

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

historic name Warren-Benham House
other names/site number N/A
name of related multiple property listing N/A

Location

street & number 5680 Seneca Point Road

N/A	not for publication
X	vicinity

city or town Bristol Springs
state New York code NY county Ontario code 069 zip code 14512

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
I hereby certify that this X nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.
In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide X local

Roger Daniel Wray 9/20/17
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
Deputy State Prosecutor
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date
Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:)

Alexis Abernathy 11/9/17
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	1	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/residence

DOMESTIC/residence

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Early 20th century: Tudor Revival

foundation: CONCRETE, STONE
walls: WOOD, STUCCO

roof: ASPHALT
other: _____

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Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

South Bristol is a town located in the Finger Lakes area of New York State along the west side of Canandaigua Lake between the towns of Canandaigua to the north and Naples to the south. Seneca Point Road is a major roadway that runs through South Bristol along the west shore of the lake. The house at 5680 Seneca Point Road is sited on the west side of the road just north of Seneca Point Gully, between Seneca Point to the north and Cook's Point to the south. The house is irregularly shaped and located adjacent to a hillside. It is composed of four interconnected sections. The easternmost portion facing the Seneca Point Road appears as a two-story cottage with a center entrance, regularly spaced windows and an asphalt clad roof with two dormers. Extending to the west is a one and one-half story section that connects with a two-story west cottage section. Extending west from this is a small one-story connector to a two-story garage/carriage house with a louvered cupola at the peak of the roof ridge. The entire building is wood frame with a stucco exterior and dormers on the prominent elevations (except the garage). Windows vary from casement (mostly paired) to double-hung sash, most of them original. The foundation is concrete and only the east cottage portion facing the road has a basement/cellar. The house was built ca. 1924 with compatible alterations made ca. 1960 and features wood floors, original staircases, original doors, moldings, plaster ceilings and walls, and built-in features such as window bench seating, shelves and a rustic inglenook fireplace. Many of the exterior doors retain their original iron hardware. The garage/carriage barn retains its original track door and a horse stall with feed bins and feed chute. To the west of the house and garage is a dilapidated one-story structure that may have been a barn and chicken coop, but the level of deterioration is such that its function is indiscernible; therefore, this building is considered non-contributing. The main house also suffered neglect, but it is being stabilized and restored by the current owners. The house was designed by Boston based architect James Stearns Lee, whose family owned property along Canandaigua Lake. Lee designed a number of the houses along the Seneca Point area lakeshore, including his house, *Bogdanit* (extensively remodeled, 1998). In comparison, the house at 5680 Seneca Point Road displays a higher degree of historic integrity in terms of location, setting, form/design, materials, workmanship and association.

Narrative Description

Location and Setting

Canandaigua Lake is one of the Finger Lakes in central New York State, located between Honeoye Lake to the west and Seneca Lake to the east. The city of Canandaigua is on the north end of the lake and is roughly 30 miles southwest of Rochester (Monroe County). The lake is mostly bounded by Ontario County and South Bristol is one of its towns on the west side of the lake, characterized by hills, steep inland drop-offs and flat land at the shorelines. South Bristol also features Seneca Point Glen and creek, which runs along the south boundary of the nominated property. The nominated house is located at the east end of the property, set back from the road and overlooking the lake and Seneca Point, one of the named points along Canandaigua Lake. The entire property covers slightly less than four acres. West of the house is a dilapidated former agricultural outbuilding of undetermined age (non-contributing). Large open lawn/fields surround the

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buildings, except for the north side of the house, which abuts a hillside. A gravel drive accesses the property from Seneca Point Road and extends along the south side of the house. Beyond the grade of the driveway, the land begins to fall gradually away as it descends toward the brook which runs through the property. Viewed from the southern approach, as one drives north on Seneca Point Road, the house nestles in harmoniously with its surroundings while it looks out over the glen and the lake.

