

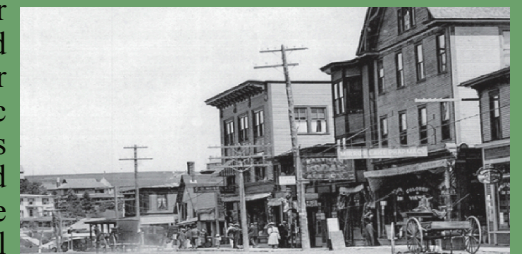
Historic Walking Tour

Lake Placid, NY
Incorporated 1900

The Lake Placid-North Elba Historical Society invites you to take a walking tour of some of the busy main streets and quiet side avenues of our lovely village. The tour is just over four miles. You can do it all at once or in sections. You will find interesting eating places, resting benches, and shops for breaks along the way. Be prepared for some good exercise, and comfortable walking shoes are recommended.

Around 1800, the first settlers began farming on the Plains of Abraham (next to the Adirondack Loj Road on Rt 73). Very quickly, a second settlement sprang up around Mill Pond with a small sawmill and an iron foundry. This was the heart of the original village.

During your walk, you will pass by many old homes and businesses, some dating back to the late 1800s and some quite new. Many are unique to our village, having survived the 1919 Main Street Fire. One of these was the library, which still looks as it did when constructed in 1884. Later buildings include municipal buildings and schools, as well as the facilities for the 1932 and 1980 Winter Olympic Games. This guide and map have thumbnail descriptions of the more historic buildings and locations.



Upper Main Street 1906

We invite you to visit our seasonal museum, 242 Station Street (Memorial Day to Columbus Day, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Wednesday through Sunday) for a more in-depth introduction to our history.

Visit the History Museum
Lake Placid-North Elba Historical Society
242 Station St. Lake Placid, NY 12946
518-523-1608

www.lakeplacidhistory.com

Like us on Facebook:
"Lake Placid History Museum"

1. 242 Station St. - The History Museum and Lake Placid Depot

The Lake Placid depot was built in 1904. The trains came and went here daily until April 24, 1965, when New York Central Railroad ceased operations on short notice. Americans were in love with the automobile, and the train station fell silent. In 1967, the station was purchased by Lake Placid sisters, M. Frances and Louise Brewster. They donated the building and its land for use by the Lake Placid-North Elba Historical Society to preserve and tell the history of Lake Placid. In 1980 the trains ran briefly. The Utica to Lake Placid line was revived by New York State for the 1980 Olympic Winter Games, but bankruptcy halted the trains soon after.

