



# HISTORIC RESOURCE INVENTORY FORM

NYS OFFICE OF PARKS, RECREATION  
& HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
P.O. BOX 189, WATERFORD, NY 12188  
(518) 237-8643

**OFFICE USE ONLY**

USN: \_\_\_\_\_

## IDENTIFICATION

Property name(if any) \_\_\_\_\_  
Address or Street Location 49 Leitch Avenue  
County Onondaga Town/City \_\_\_\_\_ Village/Hamlet: Village of Skaneateles  
Owner De Forest and Maura Barron Address 49 Leitch Ave., Skaneateles, NY 13152  
Original use single-family residence Current use single-family residence  
Architect/Builder, if known unknown Date of construction, if known unknown

## DESCRIPTION

Materials -- please check those materials that are visible

Exterior Walls:	<input type="checkbox"/> wood clapboard	<input type="checkbox"/> wood shingle	<input type="checkbox"/> vertical boards	<input type="checkbox"/> plywood	
	<input type="checkbox"/> stone	<input type="checkbox"/> brick	<input type="checkbox"/> poured concrete	<input type="checkbox"/> concrete block	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> vinyl siding	<input type="checkbox"/> aluminum siding	<input type="checkbox"/> cement-asbestos	<input type="checkbox"/> other: _____	
Roof:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> asphalt, shingle	<input type="checkbox"/> asphalt, roll	<input type="checkbox"/> wood shingle	<input type="checkbox"/> metal	<input type="checkbox"/> slate
Foundation:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> stone	<input type="checkbox"/> brick	<input type="checkbox"/> poured concrete	<input type="checkbox"/> concrete block	

Other materials and their location: \_\_\_\_\_

Alterations, if known: Garage (32' x 22') Date: 1997

Condition:  excellent  good  fair  deteriorated

## Photos

Provide several clear, original photographs of the property proposed for nomination. Submitted views should represent the property as a whole. For buildings or structures, this includes exterior and interior views, general setting, outbuildings and landscape features. Color prints are acceptable for initial submissions.

Please staple one photograph providing a complete view of the structure or property to the front of this sheet. Additional views should be submitted in a separate envelope or stapled to a continuation sheet.

## Maps

Attach a printed or drawn locational map indicating the location of the property in relationship to streets, intersections or other widely recognized features so that the property can be accurately positioned. Show a north arrow. Include a scale or estimate distances where possible.

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**PLEASE PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION**

**IF YOU ARE PREPARING A NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION, PLEASE REFER TO THE ATTACHED INSTRUCTIONS**

**Narrative Description of Property:** Briefly describe the property and its setting. Include a verbal description of the location (e.g., north side of NY 17, west of Jones Road); a general description of the building, structure or feature including such items as architectural style (if known), number of stories, type and shape of roof (flat, gabled, mansard, shed or other), materials and landscape features. Identify and describe any associated buildings, structures or features on the property, such as garages, silos, privies, pools, gravesites. Identify any known exterior and interior alterations such as additions, replacement windows, aluminum or vinyl siding or changes in plan. Include dates of construction and alteration, if known. Attach additional sheets as needed.

see continuation sheet

**Narrative Description of Significance:** Briefly describe those characteristics by which this property may be considered historically significant. Significance may include, but is not limited to, a structure being an intact representative of an architectural or engineering type or style (e.g., Gothic Revival style cottage, Pratt through-truss bridge); association with historic events or broad patterns of local, state or national history (e.g., a cotton mill from a period of growth in local industry, a seaside cottage representing a locale's history as a resort community, a structure associated with activities of the "underground railroad."); or by association with persons or organizations significant at a local, state or national level. Simply put, why is this property important to you and the community. Attach additional sheets as needed.

see continuation sheet

### **Narrative Description of Property**

49 Leitch Avenue is located on a flat lot on the west side of Leitch Avenue between Academy and Elizabeth Streets. The house has a larger setback and wider lawn than neighboring houses on Leitch Avenue. Two concrete walks lead from the sidewalk to the house; one is perpendicular to the main entrance on the east façade and one runs diagonally from the sidewalk to the side porch on the south façade.