Beginning in the late nineteenth century, the shores of Canandaigua Lake became an attraction for vacationers and, later, for seasonal lakeside homeowners, taking advantage of the scenic views across to Bare Hill on the east side of the lake. Several large homes are visible from the nominated property along Seneca Point's shoreline, accessible by Applewood Drive, Shore Drive and Hicks Road. Some large homes are on the west side of the Seneca Point Road, including the nominated property, all sited looking toward Canandaigua Lake. South Bristol is still largely undeveloped with several enclaves of vacation homes along the west shore of Canandaigua Lake, similar to Seneca Point. Areas further inland are still largely woodland or agricultural with two large commercial developments being the Bristol Mountain Ski Resort and lands around the Bristol Harbour Golf Club/Village. Undeveloped lands owned by Bristol Harbour Village border the nominated property on the north. The nearest incorporated settlements are the village of Naples to the south and the city of Canandaigua to the north. Bristol Springs is the closest hamlet to Seneca Point.

Exterior

Built ca. 1924, the house is an irregular shaped building that is composed of four distinct sections: the east end cottage, the center enclosed breezeway, the west end cottage (former garage) and the barn at the extreme west end. (See diagram.) The east end cottage section (closest to Seneca Point Road) is two-stories, wood frame with stucco exterior and steep asphalt-shingled roof. The foundation is stone and concrete and has a cast concrete watertable that connects on the east elevation with a concrete base. This supports a centrally placed single-width entrance porch with a flat roof and wood lattice supports. The door is a combination of nine-lights over a solid wood panel and features original iron hardware. Paired nine-light casement windows flank the centrally located entrance and porch. The roof begins at the edge of the first story and is slightly flared. Two evenly placed dormers are in this roof end and consist of eight-over-eight double-hung sash, flat roofs, and wood siding. A tall, stucco coated brick chimney is on the roof ridge between the dormers. Visible in the foundation are two basement windows, as this is the only part of the building that has a basement/cellar. These windows appear to be replacements. The south elevation of this portion of the building features two sets of paired casement windows on the first floor and an entrance door. Paired six-over-six double-hung windows are in the second story and a louvered vent is in the gable peak. The same type vent is in the north elevation. This part of the east cottage section (north elevation) features a large tripartite window in the first story that consists of a central, eight-over-eight double-hung sash window flanked by two four-over-four windows. The second story has a set of paired windows similar to the south elevation.

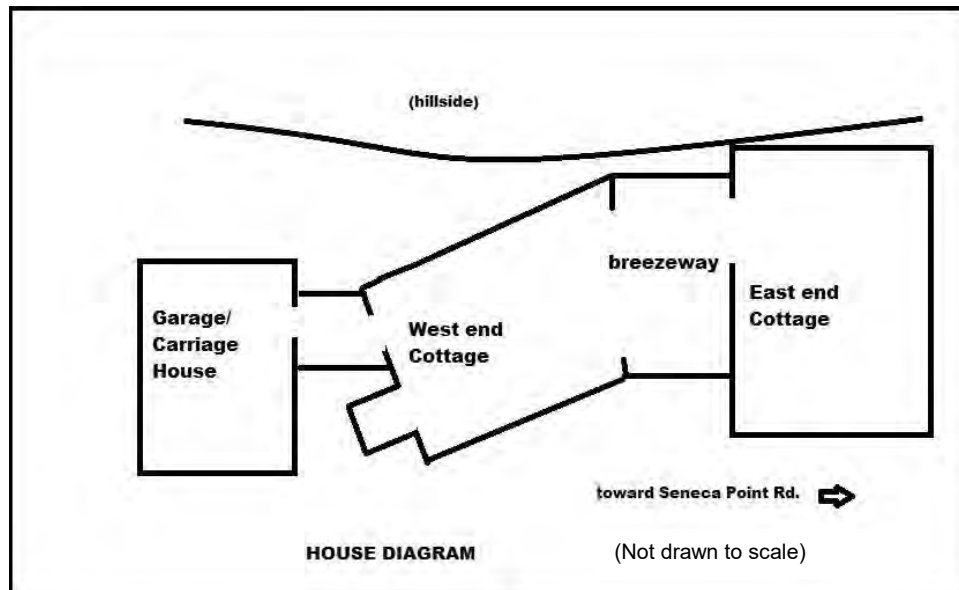
Extending east from the east-end cottage is a breezeway that was originally open but enclosed ca.1960. The north side has the best evidence of the enclosure with the second floor slightly extending beyond the first floor exterior wall. This upper portion is sided in wood shingle and contains two small casement windows and extends to the north side of the west end cottage creating a continuous roof dormer. This section has three six-over-six double-hung windows and a flat roof

