

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
 NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
 NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
 REGISTRATION FORM

OMB NO. 1024-0018, NPS FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets. Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name The Leis Block
 other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 3-5 Bloomingdale Avenue | | not for publication
 city, town Saranac Lake (town of Harrietstown) | | vicinity
 state New York code NY county Franklin code 033 zip code 12983

3. Classification

Ownership of property	Category	Number of resources within property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	_____ buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	_____	_____ objects
		<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listings: Village of Saranac Lake
Multiple Documentation Form
 Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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, this property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

William J. Hogan
 Signature of certifying official
 Deputy Commissioner for Historic Preservation
 State or Federal agency and bureau
 Date 3/31/92

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

Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____
 State or federal agency and bureau _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:
 entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
 determined eligible for the National Register. see continuation sheet.
 determined not eligible for the National Register.
 removed from the National Register.
 other, (explain:)

Signature of keeper _____ Date of Action _____

6. Function or Use

Historic Function
(enter categories from instructions)
Domestic/multiple dwelling
Commercial trade/Specialty Store

Current Functions
(enter categories from instructions)
Domestic/multiple dwelling
Commercial trade/barbershop

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th & 20th Century Revivals:
Classical Revival

Materials(enter categories from instructions)

foundation Fieldstone, concrete block
walls Wood frame faced with brick
Metal/aluminum siding
roof Asphalt
other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Leis Block, a three-story four-bay structure, is located on a one-eighth acre lot near the center of Saranac Lake. The building and lot lie within the boundaries of the incorporated village of Saranac Lake, Franklin County. The brick-fronted building faces north onto Bloomingdale Avenue, one hundred feet east of the intersection of Bloomingdale Avenue with Broadway. The Leis Block neighborhood is a densely settled area only a few blocks from downtown Saranac Lake, with a mixture of extensively altered commercial and residential buildings from the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth century. The adjacent lot is used for parking, exposing the entire western facade of the property along Broadway. The building is bordered on the east by another parking lot and on the south by two small houses.

The Leis Block was constructed in 1902, and was subsequently altered by the addition of sleeping porches and other curing features to the apartments before 1915, in the period when Saranac Lake was rapidly expanding and the demand for patient space was high. The design detailing is classical in reference, as exemplified in its symmetrical facade, brick quoins, and simple cornice.

The primary (north) facade fronts onto Bloomingdale Avenue and is distinguished at the street level by three entrances and storefronts framed with ornamental cast iron pilasters made by the George L. Mesker Iron Works of Evansville, Indiana. The upper two stories have paired one-over-one windows flanking central inset porches glazed with three pairs of similar windows. The walls are clad in red brick with yellow brick quoining along the outer edges and on the sides of the inset porches. A simple classical cornice with brackets tops the building. The brick facing continues around the edges of the structure for about one-third of the side walls, after which it is replaced with aluminum siding. Another set of open, arched inset porches are located on second and third floors of the eastern wall.

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The Leis Block, completed April 2, 1902, was originally constructed as a three-story wood frame structure with a wooden Italianate cornice. The upper two floors were set back from the street, while the first floor storefront extended forward to be flush with the sidewalks. The cast iron pilasters are probably original to the structure. A series of renovations between 1910 and 1914 created four full-floor apartments for tuberculous individuals, each containing a central inset sleeping porch. The doorway from each bedroom onto the sleeping porch is wide enough to accommodate a bed or cure chair. The unheated porches have wooden flooring, stuccoed walls, and a drain slot in front for water runoff. Each apartment originally ran the depth of the building and contained two bedrooms, living room, dining room, kitchen, bath, pantry, and closets. The eastern apartments also had an additional inset porch along the east wall. At one point the roof was converted into a rooftop garden with latticed sides and flower boxes.

When the St. Regis Hotel to the west of the Leis Block added a full five stories of rooms to within three feet of the Leis Block between 1911 and the early 1930s, Henry Leis built a substantial firewall along the western side of the building. The western apartments were redesigned as well, creating two three-room apartments out of each six-room unit, with the main rooms facing north or south.

The vestibule for the residential units retains its original pressed metal walls and ceilings, with plaster walls and wooden wainscoting along the stairs and landings. Most of the hallway doors have their original moldings, bulls-eye corner blocks, and transoms made of painted, patterned glass. An original exterior window remains on the third floor landing, installed before the upper floors were extended. The apartments have been remodeled a number of times, but the distinctive cure porch fenestration remains intact.