The two-story, gable-front house has a low-pitched roof and a simple rectangular central mass. The oldest (east) section of the house has a fieldstone foundation. The house's original details and finishes are no longer present, but the massing and fenestration suggest that it may have been constructed in the Greek Revival style. The house has horizontal vinyl siding. With the exception of the wood basement windows, the windows all appear to be vinyl.

The east façade of the house faces Leitch Avenue. A full-width, single-story porch covers the first story of the façade. The main entrance to the house is on the north side of the porch. Two windows are located to the south of the door. Two double-hung windows are evenly spaced across the second story of the façade.

Additions to the house are visible on the south façade. The east section of the south façade is the oldest. It has six-over-one, double-hung windows on the first story and smaller window openings on the second story. An enclosed porch addition projects to the south where the oldest section of the house ends. The porch provides a secondary entrance to the house. A two-story addition projects to the west from the rear of the house.

The north façade is divided in to two sections, the original house and the two-story addition to the west. The original section of the house has five windows of varying sizes irregularly space across the first and second stories of the façade. A drive way enters the property along the north façade, extending west to the detached garage.

### **Narrative Description of Significance**

The village of Skaneateles derives its name from the Indian phrase "Skeh-ne-a-lies" meaning "very long lake." The village was incorporated on April 9, 1833. Originally the hunting and fishing ground of the Onondaga, Cayuga, and Seneca of the Iroquois Six Nations, the land was divided into 41 military tracts granted to Revolutionary War soldiers as payment for their service. Abraham Cuddeback, his wife and eight children were the first settlers on the west shore of the lake in 1794, then known as the township

of Marcellus. Two years later Jedediah Sanger purchased Lot 36, the site of the village of Skaneateles, and had Jesse Kellogg build and operate a dam and grist mill. Other mill, tannery and distillery operations were quick to develop along the lake outlet, which was a major source of industry for the growing village until the 1890s when Syracuse began siphoning drinking water from the lake.

Fertile farmland was another benefit of Skaneateles' lakeside location. Teasel growing quickly became one of the most lucrative crops in town, persisting for over one hundred years after the first growers William Nipper and John Snook established the industry in 1835. Tobacco, cabbage and dairying also became popular agricultural pursuits. Carriage and sleigh making proved a profitable industry throughout the nineteenth century, and numerous boat building companies established Skaneateles as a well-known and respected name in the boating industry.

A rich social history developed simultaneously with the economic growth of the village. Residents took interest in religious pursuits, beginning with the Skaneateles Religious Society in 1801. Educational institutions, public and private, were also an early concern of the village. The mid-nineteenth century was an especially important time in social history, marked by the unique social experiment of the Skaneateles Community of 1843-1846. The Skaneateles Anti-Slavery Society, established in 1837, was a testament to the strong abolitionist spirit of the village, which served as a stop on the Underground Railroad.

Following a decline in agricultural and industrial development, Skaneateles became home to a thriving tourist industry. Early visitors arrived via stagecoach to visit establishments such as the Sherwood Tavern and Charles Kreb's Lake View House. By 1865 the Skaneateles Railroad connected the village to the Auburn branch of the New York Central Railroad, and from 1903-1930 a system of steamboat lines provided transportation between the Auburn and Syracuse Electric Trolley line. Today, Skaneateles is largely residential, and continues to have a strong tourism industry. Major medical supply company Welch Allyn is based in Skaneateles.

Leitch Avenue was originally named John Street. In 1851, a village resolution extended the street north towards what is now Elizabeth Street. John Street was renamed Leitch Avenue after D. Kellogg Leitch donated land to widen the road in 1871. The street was not populated as quickly as neighboring Academy Street because of poor drainage along much of the street. Municipal services including electric lights, telephone service, and water reached Leitch Avenue ca. 1900.