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that appears to be membrane rather than asphalt shingle as seen in the rest of the house. Most of the first story on this elevation is obscured by the hillside, but a set of French doors is visible in the portion adjacent to the east end cottage. The south side roof of the enclosed breezeway has a pair of casement windows in the first story and two bay-style window dormers in the upper portion of the roof, again with casement openings.



Both the south side of the breezeway and the west end cottage have faux half timbering around the casement windows and an entrance with French doors. The west end cottage (originally a garage) features a pair of casement windows toward the east and two larger sets of casement windows to the west. As built, the entire first floor of this section was dominated by two overhead garage doors. Another change to this section was the addition of the tall stucco clad chimney that rises above the east gable end. This does not appear in a 1928 image of the house and was apparently added when the garage was turned into living space. Two dormer windows are above, similar to the east end cottage façade.

Extending to the west is a single bay projection and behind it is the single story connecting section of the barn. This portion has a nine-light and wood panel door with a three-light transom and eight-over-eight double-hung windows. The main portion of the barn extends perpendicular to the connector. The east elevation has the main entrance, which consists of hinged wood paneled sections on an overhead track which curves to the south. The south side has two six-over-six windows in the first story and above is a centrally located wood batten style hatch with a triangular top edge and iron hardware. The west elevation has a central batten style door flanked by two six-over-six windows. The roof is flared and asphalt shingled as seen in the rest of the building. The barn has a tall louvered ventilator with a rounded metal cap centrally located on the roof ridge. There are no dormers in the garage/barn roof.

Interior

Beginning with the east end cottage, the first floor interior consists of a large open room visually divided by a center ceiling beam and brick chimney stack. The south side of the room functions as a kitchen, and the north side is currently being

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used as a dining room. The room retains the original baseboard and crown moldings, which lack any indication that a wall originally separated the space. The room also features the original window sill and moldings, but the floor may be an in-kind replacement (narrow wood flooring). Wall surfaces are plaster and a center arch leads to an enclosed stair to the second floor and to the enclosed breezeway. A half-bath is located near the south side entrance (off the kitchen) and features an original casement window set into a wide molding in the wall adjoining the enclosed breezeway. The second floor is divided into three spaces: an open sitting area that was originally a separate bedroom to the east of the stair landing; a northeast bedroom, and a full bath to the west. These areas retain original wall and ceiling surfaces, window moldings, floors (wood and tile), and built-in cabinetry. Interestingly, many of the interior walls were made of sheetrock, sometimes known as drywall, then a relatively new material.¹

Only the east end cottage has a cellar or basement, which is accessible by an internal staircase. The floor is concrete and the foundation walls appear to be combination of crushed stone and concrete. This area currently is empty but contains updated electrical panels, sump pump and newer basement windows. Also visible is the brick chimney support pier, original floor joists, and newer subflooring above.

Continuing to the west, the stair hall connects with an upper walkway that follows the north side of the enclosed breezeway, connecting with the second floor of the west end cottage. This walkway was added ca. 1960 when the breezeway was enclosed and is currently open to the interior due to repairs being made to the breezeway ceiling. The roof in this section is membrane and deferred maintenance/water damage resulted in a partial collapse of the ceiling. The breezeway interior is open from floor to ceiling. The floor in this area consists of brick, except for a curved depression in the north side that was a koi pond, added ca. 1960. The floor was resurfaced at the same time and is composed of bricks salvaged from a demolished local one-room school house.