2. 268 Station St. - Hurley Brothers Building

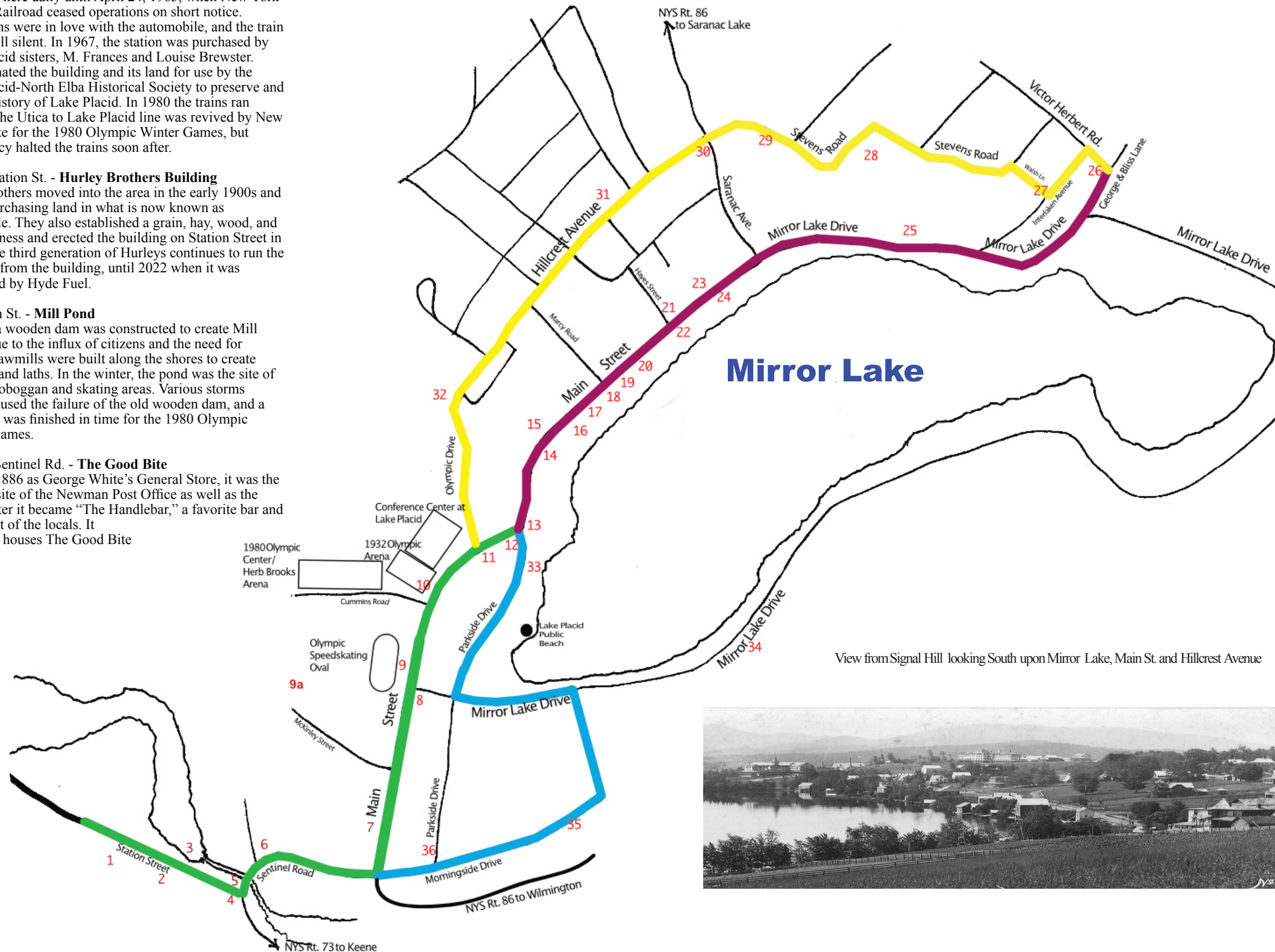
Three brothers moved into the area in the early 1900s and began purchasing land in what is now known as Averyville. They also established a grain, hay, wood, and coal business and erected the building on Station Street in 1909. The third generation of Hurleys continues to run the business from the building, until 2022 when it was purchased by Hyde Fuel.

3. Station St. - Mill Pond

In 1855 a wooden dam was constructed to create Mill Pond. Due to the influx of citizens and the need for homes, sawmills were built along the shores to create shingles and laths. In the winter, the pond was the site of the first toboggan and skating areas. Various storms finally caused the failure of the old wooden dam, and a new dam was finished in time for the 1980 Olympic Winter Games.

4. 6115 Sentinel Rd. - The Good Bite

Built in 1886 as George White's General Store, it was the original site of the Newman Post Office as well as the store. Later it became "The Handlebar," a favorite bar and restaurant of the locals. It currently houses The Good Bite Kitchen.



View from Signal Hill looking South upon Mirror Lake, Main St. and Hillcrest Avenue



- Hillcrest Ave/Signal Hill - 1.8 miles - elevation changes = 153 feet
- Upper Main Street - .73 Miles - elevation changes = 18 feet
- Lower Main Street/Newman - .95 miles - elevation changes = 145 feet
- Lake Placid Club/Parkside Dr. - .77 miles - elevation changes = 76 feet

5. 6125 Sentinel Rd. - **Lisa G's**

Built in 1885 as George White's Opera House, the top floor contained a stage and seating for 500. The middle floor was a hardware store. The first floor was a butcher shop that later became the A&P grocery store. Over the years, it has housed a drug store, nightclubs, and restaurants.