Today there are ten apartments in the building and two commercial storefronts, only one of which is occupied.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: [] nationally [] statewide [X] locally

Applicable National Register Criteria [] A [] B [X] C [] D

Criteria Considerations [] A [] B [] C [] D [] E [] F [] G

Areas of significance	Period of Significance	Significant Dates
<u>Health/Medicine</u>	<u>1910-c.1941</u>	<u>1902, 1914</u>
<u>Commerce</u>		

Cultural Affiliation
<u>n/a</u>

Significant Person	Architect/Builder
<u>n/a</u>	<u>n/a</u>

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Leis Block is architecturally significant as an intact representative example of a commercial building adapted specifically for the needs of tuberculosis curing. It was first owned and constructed by Thomas J. Farrell, a blacksmith. Located next door to the St.Regis Hotel and within one block of the Union Depot, it was in the heart of the commercial district of Saranac Lake. Under the ownership of Henry Leis, the residential portions of the building were expanded and adapted specifically to provide housing for tuberculous patients and their families. The commercial spaces - Leis's piano and music store, and Earl Finegan's pharmacy - also derived much of their business from the curing industry, and tuberculosis patients in particular. The fine, largely intact sleeping porches and sitting-out balconies are excellent examples of such curing features, made doubly important by their location within a commercial structure. As the demand for patient housing increased in the early part of the Twentieth century, previously underutilized spaces, such as the upper floors of commercial structures, were adapted to fill the requirements. Such apartments, incidentally, were popular among patients who could watch the bustle of downtown life from their beds and not feel as isolated as their counterparts in residential areas. A 1917 health survey map of Saranac Lake indicates the presence of tuberculous individuals in the Leis Block.

[X] see continuation sheet

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Henry Leis, son of a German cabinet/piano maker, moved from New York City to Saranac Lake in 1896 to cure his own pulmonary tuberculosis. In 1899, Henry and his brother, also ill, built and operated an inn at 33 Algonquin called "The Governor" while curing in tents on the hotel grounds. In 1903, Henry left the hotel business to purchase and operate Henry P. Leis Company Pianos at 3-5 Bloomingdale Avenue, where he bought, sold, and rented pianos. By 1910, the second and third floors were used for apartments with no special amenities for tuberculous residents. Henry married Mary Disco in 1911 and together they embarked on a series of renovations to the Leis Block.

On the street level were two storefronts. Leis expanded the eastern one to house his growing piano and music store, with additional warehouse space at the rear of Earl Finegan's pharmacy/drug store in the western storefront. Eventually space at the rear of the central hall of the Block was made into a small apartment where the Leis family lived in the winters. (During the summers they lived in their cottage at 26 Algonquin Avenue, also nominated to the National Register.)

In 1913-14 the upper two floors were extended forward in a brick addition so that the entire building is flush with the sidewalk, creating the Bloomingdale Avenue facade as it stands today. A bedroom was built at the outer corner of each of the four apartments (two per floor) and the central space was finished off as paired sleeping porches. Leis continued to work in his store until his death in 1940 and his widow continued the business for three or four years after his death.

The cure cottages of Saranac Lake were predominantly built between the years of 1870 and 1930 and represent almost every housing type popular in the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth century. They represent vernacular expressions of architectural styles which include Italianate, Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, and bungalow stylistic features. The majority of the cottages which remain were built between 1890 and 1930.

The most common cure cottages are vernacular expressions of the Queen Anne and Colonial Revival styles, with multiple gables, balloon frame construction, decorative