Part of an exterior wall to the west-end cottage was removed, allowing the brick floor to be extended into this portion of the house, terminating at a large Arts and Crafts style fireplace marked by heavy brick timbering at the west end of the room. The fireplace and interior of this room date to ca. 1960, when it was converted from a garage into living space by its second owner. The brickwork in the fireplace was built when the floor was resurfaced. This area retains its original wall and ceiling surfaces. It also has a stair to the second floor, added ca. 1960. The second floor has two bedrooms and a small, unfinished section that shows the connection between original roof and north side dormer walkway. The bedrooms feature original floors, baseboards, window sills and moldings and plaster walls and ceilings. One room has built-in shelving along the wall surfaces which may date from ca. 1960.

From the west end cottage, a connector to the barn extends from the northwest. This extension is clearly visible from a south side entrance that consists of an original nine-light and wood paneled door with a three-light transom. This connector has a concrete floor, walls with horizontal wainscoting under the window and the original wood-paneled door to the barn.

¹ Sheetrock, invented in 1916 by the U.S. Gypsum Company, was a fire-proof, non-warping wall board composed of compressed layers of gypsum between heavy paper. The product later became commonly known as drywall, but U.S. Gypsum marketed the product with Sheetrock as the brand name. After its introduction, builders used drywall in place of lath and would spread a thin layer of plaster over the surface. Later improvements in drywall resulted in thicker paper that allowed it to be immediately painted or papered, bypassing the process of skim coating with plaster. By the 1950s, drywall was the preferred interior wall construction technique due to its quick installation and lower costs.

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The barn is divided into an area used as a garage on the south end and horse stalls in the north end. The interior is unfinished. It features wood floors, built-in feed bins and a ladder to the upper loft that was for feed storage. Interior wall surfaces are wide vertical boards. The larger opens to the exterior driveway and the door consists of panels that fold accordion style as it makes its way around a track designed to accommodate the 90 degree turn from the doorway to the inside wall.

Outbuilding

West of the barn is a long, rectangular shaped outbuilding of undetermined age and function due to a large portion of the building being gone, exposing much of the interior to the elements. Due to the deterioration and undetermined age, the building is considered noncontributing to this nomination.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Recreation

Architecture

Period of Significance

Ca. 1924-ca.1960

Significant Dates

Ca. 1924, 1957, ca. 1960

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

James Stearns Lee

Period of Significance (justification)

The period begins with the initial construction (ca. 1924) and ends with the last changes made to the house ca. 1960.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary) N/A

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

Built ca. 1924, the Warren-Benham House is significant under Criterion A in the area of recreation as representing Seneca Point's early twentieth century transition from an economy based on limited agriculture and summer steamboat excursions to one based on the development of private estates and vacation homes. The nominated property was originally part of an apple farm located across from the Seneca Point Hotel, a popular vacation spot until the hotel was destroyed by fire in 1899. The fire marked the end of the public era of Seneca Point, which coincided with the decline of the steamboat trade on Canandaigua Lake. Private estates began to appear along the point, accessible by private boats and eventually by improved roads. Around 1924, Frank H. Warren, music critic for the *New York World*, acquired a Seneca Point property known as Willowbrook, and eventually had the nominated house built across the street after he acquired the land ca. 1923. Although intended to be used as staff housing, the cottage was nevertheless designed by prominent architect James Stearns Lee and was similar to the cottages Lee designed for himself and for other summer residents of Seneca Point. Eventually, Frank Wagner moved into the Lee-designed cottage and lived there until his death in 1948. In 1957, the house and surrounding three-acres were purchased by Walter Benham, a local politician, who owned the property until 1979. Benham was responsible for the major alterations to the house. These included enclosing the breezeway, converting the original garage to living space (now west cottage) and adding a chimney with interior fireplace and inglenook. The house has remained intact since the Benham period.