6. 6143 Sentinel Rd. - **Rae Oil Building**

This building was originally established as a mercantile building. Rae Oil has recently been purchased by Hyde Fuel.

7. 2764 Main St. - **Art Devlin's Olympic Motor Inn**

Founded by (and still operated by the family of) Olympic Ski Jumper and ABC Wide World of Sports color commentator Lake Placid's own Art Devlin. Lake Placid is the home of many Olympic champions, some born here and others who fell in love with the beauty of the area.

8. 2693 Main St. - **North Elba Town Hall**

The first formal town hall was completed on this site in 1903. It was called "The Tin Playhouse" for two reasons: because it was sheathed in tin and because there was a theatrical space located within the building. The original building burned down in 1915. The renovations for the 1980 Olympics eliminated the performance space.



9a. **Lake Placid High School**

The present Lake Placid High School began construction with the south wing in 1922.

The center and north sections were added in 1934-35. The old wooden schoolhouse was cut into sections and moved to Park Place (to become staff quarters for the Lake Placid Club). During the 1980 Olympics, the school was home to the International Press Center with a bar, making it the only school in NYS to have ever held a liquor license!



9. **Site of 1932 Olympic Stadium and 1980 Olympic Speed Skating Oval**

The present Olympic Speed-skating Oval was once the site of many early buildings which were demolished when the land was excavated and prepared during the construction of the stadium for the 1932 Winter Olympics. The outlet of Mirror Lake ran through this land but was buried when the Oval was engineered for the Olympics. The Stadium was the site of the 1932 Winter Olympics opening ceremony. At the center of the stadium were the speed skating oval and the hockey rinks. A completely new speed skating oval was built on the same site for the 1980 Olympic Winter Games. It is named to honor Lake Placid pioneer speed skater, James "Bunny" Sheffield. The oval was upgraded in 2022 for the 2023 FISU World University Games.



10. 2634 Main St. - **The Olympic Center**

This tan brick structure is the original Olympic Arena, where the 1932 Olympic Winter Games figure skating competitions were held. The large white section was completed in 1979 for the 1980 Olympics and was home to "Miracle on Ice". The Olympic Center now has three ice rinks. In preparation for the 2023 FISU World University Games, New York State has once again renovated the structure. The Lake Placid Olympic Museum is located on the first floor of the 1980 Ice Arena. The north end of the building houses the Convention Center and the Lake Placid Visitor Center.

11. 2599 Main St. - **Cunningham's Ski Barn**

The building still displays vestiges of its original use as the 1912 firehouse. The fire truck bays, the hose tower, and the siren tower are all still visible despite the current use as a ski shop.

12. 2591 Main St. - **Lake Placid Post Office**

This first post office building in the village was a WPA project completed in 1936 during the Great Depression. Beautiful murals, also part of the WPA, decorate the building's inside. The building is included in the National Register of Historic Places Multiple-Resource District, composed of New York State post offices built between 1858-1943.

13. 2533 Main St. - **Beglin's Jewelers**

The first drug store in town was located here in the Noble Building. This building, circa 1880, was the first home of the Bank of Lake Placid, established on May 4, 1909. Henry Van Hoevenberg set up his Adirondack Electric Shop in the basement in 1917 after parting ways with the Lake Placid Club.

14. 2511 Main St. - **The Masonic Temple**

The former Masonic Temple, completed in 1916, was designed by Lake Placid architect Floyd Brewster. The cost of the building was \$30,000. The Masonic Temple rooms were on the upper floors. The Post Office was in this building for 20 years, from 1916 to 1936.

