Dr. Edward Livingston Trudeau's work with tuberculosis. His Adirondack Cottage Sanitarium was founded in 1884 to promote "The Cure" – extended bed rest in the open air – and Trudeau had developed the first laboratory in the United States dedicated to study of the disease.⁸ Second, the Saranac Lake area welcomed Jews – unlike Lake Placid, where Jews were excluded from Melvil Dewey's Lake Placid Club and other local establishments.⁹ When debt forced investor William West Durant to sell his land around the Upper Saranac Lake in 1890s, many Jewish millionaires purchased lots and built Adirondack camps, among them Mitchell Levy's "Pine Brook Camp" on Gilpin Bay, Adolph Lewisohn's "Prospect Point," Otto Kahn's "Bull Point," Jules Bache's "Wenonah Lodge," and Isaac Seligman's "Fish Rock." These men and their families also frequented the Prospect House, and their friends would stay there when visiting the area.

Daniel W. Riddle became manager for the association and oversaw the inn's operations for more than twenty years. He had arrived in the village of Saranac Lake in 1879 as a patient of Dr. Trudeau. In May, 1880, a tent was pitched for him on the shore of the back bay of the Saranac Inn, where "he slept under canvas during the summer, as a part of the cure." He slowly recovered, and Dr. Trudeau accepted his help as first treasurer of the sanitarium – "As he was a good business man and had had much experience in building, his help proved to be most practical and acceptable." By 1886, when his brother became one of the investors in the Upper Saranac Association, Riddle was well enough to take on the inn.¹⁰ However, to the end of his life, he "continued to

⁶ Maitland C. De Sormo, *Summers on the Saranacs* [Reprint of 1980 edition] (Utica, NY: North Country Books, 2002), 69.

⁷ Bryant F. Tolles, Jr., *Resort Hotels of the Adirondacks* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 2003), 96. Tolles suggests that the wing was actually added by Hough, but other sources suggest Derby expanded the original building.

⁸ Summer and winter, patients spent much of their time outside or on covered porches breathing fresh, balsam-scented air.

⁹ Dewey was the director of the New York State Library, inventor of the Dewey Decimal system, and advocate for simplified spelling – hence, Melvil rather than Melville as his first name.

¹⁰ Mary Hotaling, *A Rare Romance in Medicine: The Life and Legacy of Edward Livingston Trudeau* (Utica, NY: North Country Books, 2016), *passim*.

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make Saranac Lake his winter home, slept under canvas during the summer, as a part of the cure, and was carried from camp to Saranac Lake, or visa versa [sic], on a bed."¹¹

A stereotype by Seneca Ray Stoddard shows the Prospect House in the early or mid-1880s before it was rebranded as the Saranac Inn.



Figure 12. Log Cottage and Prospect House, 1881 or mid-1880s. (Courtesy of the Adirondack Museum)

In August 1886, Grover and Frances Clara Folsom Cleveland took a second honeymoon in the log cottage (on the left in Figure 12) adjoining the Saranac Inn; they returned to the area on their first anniversary and several other times during and after his presidencies. The ensuing publicity brought more summer people to the Saranac Lake system, both to visit and to build. In 1888, the southern half of the town of Brandon broke off to form the town of Santa Clara, with a half township added in 1896. This “dismemberment of Brandon” was opposed by northern town supervisors because, by then, two-thirds of the entire town’s tax income came from non-residents owning recreational properties “along the Saranacs.”¹² In 1892, William Seward Webb’s Mohawk and Malone Railroad reached Saranac Inn.¹³ Visitors could now reach the inn within a day – many in their private railroad cars – and visitation continued to grow.

¹¹ “Well Known Hotelman Dead,” *Chateaugay Record and Franklin County Democrat* (June 13, 1913), 7; [Obituary of Daniel W. Riddle], *Adirondack Daily Gazette* (1913). Quote from obituary cited in Historic Saranac Lake at the Saranac Laboratory Museum, “Daniel W. Riddle,” *Historic Saranac Lake LocalWiki*.

¹² Seaver, 204.

¹³ Duncan H. Cameron, “Adirondack Railways: Historic Engine of Change,” *Adirondack Journal of Environmental Studies* 19 (2013). Available at: <http://www.ajes.org/volume-19-2013/adirondack-railways-historic-engine-of-change.php>

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Alfred Horatio Belo (1839-1901)

President Cleveland was a close friend of Alfred Horatio Belo, a Texas newspaperman and former Confederate army colonel. During the Civil War, Belo raised a company of riflemen for the Fifty-Fifth North Carolina regiment and served in every major engagement from Manassas to Appomattox. He was promoted to major for his conduct at Bull Run. In 1862 he endeared himself to his regiment by fighting a duel against an officer who had cast aspersions on the regiment's courage. After this affair of honor, Belo was elected lieutenant colonel and later colonel of his regiment.



Figure 13. Alfred H. Belo (New York Public Library)

Immediately after the war, Belo rode horseback to Texas and, within two months, began to work in the newspaper business, buying an interest in the *Galveston Daily News* and later founding the *Dallas Morning News*.¹⁴ His papers soon set a standard of excellence for others to emulate. Adolph Ochs, owner of the *New York Times*, said, "I received my ideas and ideals for a clean, honest, high-class newspaper from the late Col. A. H. Belo... In New York I put into effect those ideas; therefore the record of the *New York Times*."¹⁵ Belo became a close friend and confidant of President Cleveland, who called him, "... a chivalrous, high-minded man, and an exceptionally able, fearless, and conscientious journalist..."¹⁶

Belo seems to have visited the Saranac Inn at least once before September 1886, when he came for the season and "had the same quartette for hunting and fishing and whist" – the president, Dr. Ward (the major Upper Saranac Association investor), and a Mr. Brown.¹⁷ This was during the Clevelands' first honeymoon visit.¹⁸ While there, Cleveland offered Belo the Ambassadorship to Austria, but Belo respectfully declined, saying he had too much to do in managing his newspaper empire.¹⁹

Belo summered again at the inn in 1887 and 1888 and took a cottage along the lake in 1889, "which gave us an opportunity to pass an ideal season, as we had all the hunting and fishing we wanted to furnish our table, and our excursions into the backwoods and our enjoyment of the primeval forest were equally delightful."²⁰

¹⁴ The A. H. Belo Corporation, successor to the A. H. Belo & Co. (1881), continues to publish the *Dallas Morning News* and *Denton Record-Chronicle*.

¹⁵ Judith Garrett Segura, *Belo: From Newspapers to New Media* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008), 53.

¹⁶ "Mr. Cleveland's Sorrow," *New York Times* (April 20, 1901), 9.

¹⁷ Charles Peabody, *Memoirs of Alfred Horatio Belo* (Boston: Alfred Mudge & Son, 1904), 74.

¹⁸ "Out of the Wilds: The President Shoots a Deer," *Watertown Reunion* (September 8, 1886), 7. A later Belo visit is documented in "Mr. Cleveland's Summer Outing," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* (September 8, 1889), 8.

¹⁹ *Fort Worth Daily Gazette*, (September 24, 1886), 2 in *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress; Peabody, *Memoirs*, 74-75.

²⁰ Peabody, *Memoirs*, 74-75.