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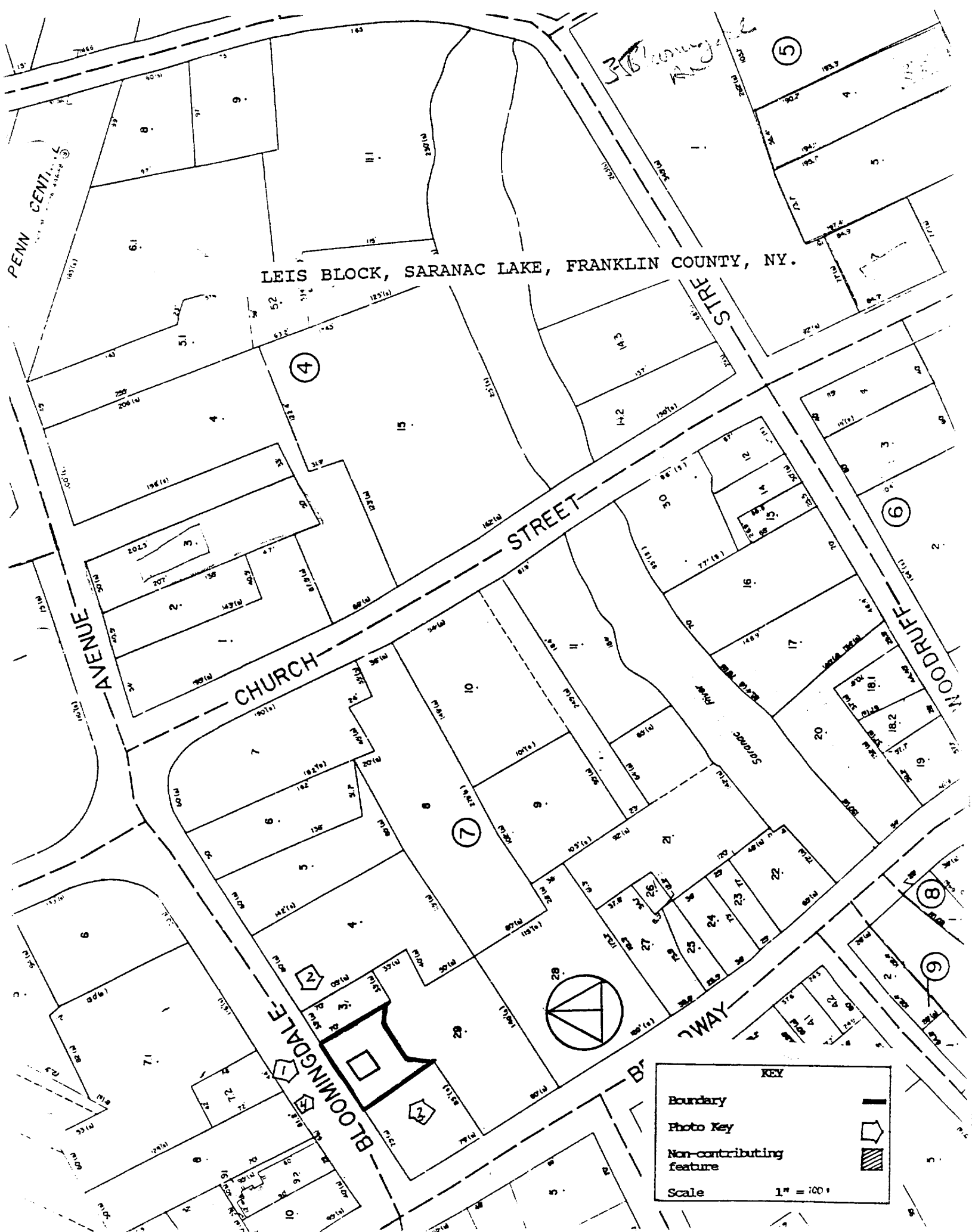
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wooden architectural detail, multiple windows of various sizes and shapes, and associated porches or verandas. Glass-enclosed porches, used for the curing of tuberculosis patients, are the most salient feature of the cure cottage. They can be found on local structures built long after porches had gone out of fashion elsewhere.




Cure cottages are structures which can be commercial, residential or institutional in scale and expression. Many were built specifically to function as private commercial sanatoria, multiple unit dwellings, boarding houses, or private homes. Equally large numbers of cure cottages were adapted for that use from vernacular single family dwellings. All cure cottages display certain architectural features which were necessary for specific functions in the process of curing tuberculosis outdoors. Whether added at a later date or incorporated into the original building design, these features can include multiple-storied cure porches, sliding glass panels, call bells and wider-than-usual doorways without sills.

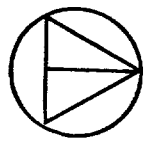
With its multiple inset sleeping porches and original architectural detailing, the Leis Block at 3-5 Bloomingdale Avenue has retained a high degree of architectural integrity from its period of use as a commercial structure and multiple-unit dwelling for tuberculous individuals. It has also retained a high degree of integrity of setting, location, materials, design, and associations.

