



The Advocate

Autumn 2025
Volume V Issue 4

Cazenovia Heritage
P.O. Box 103
Cazenovia NY 13035

In This Issue

Videos Available	1
Cazenovia Architecture	1-2
Stearns Grant Updates	2, 5
View from the Pergola	3
Water Troughs Update	3-4
Advocacy Updates	4
Stearns Grant Photos	5

Cazenovia Heritage Program Videos Available

This year, Cazenovia Heritage began recording programs, thanks to the efforts of Board Director Mark Smith and volunteer Tina Concha. As both have their day jobs, they produce the videos typically about two months after the live presentation. A link to the latest video is on the home page under **"News & Updates."** Prior program videos are archived under the **Educational Resources** tab. Explore at your own pace:

*Martin H. Knapp: His Stories and Home, "Old Trees"
Lakeland Park and Estate
Umbrecht Houses*

And speaking of videos: We highly recommend [*Vanish: Disappearing Icons of a Rural America*](#), by Jim Westphalen. This one-hour video depicts Westphalen's journey to document the nation's disappearing rural architecture displaying stunning photos taken by Westphalen and highlighting the people working to preserve their buildings' stories. One such person featured is **Jack Watts**, a former Cazenovian who grew up at 4 Forman St., "Three Willows." Jack's father was the Dean of Cazenovia College and for whom Watts Hall is named. In the film, Jack speaks about Glen Dale farm in Cornwall VT, a historic multi-structure expanse and architectural delight.



"Cazenovia's Architecture Not the Best"

So said the headline of an article and letter from Thornton Chard appearing in the *Cazenovia Republican* on 29 February 1912. Thorton Chard was a well-known architect based in New York City who designed the estate of his brother, Walter G. Chard, on today's Chard Road. Having a summer home in Cazenovia, and while overseeing the construction of his brother's home, Thornton offered his opinion on the design of farmhouses ("country houses") and the importance of architectural preservation. It is re-printed here as a perspective that may resonate today, over 110 years later.

"To Editor, Republican:

Through my interest in the architecture of Cazenovia and the surrounding country, I have noted with regret how the present generation and that preceding it, for the most part, have not appreciated the excellent design and

suitableness of the farmhouses of former generations to the extent that in altering them and building new ones, they have usually made mistakes.

"In Cazenovia and in the surrounding country, one sees houses of excellent design being altered and new ones built in a style that so evidently a backward step in architectural taste that it is encouraging to note a paper like "The Country Gentleman" of wide circulation and influence throughout the country, should have published an article recently by F. A. Waugh deploring these tendencies which I mention. I enclose a copy . . . for no subject is of more importance to the financial welfare of Cazenovia than this one: the preservation of beauty in its village and farmhouses.

A large part of Cazenovia's prosperity is derived from the summer colony. This colony does not come to Cazenovia to seek things that it finds in the cities, but rather to be relaxed and remade by the enjoyment of peace and quiet and the contemplation of the beauty of the peaceful village and countryside. Therefore, the greater the proportion of its citizens who realize the importance of serving the existing beauty of the village and

countryside, and of enhancing it, the more prosperous the village will be."

"Yours very truly,
Thornton Chard"

Extracts of the article by F.A. Waugh that he enclosed states:

"The last fifty years have seen many examples of extremely bad farmhouse architecture. The first mistake comes from building after a city plan [i.e., design]. Far too many city houses are going up in the country. The only way to build . . . is to have [the house] planned to suit its surroundings, its occupants, and all the local conditions. . . . Unfortunately, all architects are nowadays trained in the planning of city houses It is not hard to remember that the only styles of American dwelling-house architecture which ever gained any recognition, which were ever accepted as legitimate styles, were country houses The old colonial farmhouses of New England were far better than those of the present time."

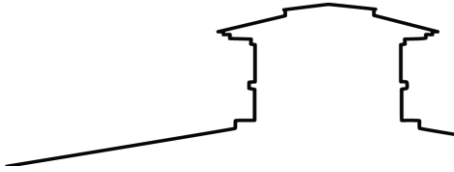
Thornton Chard and his wife Ethel S. M. Barclay themselves lived in a home located on 36 acres on West Lake Road, called "Thornfield." It was designed by Stanford White and built in 1888-1889 by Chard's father-in-law Sackett Barclay, and sadly, was demolished around 1969.



Stearns Grant Updates

The first two recipients of the Stearns Restoration & Preservation Grants completed their restoration projects this summer. The Greek Revival home at 3 Nickerson, owned by Randy Enos and Doug Milne, received replacements of 20th century windows with 6 over 6 windows. Carole Herbert undertook painting and window restoration at her Federal home at 30 Lincklaen St. Congratulations on jobs well done! Before & After photos follow on page 5.





View from the Pergola

Pause the Sale

September brought the unexpected news that four former college buildings had been contracted for purchase and formed part of the funding for the campus purchase by the 9Fresh investor group. Reisman Hall (Sullivan St.) and the Sigety building (Seminary St.) are under contract with the Madison County Sheriff, with Sigety to be demolished and converted into a parking lot for use by the Sheriff's staff only. The two Jephson campus buildings (Albany St.) also went under contract with the Town, intended for relocation of Town offices. The actual sale of all is contingent on the sale of the college assets to 9Fresh, currently awaiting approval by the Madison County Supreme Court Judge.