The house is also significant under Criterion C in the area of architecture as an example of a summer cottage built along the Seneca Point shoreline designed by James Stearns Lee, an architect known for his work in the Boston area and on Cape Cod. It closely followed the form of the house Lee designed for himself (*Bogdanit*) at Seneca Point. Lee's work drew from a number of revival styles prevalent at the time, one of them being the Tudor Revival style, which he used for the house built for Frank Warren. As such, the cottage features stucco siding, half-timbered effects, steeply pitched roofs, gabled forms, and tall chimneys with terra cotta chimney pots. The cottage is also significant for incorporating a relatively new building material, sheetrock, which was invented in 1916, as one of its primary interior construction materials. The alterations by Walter Benham, though made almost four decades after construction, carry through the same Tudor Revival theme. Particularly significant is the fireplace with inglenook created in the new west cottage (formerly a garage).

The period of significance for the Warren-Benham House begins with its construction in 1924 and ends with the changes made to the building by Benham in 1960. After Benham, the house had two subsequent owners before being foreclosed on (2011) and it was during this period that the building fell into disrepair. The house was resold twice after the foreclosure and the current owners are repairing and restoring the house to its historic appearance.

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Developmental history/additional historic context information (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Historical Context

Lands around Canandaigua Lake were first inhabited by the Seneca Nation of the Hodenosaunee (Iroquois) or the *People of the Longhouse* and the Seneca were the *Keepers of the Western Door*, being the westernmost nation. Two hills along the east side of the lake were extremely important to the Seneca, namely Bare Hill and South Hill, where the nation originated and was known as the *People of the Hill*. In 1779, the Sullivan-Clinton Expedition came through this area as part of a punitive campaign to cut British and Loyalist supply lines by destroying Iroquois settlements and newly harvested crops. A detachment was sent south to Seneca Point to burn the apple and peach orchards, and a number of soldiers returned to the region after the American War for Independence, recalling the fertile land and abundant crops. Agriculture became an important draw for the Canandaigua Lake area, as settlers moved west to purchase newly surveyed lands in the late eighteenth century. Lands were divided into townships that were further divided into lots for sale. As more people settled in the region, new towns formed, including South Bristol, which separated from the Town of Bristol in 1838.

By the late nineteenth century, South Bristol was still primarily farm land, as described in an 1892 history of the town:

The western portion of South Bristol is devoted principally to general agricultural pursuits, and the land is of such character and quality as to produce good returns to careful cultivation. During the last score or more of years, the lands in the eastern part of the town, which were formerly under general farm cultivation, have been turned into vineyards, for which the locality and soil are peculiarly adapted, and the returns of which are far in excess of anything that could be realized from the average farm. In fact the lake shore lands throughout the north and south extent of South Bristol have been changed into an almost continuous series of vineyards, well attended and carefully cultivated, while here and there, nestling comfortably in groves of forest trees, are numerous cottages, the summer homes of at least half a hundred business men and pleasure seekers.²

In addition to the vineyards, Elihu Morse and Manning Wells bought lands in 1866 at Seneca Point for an apple orchard. Morse and Wells were lawyers from Canandaigua and the apple orchard became an important local venture, producing apples and cider shipped to markets via steamboat from Seneca Point. A stone building was built near the point as a processing house, and it became a gathering point for the local summer community after it ceased being part of the Morse and Wells operation.

Beginning in 1855, various points along the lake became less isolated when the steamboat *Joseph Wood* was launched on Canandaigua Lake, ushering in an era of weekend and summertime travel with South Bristol being a preferred location:

...between the north line and the hamlet of Woodville, are dozens of landing-places... The hotel at Seneca Point is a large and well-arranged building, owned by a company of shareholders, and is unquestionably the most popular resort on the lake. The summer house at Cook's Point is for summer boarders, and smaller and of less capacity than that last mentioned, but is a comfortable place and one well patronized.³

The height of steamboat travel on Canandaigua Lake was around the turn-of-the-twentieth century, roughly 1880-1910, but officially ended in 1932, when the last steamboat ceased operations. As a result of improved access, several points along

²Lewis Cass Aldrich (George S. Conover, editor), *History of Ontario County, New York*, (Syracuse, NY: D. Mason & Co., Publishers, 1893), 441.