James Porter sold the property known as 49 Leitch Ave. to Charles J. and Maria Burnett in 1824. Charles J. Burnett was an English immigrant who settled in Skaneateles in 1803. His wife Maria Burnett was also an English immigrant, the daughter of Wm. J. Vredenburg, a Burnett business associate. Charles J. Burnett was postmaster of Skaneateles for twenty-six years. A son, C.J. Burnett, operated a general store in the

village for many years. It is unknown whether the Burnetts built a house on this property during their ownership.

In 1858, Maria Burnett sold the property to James Hydon. James and his wife Ann were English immigrants from Somersetshire. They arrived in New York State ca. 1843. According to Ann Hydon's obituary, James Hydon was a carpenter and built their house at 49 Leitch Ave. The house appears on the 1860 map of Skaneateles as the only house on the northern block of Leitch Ave. It was probably the first house built on the portion of Leitch Avenue between Academy and Elizabeth Streets. Due to the slope and drainage problems, the east side of Leitch Avenue was suitable for building before the west side.

Shortly before her death in 1911, Ann Hydon was celebrated as Onondaga County's only centenarian. She was 100 years, one month, and twenty-five days old when she died on January 22, 1911. A brief account of her life story was featured in a pamphlet titled "The Art of Longevity." Upon turning 100 she received "a steady stream of visitors...in the cozy little cottage in Leitch Avenue" for three days.

Other members of the Hydon family were also well known in Skaneateles. Robert T. Hydon, a son of Ann and James, worked as a newspaper printer. He apprenticed with the *Skaneateles Democrat*. Hydon moved to the Midwest and Pennsylvania, but later returned to Skaneateles.

Julia Hydon, daughter of Ann and James, was a life-long resident of Skaneateles and active in the Baptists Church. She died in 1927. It is possible that Julia Hydon, who was unmarried, resided in the house until her death in 1927. The property was sold a year later.

The Skaneateles American Legion, R. J. Hydon Post 239, is named after Robert J. Hydon, son of Robert T. Hydon. Robert J. was the grandson of Ann and James Hydon, and lived in with them in the Leitch Avenue house for much of his childhood. In 1918, Robert J. Hydon entered the Navy, serving first as an electrician at the Brooklyn Navy Yards and then as a guard at Ellis Island. He died at Ellis Island in 1918 of pneumonia as a result of influenza.

In 1928, Ann Hydon's sons sold 49 Leitch Ave. to Edward T. DeWitt. His wife was Bessie Myrtilla DeWitt. Edward DeWitt co-owned a Skaneateles produce firm. The company was originally Schultz & DeWitt, which he operated with his brother, Warren B. DeWitt. The business later was known as DeWitt-Tucker. An undated newspaper advertisement indicates that DeWitt-Tucker was established in 1892 and sold alfalfa, hay, grain and produce. DeWitt-Tucker was sold to the Maine-Hun company in the early 1930s.

Deed records show that in 1939, the widowed Bessie Myrtilla DeWitt conveyed 49 Leitch Ave. to Marcellia P. Thompson. The deed lists Thompson as residing at the address at the time of sale, and Thompson assumed the existing mortgage on the property. Between 1939 and 1952, Marcellia Thompson married Donald R. Barron; in 1952 she transferred ownership to herself and her husband jointly. As of September 2008, 49 Leitch Ave. remains in the Barron family.

### **Sources:**

"The Art of Longevity," B.J.Henley, Syracuse, NY, 1911. Hydon Biography file, Skaneateles Historical Society.

Burnett Biography file, Skaneateles Historical Society.

Collections of the Skaneateles Historical Society.

Edward T. DeWitt's obituary, ca. March 20, 1936. Dewitt Biography file, Skaneateles Historical Society. Clipping from Dewitt Biography file, Skaneateles Historical Society.

Hydon Biography file, Skaneateles Historical Society.

Ionta, Helen. *Our Town-Skaneateles*. Artcraft Press, 1993. Collection of the Skaneateles Historical Society.