15. 2520 Main St. - **The Marcy Hotel**

Built in 1927, the Marcy Hotel was the village's first "fireproof" (i.e., brick) hotel. Nonetheless, it suffered a major fire in 1966 in which there were five fatalities. In 2022 the Marriott Corporation purchased and renovated the newly named Grand Adirondack Hotel.



16. 2501 Main St. - **The Blue House**

Originally the Shea Building, this structure was built in 1900 by James Shea as a specialty grocery store called Shea's Market. Destroyed by fire on December 15, 1933, the store re-opened May 24, 1934. The grocery store closed in 1988 and became a gift shop known as The Market.

17. 2495 Main St. - **The Guild Block**

This handsome building was erected by Forrest Guild in 1916 and was occupied by his exclusive men's store for many years. This is one of the most architecturally elaborate and best-preserved commercial buildings on Main Street.

18. 2487 Main St. - **Smoke Signals**

Built in 1896 by John Shea, this was the original St. Agnes Catholic Church. It was owned and run by the Perkins family as a hardware store until 1988. Remodeled as a furniture store, it was renovated again in 2013 as Smoke Signals Restaurant.

19. 2483 Main St. - **NBT Bank**

This building was constructed in 1915 to the design of architect Floyd Brewster of Lake Placid. Opening in 1916 as The Bank of Lake Placid, it still vacates its successor, NBT Bank. Some of the architectural ornament was lost over the years but NBT undertook a renovation in 2012 to restore the original features of the building.

20. 2471 Main St. - **Lake Placid Public Library**

Built in 1886, the Lake Placid Public Library is one of the early libraries in the Adirondacks. This gracious little structure survives intact, with improvements such as the enclosure of porches in 1941 and a 3-story extension on the back side in 2000. Step inside and take in the beautiful view of Mirror Lake and the Sentinel Mountain Range.



21. 2450 Main St. - **St. Eustace Episcopal Church**

The church was erected on this site in 1927. It was originally built in 1900 as St. Eustace-by-the-Lakes Church at the corner of Victor Herbert Road and Mirror Lake Drive. In 1927, the building was dismantled, and each piece numbered, moved, and reconstructed on this site. If you have the time, it is well worth stepping inside.

22. Main St. - **Mid's Park**

This inviting outdoor performance space was named for Mildred (Mid) Uihlein, the wife of one of Lake Placid's greatest benefactors. The Lake Placid Sinfonietta and the summer concert series, Songs at Mirror Lake, are held here every summer. It also serves as a focal point for public activities associated with the many sporting events that come to Lake Placid.

23. 2432 Main St. - **Palace Theater**

The Palace Theater was built by the Adirondack Theater Corporation in 1926. It has been in continuous operation as a theater ever since. The building originally contained dressing rooms, an organ and an orchestra pit and was used for silent films and live performances in its earliest years. In the 1930s, after the introduction of sound movies, the painted ceiling panels, which reportedly depicted angels, were covered with a composite material to improve acoustics. In 1960, the Palace was purchased by Reginald Clark, whose family continues to operate it today.

24. 2427 Main St. - **The Cheeseman Building**

This structure was built in 1901 for William F. Cheeseman, a photographer who conducted a novelty, souvenir, and art shop at this location until 1924. This building figures prominently in all the early photos of Main Street.

25. 77 Mirror Lake Drive - **Mirror Lake Inn**

Due to this beautiful location, one of the earliest hotels in Lake Placid was situated here. Eventually purchased by the Wikoff family and renamed the Mirror Lake Inn, it grew and became a popular summer destination. Known in the figure skating world as a residence for skaters who were training here with the important coach, Gus Lussi, the Inn has a lengthy and storied history. It was winterized for the 1932 Olympics. The hill next to the Inn was home to the first "rope-tow" for alpine skiing, as well as a toboggan slide that crossed Mirror Lake Drive and sent the sleds careening onto the ice. The present owners, Ed and Lisa Weibrecht have renovated and maintained the four-star hotel. Their son, Andrew Weibrecht, a two-time Olympic medalist, is now carrying on the family tradition.