Numerous community concerns have been raised. Both the Sheriff's and Town's purchases received minimal to no public pre-notification, let alone public engagement, creating a lack of trust among citizens, 9Fresh, Town and Village officials, and the County Board of Supervisors. Specific concerns have been raised over the functions to be housed at Reisman and the lack of property taxes to be paid by all the proposed owners of the buildings at a time when additional revenues would be welcomed by the Village.

To the extent that these concerns are legitimate, they are not – repeat, not – directly within the scope of the mission of Cazenovia Heritage. There are additional issues, however, that do fall within our advocacy purview: First is the permanent impact on community character of Sheriff offices, law enforcement, and emergency vehicles in a historic neighborhood and church setting. Second is the destruction and replacement of a building for a permanent parking lot in the center of the business district and historic district. Not only will this be a lasting scar, the lot will be located on one of the extant streets in Cazenovia surrounding the original Seminary of 1824. Retaining a semblance of the campus setting should instead be encouraged through re-use of the Sigety building.

Third is to ensure that all campus buildings and associated land, including the Athletic Complex, become part of the Village Historic District to ensure additional oversight in campus redevelopment. As for the Jephson buildings, the purchase contract was executed without any published documented requirements, no estimate of renovation and operating costs, and no stated plan for the Gothic Cottage. In 2022, a large share of the public preferred retaining the Town offices at the Gothic Cottage using the plan developed by Cazenovia Heritage. For a matter having such longstanding and intense public interest, a public hearing would have been an appropriate and transparent step.

In our view, these impacts will permanently and negatively alter the character of the Village. We encourage the Town, Village, the County, and 9Fresh to pause the sale to find alternate buyers and to solicit community input as to desired uses of all the buildings.



Water Troughs Update

Restoration of the historic public water troughs is underway, and it is delightful to see the yard signs popping up all around the Town and Village in celebration. Need a sign? Email annefcz@gmail.com. At the October 25th program, a photographic update will be presented. Join us **Saturday, October 25, 2:00 PM** at the Cazenovia Public Library. (*see in-progress photos next page*)



(L) Tom Viau of Viau Masonry and Carl Stearns discuss approaches at 1864 #9 Rd Trough. (R) Interior basin wall braces, 1907 East Lake Rd



Advocacy Updates

Gothic Cottage: At the request of the Town, Cazenovia Heritage prepared a grant application for the full restoration and preservation of the Gothic Cottage. Submitted in July, a decision is expected by year-end.

Water Troughs: Restoration of the three public water troughs in the Town began in October and is underway at this time. Results will be included in the October 25th program at the Library, 2:00 PM.

National Register Listing: Cazenovia Heritage assisted Ann Ladd in the successful nomination of her home on Syracuse Road, the Roswell Beckwith Sr. House. The 1804 house is one of the most intact center chimney homes remaining in Cazenovia.

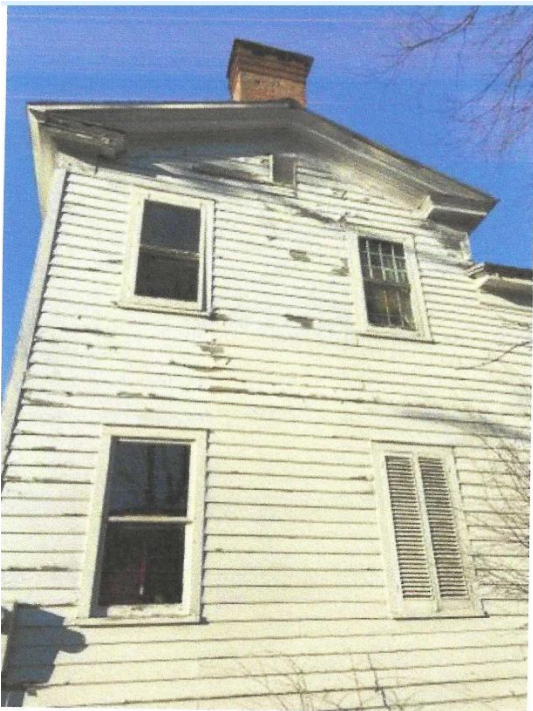
Demolition Review Process: Last April's quick survey on advocacy priorities identified the #1 priority as: "Work with residents and Town government to develop a means of protecting historic architecture and cultural resources from demolition, deterioration, or significant alteration." A meeting was held in August with owners of historic properties to identify what they would like the Town officials to undertake first. The consensus was to develop a demolition review process to ensure that demolition of historic properties receive a level of oversight and potential protection, both of which are lacking today. Cazenovia Heritage proposed to lead a team of representatives of the Town and public to begin that project. Concurrently, the Town Planning Board has recommended that the Town adopt a moratorium on demolitions or other short-term action until such time as a review process can be put in place. Both recommendations are still under consideration by the Town Board.



2025 Stearns Grant Recipients, Before & After



3 Nickerson St, 2nd Floor Window Replacements



30 Lincklaen St, Window Restoration and House Painting