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Seven years later, Belo negotiated the construction of Lone Star Cottage, now Lady Tree Lodge, on the grounds of the inn. Manager Daniel L. Riddle appears to have been involved in supervising the project – his name was found on the back of chair rails milled for the building. Completion was noted in the Sunday, July 5, 1896, *New York World*: “Col. and Mrs. A. H. Belo, of Texas, arrived recently [at the Saranac Inn] and are occupying the new Cottage Lone Star that has been built for them here.”²¹ (The article noted that several new cottages had been built at the inn that spring.)

The Belos seem to have returned yearly. In July 1897, the *Troy Times* said that the family was visiting with the Lombardis of Houston and, in August 1898, the *Franklin Gazette* noted that the Belos were at their cottage with their son and several friends. “Colonel Alfred H. Belo, editor of the Galveston and Dallas News, of Galveston, Texas, Mrs. Belo, Alfred H. Belo, Jr., and several friends are at Col. Belo’s new cottage, The Lone Star.”²²

The same article noted the conservation work of the Upper Saranac Association, owners of the Saranac Inn. The association was diligent in maintaining the recreational cachet of the area and had recently transferred a large parcel to the New York Forest Preserve “under Gov. Black’s forestry law.”

*The association has not only zealously protected the forests and the game, but it has abundantly stocked the waters every year from the State hatchery, which is situated on an inlet of the Upper Saranac Lake, and about one mile from it, so that the back ponds afford splendid sport for fly fishermen. It has been the object of the association to preserve the forests in such condition as to have a protected watershed, to prevent forest fires and to assist in enforcing the fish and game laws so as to preserve the number of fish and deer. This territory is now open to the public for hunting and fishing purposes, and the crowds of early fishermen which appeared at the Inn this year indicate that this fact is being appreciated by the sporting fraternity.*²³

Colonel Belo continued to visit the Adirondacks each year until his death at age 62 on April 19, 1901, in Kenilworth, North Carolina. His obituary noted that, “He has been an invalid for several years and has a summer home in the Adirondacks, where he spent every summer, and by careful living had prolonged his life.”²⁴ After his death, his wife continued to spend her summers at the Saranac Inn until she, too, died in 1912. However, she (or her heir) apparently sold Lone Star Cottage back to the inn within the decade.²⁵

Governor Charles Evans Hughes (1862-1948)

By the turn of the twentieth century, the Saranac Inn and its cottages figured prominently in the society pages of New York City newspapers, which were often reprinted in other papers throughout the state. Among those noted as coming to the Saranac Inn was New York State Governor Charles Evans Hughes. Lone Star Cottage, now referred to as the Rustic Cabin, was let to Governor Charles Evans Hughes for the summers of 1908 and 1909. Hughes was then at the beginning of his political career. Near the end of his term as governor (1907-1910), he resigned to serve as Associate Justice of the Supreme Court (1910-1916); resigned from the court to

²¹ “Many Adirondack Camps Occupied,” *New York World* (July 5, 1896), [page illegible].

²² “Golf in the Adirondacks – On the Upper Saranac,” *Troy Daily Times* (July 12, 1897), [page illegible]; “News from the Summer Resorts in the Adirondack Mountains,” *Franklin Gazette* (August 12, 1898), 1.

²³ “News from the Summer Resorts.”

²⁴ “A. H. Belo Dead,” *Arlington Journal* (April 25, 1901); www.findagrave.com

²⁵ Five years after Colonel Belo’s death, his son, Alfred Horatio Belo Jr., also died. Nonetheless, the son’s widow seems to have continued to visit Saranac Inn after her father-in-law, husband, and mother-in-law all died. The Adirondack Experience holds a pair of blueprints for a “Proposed Camp for Mrs. Alfred H. Belo,” drawn by Saranac Lake architect William Distin sometime after 1912. In addition, the September 19, 1941 *Peekskill Evening Star* notes a visit by her daughter almost thirty years after that.

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run unsuccessfully for president against Woodrow Wilson in 1916; became Harding's secretary of state (1921-1925); returned to private practice (with intervals on the Permanent Court of Arbitration and as Judge of the Permanent Court of International Justice); and was appointed by President Hoover as the 11th chief justice of the Supreme Court (1930-1941).

Hughes was generally progressive, having made his reputation by fighting corruption in public utilities and the insurance industry before being elected governor. He believed in the power of government to regulate the excesses of capitalism, but he was also a Republican and supported some conservative decisions. In his private life, he was intellectual and flexible and is remembered for preserving the Supreme Court during the New Deal and for negotiating judgments that addressed some of the worst excesses of the Depression.

A recent reassessment of Hughes's career by Edward Rhodes in 2001 concludes:

*Always a Progressive in outlook, Hughes believed in the organic growth and evolution of politics and political relationships; any effort to freeze conditions would inevitably become a reactionary defense of the rights of the privileged against what might, in some cases, be the reasonable and legitimate demands of the dispossessed and the interests of the community as a whole.*²⁶

In 1907, Hughes spent two weeks at the Saranac Inn with his son on a semi-official trip; he inspected state tree planting operations and visited the Ray Brook tuberculosis sanitarium.²⁷ The following year, he came to the inn with his wife Antoinette, children, and two staffers. The *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* announced his arrival:

*Governor Hughes will arrive on Monday with the members of his family to spend the summer at Saranac Inn. It is expected he will occupy the Belo Cabin, a rustic camp, situated near the waters of the Upper Saranac Lake. It enjoys a certain degree of seclusion and privacy, as it is surrounded by the woodland and is at the end of the walk or drive.*²⁸

The *New York Daily Tribune* gave more details of his party, stating:

*With the arrival here tonight of Governor Hughes this place, on the shores of the Upper Saranac Lake, in the heart of the Adirondack Mountains, becomes the summer capital of New York State. With the Governor, who came up in his private car on the train leaving Albany at 11:10 o'clock this morning and arriving here at 6:10 o'clock tonight, were Mrs. Hughes, Charles E. Hughes, jr., [sic] the Misses Helen and Catherine Hughes, baby Elizabeth and nurse, Mrs. Hughes's maid, M. B. Silverstock, who will act as secretary and stenographer to the Governor, and M. B. Smith, his private messenger.... In addition to the members of his household named, the Governor will have a guide, for he plans to do much tramping and fishing during his stay here.*²⁹

²⁶ Edward Rhodes, "Charles Evans Hughes Reconsidered, or: Liberal Isolationism in the New Millennium," in Anthony Lake and David A. Ochmanek, Ed., *The Real and the Ideal: Essays on International Relations in Honor of Richard H. Ullman* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001), 159.

²⁷ "Overboard in the Upper Saranacs," *New York Herald* (August 11, 1907), Section 3, 8.

²⁸ "Governor Hughes' Vacation," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* (June 21, 1908), 31.

²⁹ "Hughes in Adirondacks," *New York Daily Tribune* (June 30, 1908), [page illegible]. Interestingly, the article states that Hughes would be staying in a cabin "built of logs with the bark on" - which does not currently describe Lady Tree Lodge.

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The *Tribune* noted that the family would be staying for three months and “taking their meals at the inn.” A postcard and subsequent article with photos definitively links Hughes to the building now known at Lady Tree Lodge.



