

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.	<u>03347.000009</u>
QUAD	_____
SERIES	_____
NEG. NO.	_____

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YOUR NAME: Phil Gallos/Mary B. Hotalin DATE: 9/21/83

YOUR ADDRESS: Box 59, Saranac Lake TELEPHONE: (518) 891-3080 ext. 59

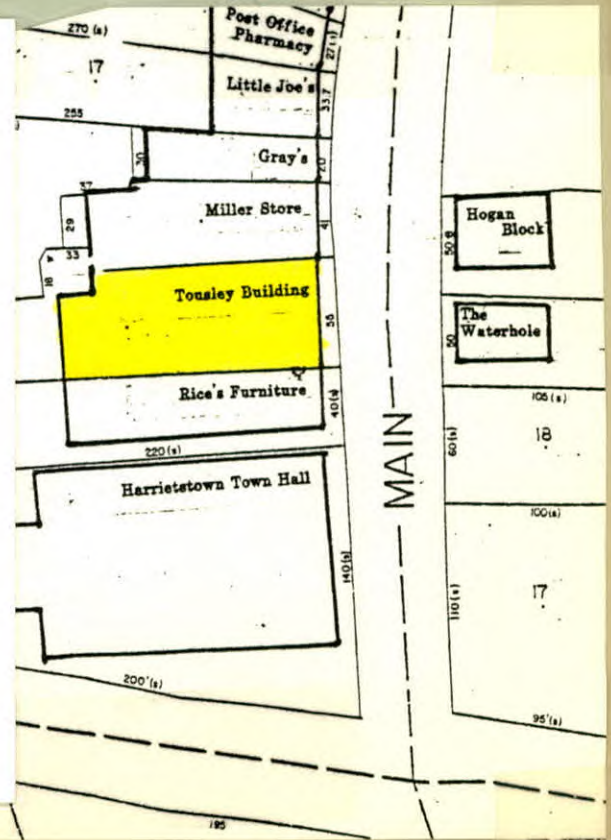
ORGANIZATION (if any): Historic Saranac Lake

IDENTIFICATION

- BUILDING NAME(S): Madden's ; the Tousley Building
- COUNTY: Franklin TOWN/CITY: Harrietstown VILLAGE: Saranac Lake
- STREET LOCATION: 38/40 Main Street *now 49 Main 2/9/2011*
- OWNERSHIP: a. public b. private
- PRESENT OWNER: William F. Madden ADDRESS: 12 Lake Flower Ave., Saranac Lake
- USE: Original: garage Present: offices, store, storage
- ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Exterior visible from public road: Yes No
Interior accessible: Explain Businesses open to public

DESCRIPTION

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



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: _____
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: In the Berkeley Square
(Indicate if building or structure is in an historic district) Historic District.

18. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING AND SITE (including interior features if known):
15'x 50' vault running east and west

SIGNIFICANCE

19. DATE OF INITIAL CONSTRUCTION: 1924 _____

ARCHITECT: _____

BUILDER: Milo Miller Estates, owner. _____

20. HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE:

SEE ATTACHED.

21. SOURCES: Franklin County Clerk's records, Malone, N.Y.

22. THEME: Saranac Lake: Pioneer Health Resort

The Tousley Building

In 1924, the Milo Miller Estates built the fortress of a building at 38-40 Main Street. Though large and formidable on the outside, it is on the inside that the Tousley Building shows its strength. It had originally been conceived to rise six stories above the sidewalk; and there is more than enough steel to bear that weight.

The first use of the bulk of the building was as Vern Carr's parking garage and Dodge sales agency. There is a freight elevator in the building that has a capacity of 7425 pounds. Made by the Warsaw Elevator Co. of Warsaw, N.Y., it is large enough to carry two automobiles side by side.

The old State Conservation Department's District offices occupied the second floor office space until the early 1950's. Of the two storefronts, there has been a liquor store in the southern one since right after prohibition. This was owned and operated by Henry Tousley's son, Frederick, until his death c.1954 and continued with the name "Tousley Liquors" until quite recently.