Leslie, Edmund Norman. *Skaneateles: History of Its Earliest Settlement and Reminiscences of Later Times*. New York: Press of Andrew H. Kellogg, 1902.

McAlester, Virginia and Lee. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Knopf, 1990.

Onondaga County County Deed Records, Onondaga County Clerk's Office, Syracuse, NY.

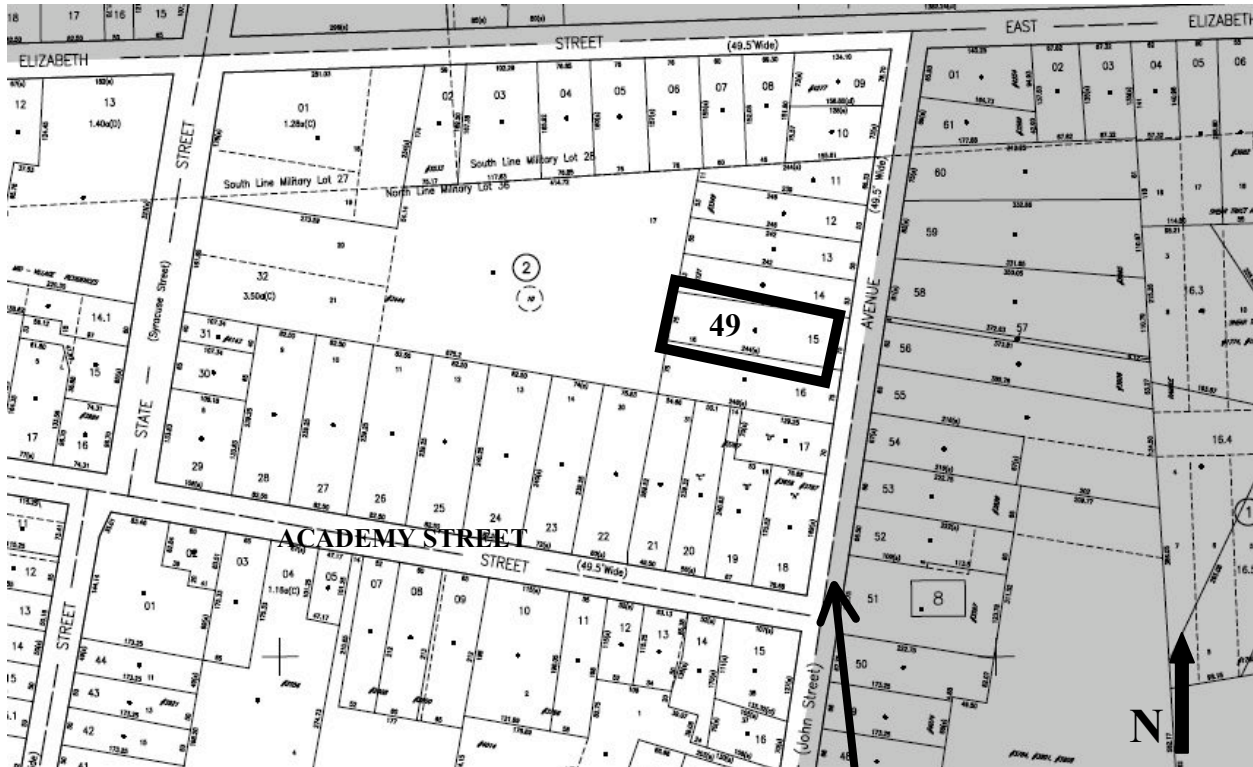
Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Digital Sanborn Maps, 1867-1970.

*Skaneateles Free Press*, "Is Now Centenarian," November 29, 1910. Hydon Biography file, Skaneateles Historical Society.

Village of Skaneateles building permit records. Accessed by Jorge Battle, Code Enforcement Officer, on November 7, 2007. Building permit records prior to 1948 were destroyed in a fire.



East façade



Map

Leitch Avenue



South façade



East and north façades