Figure 14. “The Rustic Cottage Occupied by Gov. Hughes, Saranac Inn, Upper Saranac Lake, Adirondacks” [Postcard].



Figure 15. “A Corner of the Living Room in Rustic Cabin, the Summer Home of Governor Hughes and Family at Saranac Inn,” *New York Daily Tribune* (July 26, 1908), 2.

Two counter narratives appeared in the papers. The first was that the governor was in the Adirondacks for a vacation – and not at work.

Governor Hughes, who is spending the summer with his family here, says he is “having the time of his life.” His time is for the most part occupied with enjoyable little side trips of a day or more to nearby points of interest, or to places where the fish bite best, along the numerous little lakes and ponds in the immediate vicinity of the Upper Saranac. The Governor is not giving a thought to politics or politicians. M. B. Marshall, the manager of the inn, has been vigilant in side tracking more than one politician who has come up from Albany counting upon finding the Executive in convinceable [sic] mood.

Governor Hughes mingles freely with the guests, all of whom, regardless of political faith, have voted him a jolly good fellow, but he has demonstrated on more than one occasion his determination not to talk politics or anything pertaining to that subject.³⁰

The second narrative reassured the public that Hughes was running the state from Lady Tree Lodge:

So much has been printed of the Governor’s “vacation” in the Adirondacks that a popular idea has gained ground that he is up here purely for pleasure, and that he is doing absolutely no work. Nothing could be further from the truth. So far he has taken but a few short fishing trips. Indeed, those familiar with the executive say that he is doing as much if not more work here in the quiet of the Adirondacks than he does in Albany. He is up each morning, has his breakfast eaten and is at work by 10 o’clock. As his workroom when he came here the Governor chose a small anteroom off the main living room of the pretty rustic cabin he is occupying. Mr. Fuller, his secretary, and the stenographer had for their office the room just back of

³⁰ “Saranac Inn,” *New York Daily Tribune* (July 12, 1908), 2.

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this, which was formerly used as a dining room. The Governor and his family have no use for a dining room, as all of their meals are eaten at Saranac Inn, which is but a short walk from the cabin. All of the forenoon and practically all of the afternoon are given up by the Governor to hard work on the state's business, and sometimes he even works in the evening. About 5 o'clock each fair afternoon, however, he and Mrs. Hughes go for a short boat ride.³¹

Hughes corresponded with the New York State Library while he was at the Saranac Inn, thanking George E. Champlin for sending him "an admirable selection" of books.³² On August 8, he took a quick trip on the Chateaugay train to lay the cornerstone of the new YMCA building in Plattsburgh.³³ And, at least some individuals and groups followed Hughes into Franklin County. Three weeks after he arrived, the *New York Daily Tribune* noted that "the Senate Forest, Fish and Game Committee began its investigation into the condition of the state forests" by consulting him at the inn.³⁴

A photograph by Waldon Fawcett shows the Hughes family on the first-floor porch of the cottage.

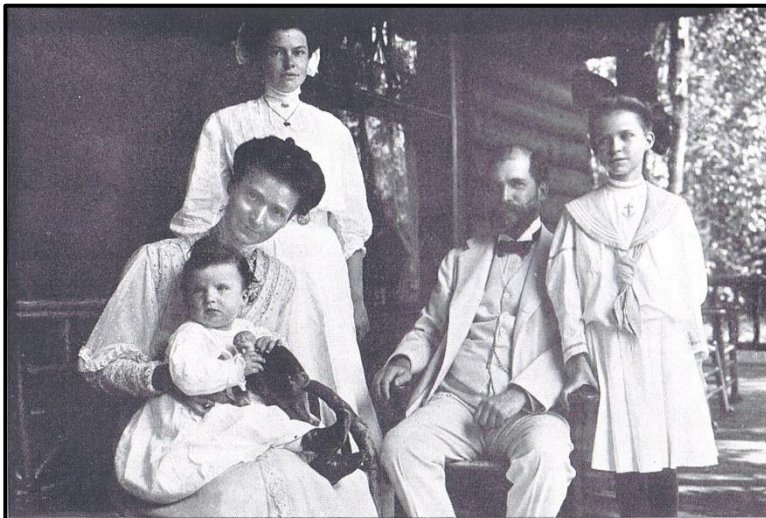


Figure 16. Governor and Mrs. Hughes and their daughters, photography by Waldon Fawcell, 1908.

The following year, the Hughes family spent another summer at the Rustic Cabin, and Antoinette Hughes interested herself in the annual fair of Dr. Trudeau's Cottage Sanitarium which was held at the inn.³⁵ Governor Fort of New Jersey visited Saranac Inn – and Governor Hughes – the same summer.³⁶

Governor Hughes did not return to the Saranac Inn again. In the summer of 1910, the cottage was let to Mr. Peter Ballantine Freylinghuysen and his family. In October Hughes resigned before the end of his term and relocated to Washington, D.C., accepting President Taft's offer to appoint him to the Supreme Court. He did come back to the Adirondacks in succeeding years but leased Camp Calumet on Moose Island in Lake Placid.³⁷

Saranac Inn

Manager M. D. Marshall had taken over active management of the Saranac Inn from Daniel W. Riddle by the time that the Hughes family summered in the Rustic Cabin. Around 1911, the cottage seems to have been

³¹ *New York Daily Tribune* (August 9, 1908), 5.

³² Charles Evans Hughes, at Saranac Inn, N. Y., to George E. Champlin, New York State Library, Albany, N. Y., July 9, 1908 [Letter], New York State Archives.

³³ "Governor Hughes' Visit," *Plattsburgh Republican* (August 8, 1908), 1.

³⁴ "The News This Morning," *New York Daily Tribune* (July 22, 1908), 6.

³⁵ "Mrs. Hughes Will Help," *Columbia Republican* (August 17, 1909), 14.

³⁶ "Two State Governors at Saranac Inn," *New York Herald* (September 5, 1909), Section 3, 9.

³⁷ "Lake Placid Summer Colony Looks for Buried Treasure," *New York Herald* (June 22, 1913), Section 3, 8.

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renamed Lady Tree Lodge. The two references to “Mrs. Belo” in the following map apparently refer to the widows of Col. Belo and his son, the son’s widow eventually owning the Wigwam cottage. (The use of both names suggests that the map dates from before 1912.)

