



ADIRONDACK EXPERIENCE™

The Museum on Blue Mountain Lake

Consultation Project 22PR02647 Responses to Questions Transmitted May 2, 2021

1) Do you know to what degree the interior of the building has deviated from the original Adams & Woodbridge design?

Main was designed and built specifically to house museum exhibitions. Under the circumstances, its interior spaces were left almost entirely windowless and unadorned, with the exception of a stone fireplace installed opposite the two entrance doors on the north side of the building. The Adirondack-style log columns, beams, and twig work currently visible in the room with the fireplace were installed in 2000 as part of the exhibition currently occupying the space. They are not original to the building. Early photographs of the exhibition galleries indicate that the walls were lined with pegboard to facilitate the hanging of display materials. Interior partitions have been erected and removed over the years according to the specific requirements of individual exhibitions.

2) Do you have anything that speaks to why the chosen design was selected?

ADKX has no information on why the particular design for Main and related buildings was chosen. The stone is not local and the design does not resemble any traditional Adirondack aesthetic. Even the twig work in the entrance portico was added in 2000 to make the building appear to be more Adirondack-y. In the 1950s, there was not the level of appreciation for Adirondack-style architecture that we have today. Emulating that style for the museum's buildings would have been a very unlikely priority. Tradition has it that the museum's founder, Harold Hochschild, was more interested in economy than building design. Famously, during a rainstorm, water poured through the roof onto Governor Nelson Rockefeller and other VIPS during the opening ceremonies in 1969 for one of the other Adams & Woodbridge buildings. When the museum opened and for decades after that, plant species completely foreign to the Adirondacks were introduced to create gardens on the campus that looked nice but were alien to the region. Inside Main, architectural design elements were intended to be as unobtrusive as possible so as not to detract from the exhibitions on display. Today this approach is often referred to as creating a "white box."

- 3) **Online sources indicate anywhere from two to twelve of the buildings at the Adirondack Experience campus were designed by Adams & Woodbridge. Are you able to confirm which other buildings may have been designed by them?**

In addition to Main (1957), Adams & Woodbridge designed the adjoining Boat Building (1963), Main's north wing extension (1965), and what was long referred to as the Roads & Rails Building, now the Life in the Adirondacks Building (1969).