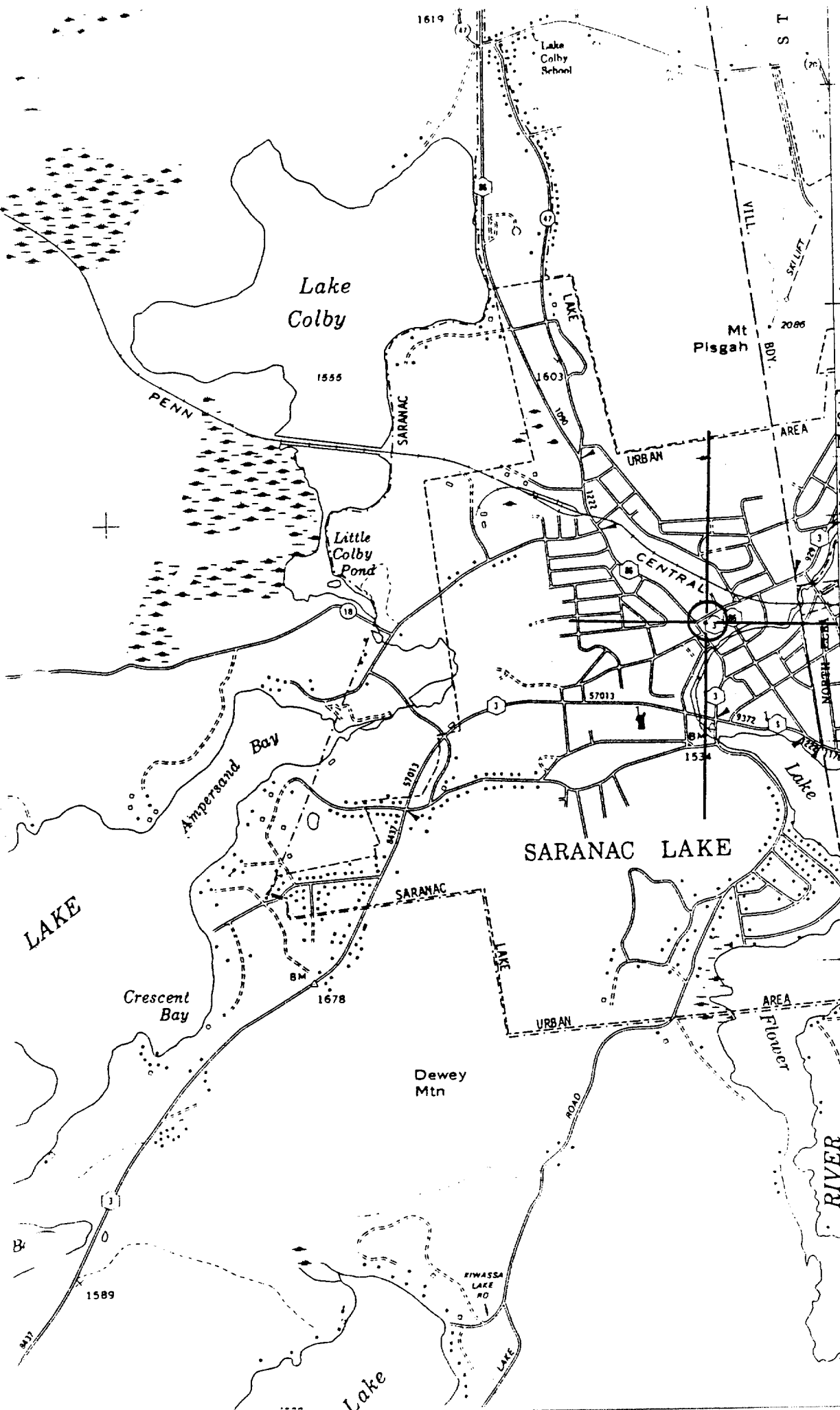
LEIS BLOCK, SARANAC LAKE, FRANKLIN COUNTY, NY.



KEY

- Boundary 
- Photo Key 
- Non-contributing feature 
- Scale 1" = 100'





4910000m. N.

The Village of Saranac Lake
Map of D.F.

Saranac Lake, NY
Zone 18
Scale: 1:24,000

Easting 569120
Northing 4908550

E 569120
N 4908550

1570000

4905000m. N.