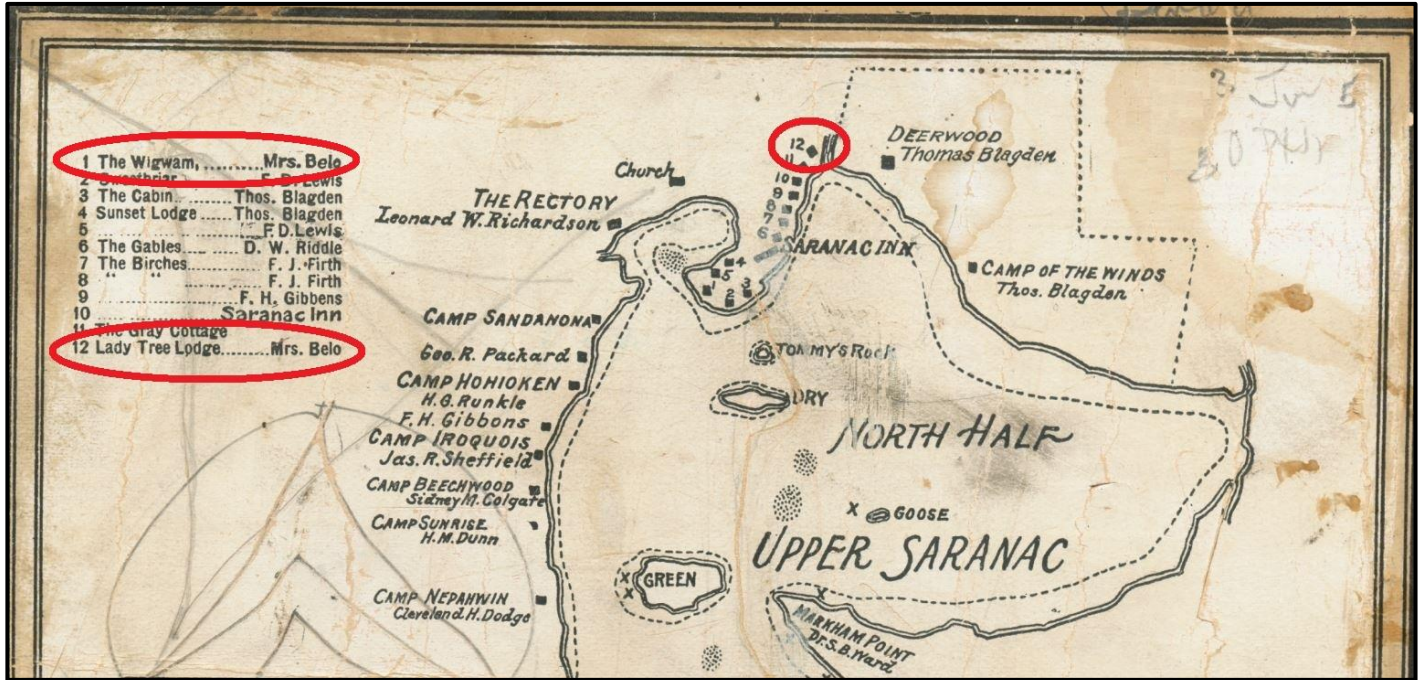


Figure 17. Map of Upper Saranac Lake (Washington, DC: Andrew B. Graham Co., [1910-1912]).

Another change of ownership in the Saranac Inn consolidated the name change. Around 1916, Harrington Mills became manager, and in 1920 he bought the controlling share of the Upper Saranac Association from Dr. Ward. Mills had built the Harrington Hotel in Washington, D. C. in 1915 and was managing the Whiteface Inn at Lake Placid when he was recruited by the association. Saranac historian Maitland De Sormo describes Mills as, “by far the best-known of [the Saranac Inn’s] proprietors and without a question among the most successful ... hotel owners in Adirondack history.”



In 1912, the inn was still fairly small, accommodating only about 250 people at a time. After Mills became manager, he doubled its size, rebuilding the main building and adding two stories, elevators, and private baths. The original Prospect House remained at the center of the structure but was entirely overshadowed.

Figure 18. “New Saranac Inn,” following the 1916 expansion. Lady Tree Lodge is barely visible in the vegetation at right. (Courtesy of the Adirondack Museum)

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A decade later, Mills expanded the inn again with new cottages and luxurious tent platforms to accommodate up to a thousand visitors. Saranac Lake architect William G. Distin was involved in much of this redesign, replacing the old Prospect House with a Colonial Revival entrance pavilion and five-story wing.³⁸

Figure 19. Postcard of the Saranac Inn after the 1926 expansion, c. 1940. Lady Tree Inn is not visible.



Lady Tree Lodge became just one of the many cottages available to guests until it was sold in the 1930s to Frederick E. Altemus, one of Mills's sons-in-law, for his personal use. Since that date, it has remained independent of the Saranac Inn.

Harrington Mills died in 1935 and another son-in-law, Lawrence A. Slaughter, managed the Saranac Inn for what was now known as the Upper Saranac Company until August 1946. At that time, Altemus helped negotiate a deal with A. S. Kirkeby to acquire the property. The Kirkeby Hotels, a nationally known chain that owned the Sherry-Netherland and Warwick Hotels in New York City, the Beverly Wilshire in Beverly Hills, and the Blackstone in Chicago, promised to maintain the policies of Harrington Mills.³⁹ Altemus was appointed manager of the inn.

After 1946⁴⁰

At the time of its sale, the Saranac Inn was struggling – as were all the remaining great residential hotels of the Adirondacks. In the 1920s, automobile tourism had begun to change the pattern of elite summer vacations in the United States. Rather than go by train to a resort and staying in one place for four to six weeks, the upper and upper-middle classes were taking road trips, in which the travel was an important part of the pleasure. The Depression reduced everyone's ability to take extended vacations, and World War II brought an almost total hiatus in luxury travel. In the 1950s, Kirkeby Hotels was able to briefly improve business at the Saranac Inn by bringing in convention business, but the property was resold in 1957 to the Sharpe Hotel chain.

Additional investment did not succeed in improving business, and the inn was soon sold again to the Fields Hotel Corporation. Finally, in 1962, it was purchased by auctioneers Charles and David Vosburgh for \$400,000. They broke up the property and sold the hotel, cottages, golf course, and vacant land to different buyers. The

³⁸ Tolles, 99-101.

³⁹ "Sale of Saranac Inn to Kirkeby Group Announced," *Lake Placid News* (August 16, 1946), 1.

⁴⁰ De Sormo, 78-88, *passim*.

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owner of the hotel stripped the hotel building and allowed it to deteriorate. On June 17, 1978, what was left of the Saranac Inn was destroyed by fire. The sparks also burned one of the cottages, but Lady Tree Lodge survived.

CRITERION C: ARCHITECTURE

Among the types of Adirondack camps identified by Wesley Haynes in his 2001 National Historic Landmarks Theme Study, none exactly fits the situation of Lady Tree Lodge. It is neither a decentralized camp, clustered camp, nor solitary camp, and – although it was “provisioned by an adjacent hotel” – it does not have the “strong sense of privacy and isolation” that Haynes associates with lake community camps.⁴¹ On the other hand, if one considers the hotel context itself, Lady Tree Lodge does meet his other criteria. It shares a distinctive compound plan with the other cottages at Saranac Inn, is integrated with its site to maximize the view from its two-story porch, and is very rustic on the exterior – though less on the interior. In his review of Adirondack architecture, Craig Gilborn notes that the Blue Mountain House had a similar grouping of private camps that depended on the hotel.⁴²

William West Durant is credited with establishing the prototype for Adirondack camps with his development of Camp Pine Knot in 1877. He subsequently developed his ideas at Camps Uncas (1893, NR 1987), Sagamore (1895, NR 1976), and Kill Kare (1898). Significant elements of his artistic camp style were real or simulated log construction, native stone work, and decorative rustic work in twigs and branches. Durant’s Swiss chalet at Pine Knot was particularly notable; Haynes considers it crucial in defining Adirondack camp architecture:

The image of Pine Knot’s chalet was publicized in railroad travel guides. It came to be regarded as the centerpiece of the first “artistic camp” in the Adirondacks and served as the prototype for main lodges and other buildings in many Adirondack camps. Durant revisited the compact two-story building with a gabled front, broad overhanging roofs, a projecting second-story balcony, and horizontal bands of small-paned windows in his later camps... Each was imbued with a strong sense of rusticity using barked-log or simulated log construction trimmed with polework in his earlier camps... The chalet form adopted by Durant suited the harsh environmental conditions and romantic image of the Adirondacks’ mountainous northern climate. Architect William Coulter continued this tradition on Upper Saranac Lake, using the rustic log chalet form at Knollwood (1900), Pinebrook (c.1901), Moss Ledge (c.1902), Prospect Point (1903-04) and other camps...⁴³

Lady Tree Lodge and Durant’s Swiss chalet share the same gable front, rustic log screen, and double porch. In addition, like Camp Pine Knot, Lady Tree Lodge has windows with complex designs made up of small panes.