³ Ibid.

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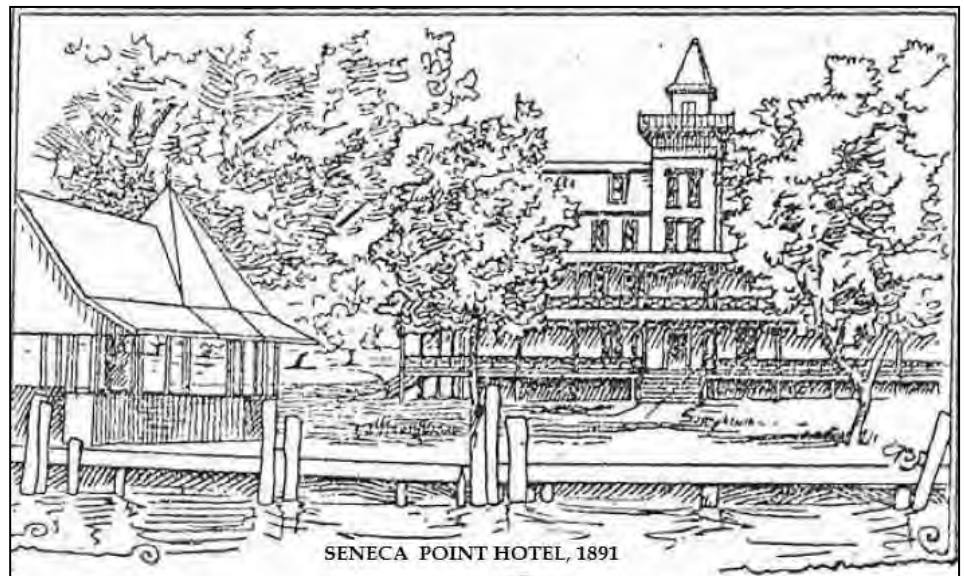
the lake became the sites for private hunting, fishing and nature clubs, popular picnic spots, and steamboats frequently offered moonlight excursions to one or more of these spots.

Steamboats regularly stopped at the Seneca Point Hotel, often making the trip in forty minutes at a top speed of ten miles per hour. The hotel was described as:

...really elegant...built in the modern style of architecture, and in all respects will compare with any of the great summer hotels of the eastern states. To give one an idea of the immensity of this beautiful building it is only necessary to state that fully 300 people can be accommodated in the great dining departments at one sitting...Excursionists who bring baskets will find rustic seats and tables in the picnic grove and in the glen back of the hotel.⁴

The hotel was owned by John D. McKechnie, whose family members were brewers before they were hoteliers; however, prior to the hotel's opening, the first hotel on Seneca Point was the Lake House, in operation before 1874. In 1886, the Seneca Point Hotel was constructed and the Lake House made part of the building. A series of sales and exchanges by the hotel owners included provisions for leasing rights for the Canandaigua Lake Steamboat Company to dock at Seneca Point, as well as an easement provided to the Seneca Point Hotel that allowed its guests to cross the farm property opposite the hotel on their way to the mouth of the Seneca Glen.