Approximately 1940, the Miller Estate opened the Adirondack Storage Vaults in the vast second floor space behind the offices. This was a refrigerated cold-storage vault for furs "and no expense was spared to make it the finest cold storage facility in northern New York", according to the manager of the Lincoln Warehouse vaults that once occupied most of the lower floors.

The Lincoln Warehouse Company operated storage vaults in a building at 10 Bloomingdale Avenue throughout WWII. Following the war, they leased the old Saranac Lake Garage space on the first and basement levels of the Tousley Building and converted it to storage vaults for documents -- mostly microfilm.

These vaults are not small. They are a honeycomb of full-size rooms built of gypsum block. This material is light-weight, fire-proof, and responds to humidity in a manner conducive to maintaining that condition at archival standards. The steel doors, some single and some double, are 8 x 3½ feet, are hung on four pin-type hinges, and close with three spring-loaded bolts.

Until around 1960, when Lincoln opened their Iron Mountain facility south of Hudson, N.Y., the vaults of the Tousley Building held microfilmed copies of all the valuable records of most of the

major oil companies in the United States, the New York Stock Exchange and many of the largest stock brokerage firms, as well as many of the nation's big banks and insurance companies not to mention shipping companies, mining companies and numerous corporations holding large Pentagon contracts. There were secret documents aplenty; and the facility was cleared for top-secret, though no such materials were stored there. There were in the vaults a number of items of value besides documents, probably the most exotic of which was the Crown Jewels of Luxomburg.

There were reasons for all these things being in Saranac Lake besides the fact that the Tousley Building was well constructed. First, in case of nuclear attack, the village is in an area less likely than any other in the Northeast to be adversely affected by either blast or fallout; and, though the idea of business as usual after a nuclear war seems absurd, the concept of "nuclear survivability" is one that was and is taken quite seriously by America's corporate giants.

Second, the natural average humidity of the region was considered most nearly ideal for the type of storage contemplated.

Third, while Saranac Lake had only a volunteer fire department, it had the highest rating that such a department could obtain.

Finally, according to a report by the General Motors Corp. on the advisability of storing its documents at Lincoln's vaults, the Village of Saranac Lake at that time had a police force surpassed in effectiveness only by New York City and Buffalo. This was in large measure due to the skill and efficiency of then Police Chief Bill Wallace. General Motors was not the only corporation to draft such advisability reports; and those that did were very thorough. From their perspective, their futures depended on it.

In Oct., 1973, William F. Madden, Jr. of Madden's Transfer and Storage purchased the Tousley Building from the Miller Estate. The president of the Estate then and now is Philmore Hyde who married Frederic^ok Tousley's daughter, Barbara. Phil Hyde is also president of the Hyde Fuel Company (Mobil distributors) and Chairman of the Board of North Country Community College. Thus, the most influential line of the Miller family, through the matrilineal chain, continues to have a vital interest in the business and cultural health of Saranac Lake.

Currently, the Tousley Building houses a liquor store, a real estate and insurance office, and the Saranac Lake Community Development Office; but the bulk of the structure is used by Madden's for -- that's right -- storage.

It is hard to believe that a parking garage or warehouse could have such a fine face; but the builder of this one was a Tousley, and the face was important, so it is one of the best on the street.

The Tousley Building, two stories in front and three at rear, is of steel-frame and brick construction. The ground floor of the facade is marked by four Tudor arches. The first and third (left to right) are the entrance to the garage portion and the entrance to the storefront and office portion of the building. The second and fourth are display windows. All but the third are approximately 12 x 9 feet. The third is 6 x 9 feet. The treatment of the second story, with windows of the Chicago type, hints at commercial style. At either end of the facade and on the piers between the arches are wrought-iron lamps. Unfortunately, only one of these is intact. There is a brass standpipe just to the right of the third arch.

The entire facade is clad with architectural faience that has been glazed ivory. The glaze has a satin surface that has crazed and taken on subtle variations in color over the years so that it seems almost to be alive.

The detailing is balanced and achieved mainly with the use of different kinds of molding, all executed in faience.

by Phil Gallos

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