⁴¹ Wesley Haynes, *Adirondack Camps National Historic Landmarks Theme Study* [Context Study] (Albany, NY: New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, 2000), 36-37.

⁴² Craig Gilborn, *Adirondack Camps: Homes Away from Home* (Syracuse: Adirondack Museum, 2000), 74.

⁴³ Haynes, 24.

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CAMP PINE KNOT ON RAQUETTE LAKE
Built by W. W. Durant in 1898. The first artistic camp in the mountains

Figure 20. Camp Pine Knot in 1921. (Alfred Lee Donaldson, *A History of the Adirondacks*, Vol. 2, New York: Century Company, 1921, 96)

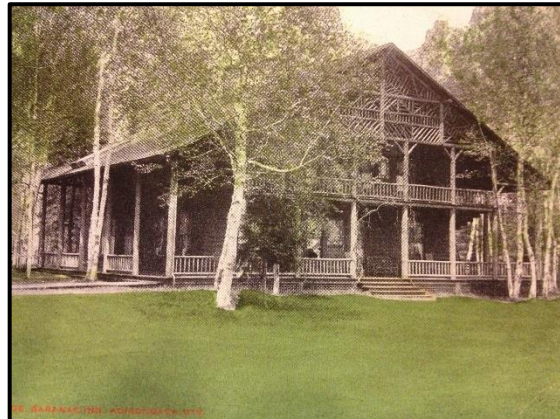


Figure 21. Belo Camp (Lady Tree Lodge), c. 1909. (Courtesy of owner)

Durant's porches wrap around three sides of the building; Lady Tree's porches once did. Photos from 1908 (see below) and 1909 (see above) show that the first floor-porch wrapped around the house at that time, and a map of the Saranac Inn after 1926 (See Figure 27 in Additional Information) continues to show porches on the front and side elevations.



Figure 22. Governor Hughes and family on east porch, 1909. Note wrap-around porch, bark-on logs, and mitered corners on the bay window.

In addition, the exterior of Lady Tree Lodge appears more rustic when first constructed. The June 30, 1908 newspaper article of Governor Hughes' visit to the Adirondacks stated that Hughes would be staying in a cabin "built of logs with the bark on," and photos of the Hughes family the following year show horizontal logs with a rough surface and vertical posts clearly covered with bark.⁴⁴

Sometime later, either the bark on the siding was removed or the siding replaced.⁴⁵ Removal of bark on Adirondack camps happened often – logs with bark were difficult to maintain due to insect damage. The Adirondack Rustic Style changed to smooth timbers early in the twentieth century.

⁴⁴ "Hughes in Adirondacks."

⁴⁵ It is possible that the building lost the name "Rustic Cabin" and became Lady Tree Lodge when the siding was altered. Gilborn, 153, notes that bark became less popular as a material as the State of New York developed the Adirondack Forest Preserve and a new conservation ethic emerged.

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Architect

No architect has yet been identified with the construction of the Belo Cottage in 1896, but there are a number of features in Lady Tree Lodge that later came to be associated with William Coulter, the first full-time architect in Saranac Lake and designer of several distinctive Adirondack camps on Upper Saranac Lake. The difficulty in making a secure attribution to Coulter is that he only arrived in Franklin County in the spring of 1896. In addition, although he continued working in Saranac Lake for his New York firm – Renwick, Aspinwall and Renwick – he initially came to be treated for tuberculosis by Dr. Trudeau and, presumably, was in poor health.

Coulter's first known camp in the area is Moss Ledge, built in 1898 on Gilpin Bay of Upper Saranac Lake (NR, 1983). The camp was designed for Miss Isabel Ballantine, daughter of the New Jersey beer baron John Holme Ballantine. Five years before she built Moss Ledge, she had vacationed at the Saranac Inn.⁴⁶ Though this was before the construction of the Belo Cottage, she clearly was aware of the inn and its cottages when she developed her own property. Subsequently, in 1910, her nephew, Peter Ballantine Frclinghuysen, actually rented Lady Tree Lodge.

The central structure at Moss Ledge is Redfield Lodge, described as follows in the National Register nomination:

This is a two-story, wood-framed, chalet style building with an exterior fabric of half-round spruce log siding on the first floor and cedar shingles on the second floor. The building is surrounded on three sides by a two-tiered rustic porch roofed by the eaves of the main gable roof and supported by projecting log brackets and bark-clad posts. The porches are ornamented with rustic porch railings and there is an impressive gable end screen of vertical and diagonal bark-clad spruce poles. Window sash is both sliding and in casement with multiple panes in squares and diamonds. Interior details included extensive use of beaded wainscoting for paneling in diagonals, vertical, horizontals, all in natural varnished tones. There are boxed beams, a fieldstone fireplace with bark-clad birch log mantel, and a brick fireplace and chimney breast. This building is a stylized copy of the chalet at Camp Pine Knot designed by William West Durant.⁴⁷

Redfield Lodge has many similarities to Lady Tree Lodge:

- Both homes are executed in simulated split-log construction on the first floor with a shingled upper story
- Both homes have large front gable screens with elaborate geometric designs
- Lady Tree has the same extended wall logs supporting the second-floor porch as Redfield Lodge
- Both homes have identical window framing, including the same corner blocks and sills
- Windows at Lady Tree feature a complex series of diamonds, squares and triangles similar to (but not identical with) the window patterns at Moss Ledge
- Both homes have similar second-floor porch overhangs with bark-on log beams and finished beadboard
- Both homes have Dutch doors
- Attic window locations are similar
- Gable end shingle detail is similar

⁴⁶ "Mountain Resorts," *New York Daily Tribune* (1893).

⁴⁷ Raymond W. Smith and Richard Youngkey, *Moss Ledge* [National Register Nomination] (Albany, NY: New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, 1986), Section 7:2-3.

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This similarities do not prove that Coulter built Lady Tree Lodge – he may have used the Saranac Inn property as a model for Moss Ledge – but they do suggest some relationship between the two buildings.