26. Site of **Saint-Eustace-By-The-Lakes** –See #21.

The current owners welcome the public to this lovely garden created within the old foundation. The church was moved to its present location at 2450 Main St. In 1927.



27. 39 Interlaken Avenue - **Interlaken Inn**

Built in 1912, this imposing building was sold in 1918 to Robert Kamber of NYC as a summer residence. He vacationed here until his death in the 1940s. It was sold by his heirs in 1944 and was converted into lodging for well-to-do refugees from Europe. In 1969 it became a home for skaters in the summer and skiers in the winter. It is now closed and for sale. One hopes this historic Inn will have a new beginning soon.

28 & 29. Homes along Stevens Road & site of The Stevens House Hotel

Many of the homes built around this neighborhood in the late 1800's to mid 1900's were a part of the compound belonging to the Stevens House (originally built in 1876 and known as the Excelsior House). Early photos of Lake Placid show this magnificent hotel sitting at the crest of what is known as "Signal Hill". The old stone wall which formed the front drive of the hotel is still visible on the south side of Stevens Road just across the road and up the hill from St. Agnes Church.

30. 169 Hillcrest Ave. - **Saint Agnes Church**

The 1896 church on Main Street became too small for the growing congregation. Construction began here on a new wooden church in April 1925. The church was consecrated on August 16, 1925. It was enlarged with clad and bricks in 1950. Other renovations were completed in 1999, and 2013. St. Agnes Parochial School, across the street, was dedicated in 1959.

31. Hillcrest Avenue Homes

Following WWII, many homes in this neighborhood opened as rooming houses catering to many European refugees who wished to escape city life for the summer.

32. 101 Olympic Drive - Crowne Plaza Resort

On this spot stood The Grand View Hotel. In 1922, it became Lake Placid's first Jewish-owned hotel, breaking Lake Placid's religious barrier. A haven for refugees of Hitler's Third Reich, the Grand View closed in 1956. It was razed in 1961, making way for a Holiday Inn. The Grand View was one of the grandest hotels in the Village and was well known for its spectacular ballroom, enjoyed by locals and hotel guests alike.



33. 2583 Main St. Adirondack Community Church

The building was designed in 1922 and consecrated in 1925. A wooden Methodist- Episcopal church was on this site in 1888 and appears in several of the earliest photographs of Main Street. It was the second house of worship within the borders of what would be the village of Lake Placid.

34. Site of Lake Placid Club Main Bldg

The history of the sweeping properties of the former Lake Placid Club is extensive. Founded in 1895, The Club (as it was called locally) was open and active into the early 1980s, when it fell into bankruptcy and a series of tragic fires finally took down the main building and a couple of others at different times. Several buildings still stand on the property, although all have undergone extensive renovations to bring them to modern standards. The vast property is owned and being gradually developed by the Lussi family, owners of the Crowne Plaza Resort. There are several historic books for reference if you are interested in the history of the Lake Placid Club. Visit the History Museum or the Lake Placid Public Library for more.



35. 88 Morningside Dr. - Lake Placid Club Golf Courses

The vast holdings of the LP Club property also included 45 holes of golf; two 18 hole and one 9 hole course, still in full operation today, under the ownership of the Lussi family. The most recent Club Golf house is still standing, remodeled from the original in the 1960s, as designed by noted local architect Ronald Allwork.

36. Lake Placid Club Stable

Horseback riding was an integral part of life at the Lake Placid Club, with sleighs greeting guests at the train, along with recreational equestrian activities on extensive bridle trails across the vast Club property. In 1926 the Lake Placid Riding Club was formed. This early equestrian involvement was a precursor to the advent of the Lake Placid Horse Shows, which continue today for 2 weeks in early summer at the Lake Placid Horse Show Grounds across from the Olympic Ski Jumps.