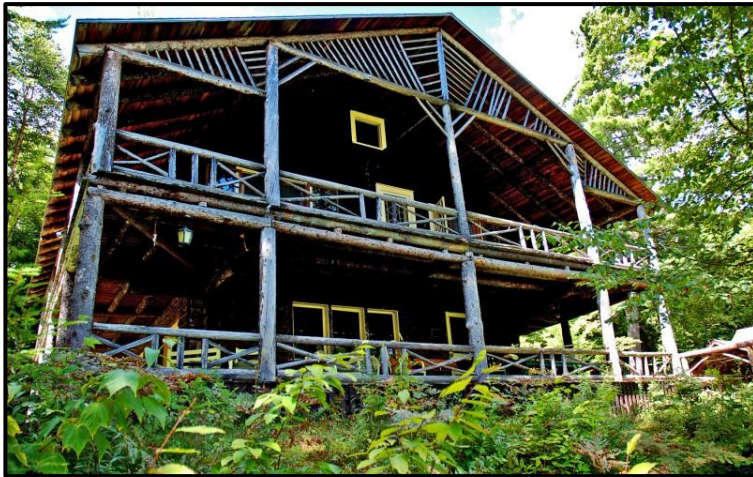


Figure 23. Moss Ledge – Redfield Lodge façade. Porch wraps around three sides (Merrill L. Thomas Inc.)



Figure 24. Lady Tree Lodge façade. (2016)



Figure 25. Moss Ledge – Redfield Lodge front gable screen. (Merrill L. Thomas, Inc.)



Figure 26. Lady Tree Lodge front gable screen. (2016)

William L. Coulter (1865-1907)

According to historian Mary Hotaling, Coulter was one of the premier Adirondack camp designers and “the first successful, resident, professional architect to practice in the central Adirondack region of New York State.”⁴⁸ In New York City, he had worked for Renwick, Aspinwall, and Renwick, which designed many important structures including St. Patrick’s Cathedral (New York City), St. Bartholomew’s Church (New York City), and the Smithsonian Institution (Washington, DC). His mentor, J. Lawrence Aspinwall, was both Renwick’s junior partner and Dr. Edward Livingston Trudeau’s cousin.

Aspinwall obtained several commissions in the village of Saranac Lake, which was beginning to expand as Trudeau’s sanitarium became better known; its population was 191 in 1880, 768 in 1890, and 2,594 in 1900.

⁴⁸ Mary Hotaling, “W. L. Coulter, Architect,” *Adirondack Architectural Heritage Newsletter* 4:2 (December 1995), 1.

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Hoteling describes Coulter as “one of the very few tuberculosis patients who arrived with a job.” He supervised construction on at least two private houses (not rustic), and worked on Trudeau’s new Administration Building. But, the villagers of Saranac Lake had different needs than those of vacationers at the Saranac Inn. How Coulter could have become the architect of Lady Tree Lodge is unclear. A possible link is Daniel Ritter, Trudeau’s treasurer and a fellow tuberculosis patient, who might have recruited Coulter (or the Renwick office) to work on the new Belo Cottage.

By 1898, when Moss Ledge was built, Coulter had fifteen years’ experience in New York and been in practice as an independent architect in Saranac Lake for a year. He went on to produce one hundred projects over the next ten years – in the village (where he designed some of the first cottage “sleeping porches” for tuberculosis patients), the Upper and Lower Saranac Lakes, and the St. Regis chain. Whether or not he actually designed Lady Tree Lodge in 1896, many of its distinctive details show up in his later commissions.

SUMMARY

Lady Tree Lodge at Saranac Inn, Franklin County, New York represents a type of Adirondack camp not previously well-defined – the hotel cottage – and has significance at the local level as the summer home of Colonel Alfred Horatio Belo and summer governor’s mansion of Charles Evans Hughes. It was built in the spring of 1896 for Belo and occupied by Hughes in the summers of 1908 and 1909. Because of the publicity surrounding Hughes’s visits, the use of the cottage is well documented – dependence on the hotel for social meals with other visitors, family activities on the grounds, excursions on the water by motor launch, guided fishing and hunting trips, and visits by dignitaries as Hughes continued to manage the state from Lady Tree Lodge’s comfortable den. In addition, the building is architecturally significant for its rustic exterior and striking front gable screen, which are derived from William West Durant’s prototype “Swiss chalet” at Camp Pine Knot and foreshadow William L. Coulter’s work at Moss Ledge two years later. Although its interior plan and design are more conventional – in line with contemporary suburban homes – the contradiction between the interior and exterior may reflect its use as a functional dependency of the Saranac Inn. Overall, Lady Tree Lodge is significant for its history and an important addition to understanding the breadth of types of Adirondack camps built at the turn of the twentieth century.

Lady Tree Lodge
Name of Property

Franklin County, NY
County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

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Lady Tree Lodge

Name of Property

Franklin County, NY

County and State

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All newspaper references are given in full in the footnotes.

Adirondack Daily Gazette

Brooklyn Daily Eagle

Columbia Republican

Chateaugay Record and Franklin County Democrat

Fort Worth Daily Gazette

Franklin Gazette

Lake Placid News

New York Daily Tribune

New York Herald

New York Times

New York World

Peekskill Evening Star

Plattsburgh Republican

Troy Daily Times

Watertown Reunion

Archival and Photo Sources

Adirondack Experience (formerly, Adirondack Museum), Blue Mountain Lake, NY

Merrill L. Thomas, Inc. [Real Estate], Lake Placid, NY

New York Public Library, New York, NY

New York State Archives, Albany, NY

New York State Library, Albany, NY

Lady Tree Lodge
Name of Property

Franklin County, NY
County and State

New York State Museum, Albany, NY

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
 previously listed in the National Register
 previously determined eligible by the National Register
 designated a National Historic Landmark
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 2.19 Acres
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 18N 554515E 4910480N
Zone Easting Northing

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing

2 _____
Zone Easting Northing

4 _____
Zone Easting Northing

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary is indicated by a heavy line on the enclosed maps.

Boundary Justification

The boundary encompasses the lot historically and currently associated with the nominated building since the 1930s; the property passed out of the Saranac Inn when bought by Frederick E. Altemus at that time.

Lady Tree Lodge
Name of Property

Franklin County, NY
County and State

Lady Tree Lodge
Santa Clara, Franklin Co., NY

21 Loon Over Lane
Saranac Lake, NY 12983



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter



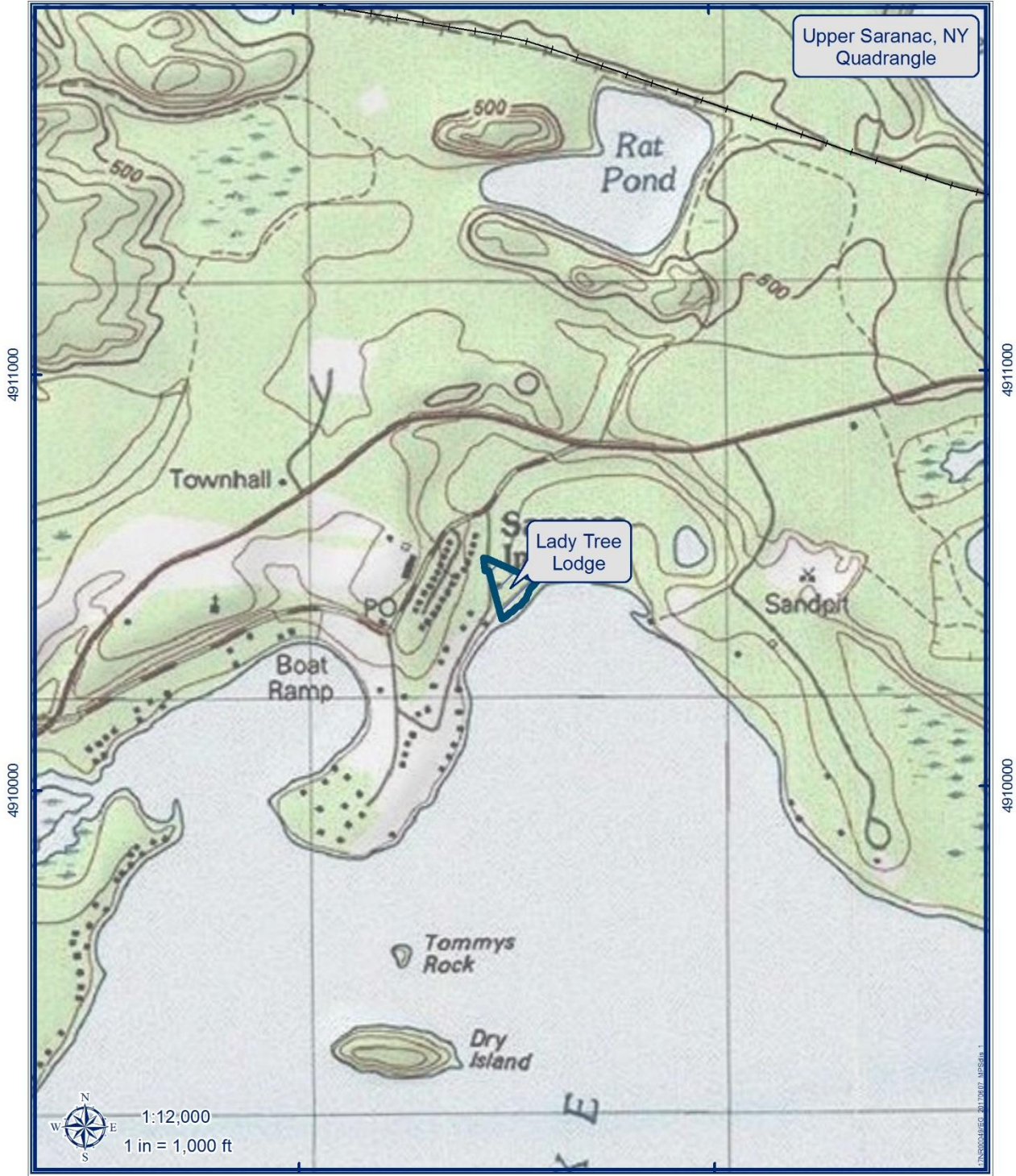
**Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation**

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 Lady Tree Lodge



**Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation**

Lady Tree Lodge
Name of Property

Franklin County, NY
County and State

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Chris Cohan (with edits by Emilie W. Gould, Historic Preservation Program Analyst, NY SHPO)
organization Owner date May, 2017
street & number 315 Oakland Beach Ave telephone _____
city or town Rye state NY zip code 10580
e-mail _____

Additional Documentation

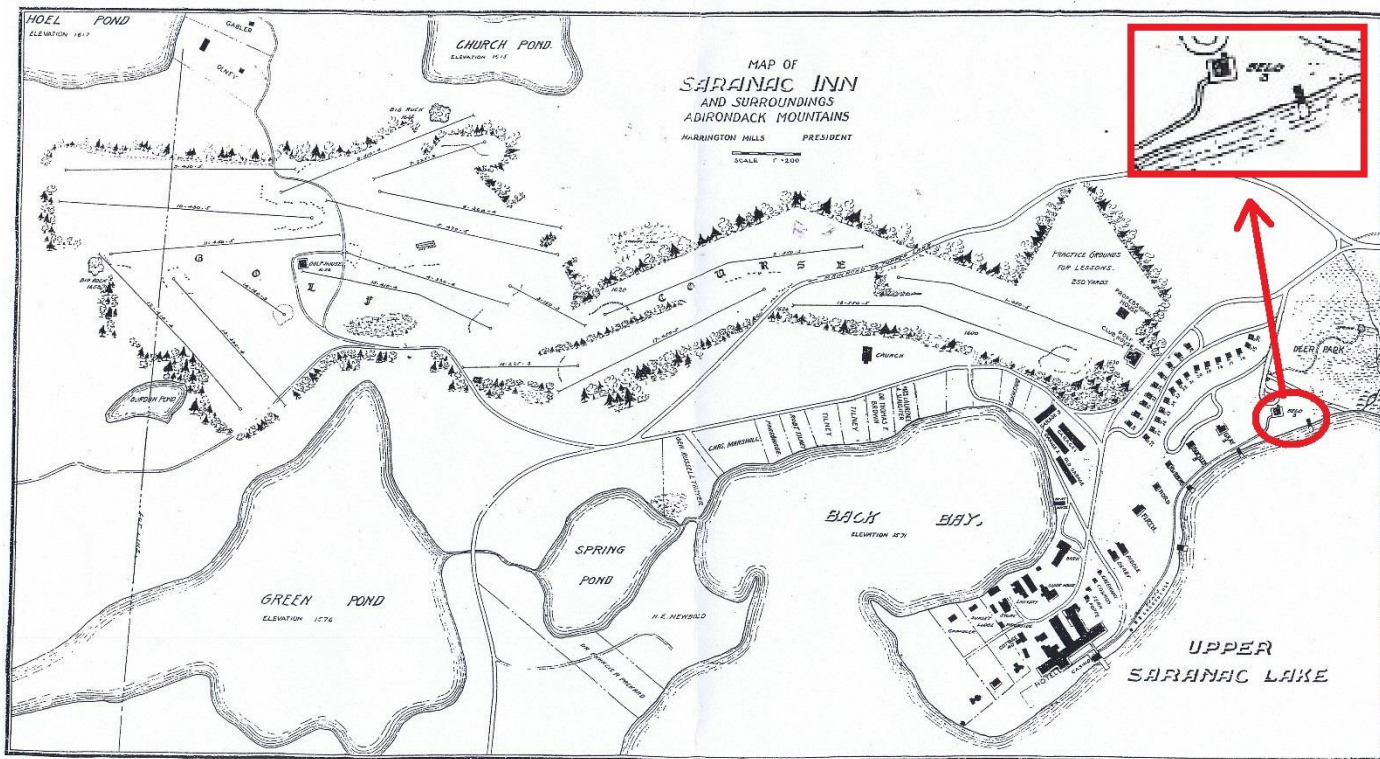


Figure 27. Map of Saranac Inn after 1916 (when Harrington Mills became president) and before 1926 (when the building was expanded a second time). Note the wraparound porch on Lady Tree Lodge. In addition, the building is referred to as “Belo,” although by this time both the Belos had died and other maps called the property Lady Tree Lodge.

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Lady Tree Lodge

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Figure 24. Lady Tree Lodge façade. (2016)

Figure 25. Moss Ledge – Redfield Lodge front gable screen. (Merrill L. Thomas Inc.)

Figure 26. Lady Tree Lodge front gable screen. (2016)

Figure 27. Map of Saranac Inn after 1916 (when Harrington Mills became president) and before 1926 (when the building was expanded a second time). Note the wraparound porch on Lady Tree Lodge.

Lady Tree Lodge
Name of Property

Franklin County, NY
County and State

Photographs:

Name of Property: Lady Tree Lodge

City or Vicinity: Saranac Lake

County: Franklin County State: New York

Photographer: Chris Cohan (except where noted)

Date Photographed: Fall 2016 (except where noted)

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

0001: Façade (south), with double porches and front gable screen.

0002: North (rear) and west (side) elevations, showing service wing/rear addition and side entrance to main house.

0003: Side (east) elevation. (Emilie Gould, May 2017)

0004: Second-floor porch on façade, showing Dutch doors and windows into the principal bedrooms shadowed by front gable screen.

0005: Rebuilt first-floor porch.

0006: Porch overhang and mitered corners of first-floor log trim, from southeast corner of the building. (Emilie Gould, May 2017)

0007: Living room, first floor. (Emilie Gould, May 2017)

0008: Library, used by Governor Charles Evans Hughes as his office. (Winter 2017)

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0010: Curved wall in second floor corridor.

0011: View from Bedroom 3, south to the porch and the lake, showing beadboard walls, spruce floor, Dutch door, and window detail.

0012: Boathouse exterior.

0013: Boathouse interior. (Emilie Gould, May 2017)

0014: Storage shed (west) at rear of house. (Emilie Gould, May 2017)

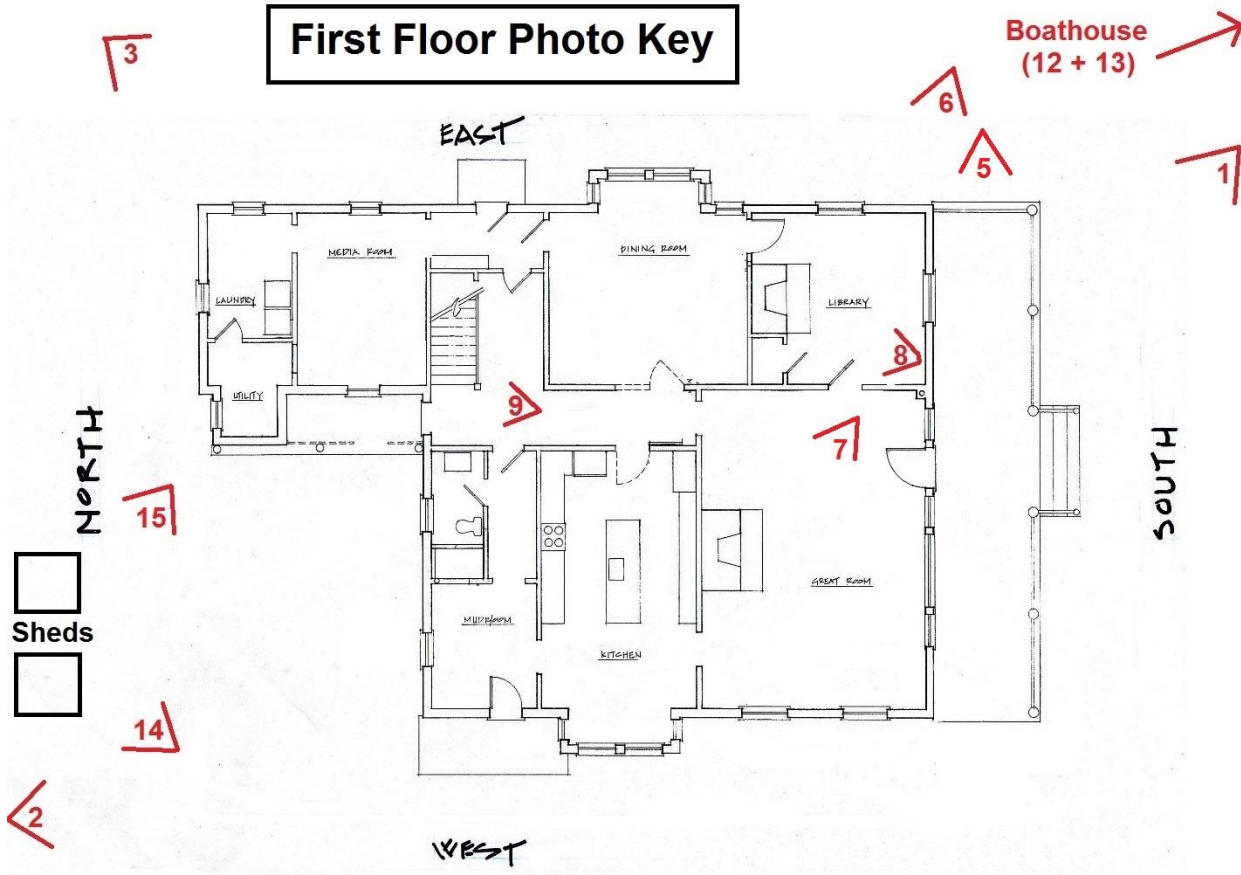
0015: Storage shed (east) at rear of house. (Emilie Gould, May 2017)

Lady Tree Lodge
Name of Property

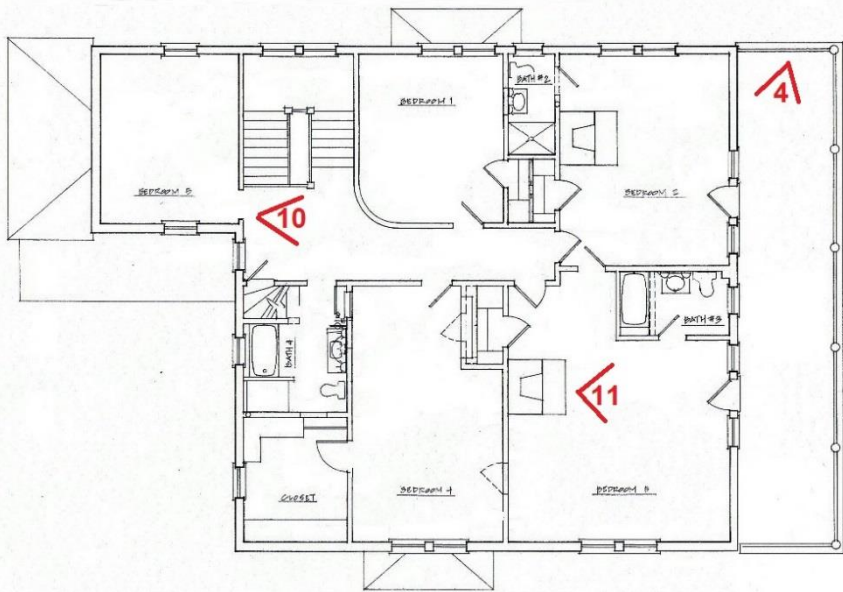
Franklin County, NY
County and State

Photo Keys

First Floor Photo Key



Second Floor Photo Key



Lady Tree Lodge
Name of Property

Franklin County, NY
County and State

Property Owner: _____

name _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state NY zip code _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.