In addition to the hotel, the McKechnie family owned Willowbrook, vaguely described as a "Victorian cottage," not far from the hotel. In 1898, they sold Willowbrook to Dr. Belmont D. Bogart and his wife, Maude Humphrey Bogart, a well-known artist/illustrator originally from Rochester. The couple lived in New York City, using Willowbrook as a summer home. For fifteen years the Bogarts and their children spent summers on Seneca Point, where their son, Humphrey, would lead his friends on frequent expeditions through the glen into Seneca Point Gully. He went on to become the well-known Hollywood actor.⁵



In 1899, the Seneca Point Hotel burned to the ground, but Seneca Point remained a popular destination for weekenders and seasonal vacationers with its 100 scenic acres and access to the Seneca Point Glen. One of the boys who may have accompanied the young Humphrey Bogart on treks to the glen was James Stearns Lee, son of the former rector of St. John's Episcopal Church and principal of the Fort Hill School for Boys, both in Canandaigua. The family retained a summer home on the point even after moving to Milton, Massachusetts, where John Hattrick Lee (the father) taught

⁴"Tis a Beautiful Place. Seneca Point the Queen of the Inland Lake Resorts," *Elmira Telegram*, 19 July 1891, 4.

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science at Milton Academy. By this time, more of the land along Seneca Point was gradually shifting to private ownership, marking what one resident described as a third period of the point's history. Following the destruction of the Seneca Point Hotel, the point was divided into lots for individual sale, starting in 1916.

Richard M. Morse was a Seneca Point resident, local historian, and town official who published an article in the *Canandaigua Daily Messenger* in 1973 describing the close-knit summer community that developed between the 1910s and the 1930s. In his article, he wrote that by end of the 1920s, all of the lake property was "occupied by cottages...At the beginning of this period the late George W. Hamlin, the Canandaigua Banker ...and Sherman Morse bought most of the property north of Sucker Brook and subdivided it. The eleven acres behind the cottage lots were planted with apples and added to Sherman's farm operation." He continued:

In the early '20s, Roy McCanne, head of Rochester's Stromberg-Carlson Company, bought three lots from the Hamlin-Morse tract and built a large but tastefully rustic cottage. He was influential in bringing electricity and radios to the point. For some time, however, the old Victrola in the Packing House [stone house] was not completely displaced by its temperamental rival...Changes at Seneca Point frequently were viewed with suspicion. When a collection was taken up to help bring in electricity, George Hamlin refused to participate. For some years after the highline came down Seneca Hill, his cottage continued to depend on kerosene lamps and candles. One summer he took a vacation in Europe, and his good wife, Mary, had the cottage wired.⁶

He described other changes made to the point during this period, which included the paving of Seneca Point Road, the appearance of Chris-Crafts and other private boats powered by outboard motors and how World War II curtailed the frequent parties and dances at what was known as the Stone House (the former packing house for Morse and Wells). The stone packing house was then owned by Frank Warren, a former music critic for the *New York World* and an announcer with the new WHAM radio station in Rochester. Warren later became its programming director. He frequently hosted dances at the Stone House, where Richard Morse's grandmother played the piano and Frank Warren regaled the partygoers with popular songs, some of which he composed. The dances often went into the early hours of the morning, much to the chagrin of Georgie Lee, who lived in *Bogdanit*, the cottage just south of the stone house. According to Morse:

Just across the brook from the Packing House stands the cottage built by the late James S. Lee, a native of Canandaigua, and his Boston wife, Georgia. (Perhaps the reader feels the term "cottage" is somewhat odd when applied to some of the Seneca Point structures; however, it comes nearer reality than "cabin," the description once used regularly by neighboring farm-folk and occasionally still heard).

"Auntie Georgie" used to "come west" for the summer from the home of the bean and the cod. Sometimes the Saturday night dances lasted past midnight, and Sherman [Morse] was accused of disturbing her dreams. He, in turn, threatened to add peacocks and Guinea hens, noted for their pre-dawn outbursts, to his farm operations if she persisted, and the dances continued.

But usually they ended early...⁷

Frank H. Warren and his wife, Esther Judson, acquired property across the road from their summer Seneca Point estate around 1924. A small house that was on the property burned down in 1922 and, after the fire, the Warrens acquired the

⁵ "Finger Lake Home of Actor Bogart, Seneca Point, Changes Hands," *Geneva Daily Times*, 18 April 1945, 7.

⁶ Richard M. Morse, "Seneca Point Then and Now," reprint: *Canandaigua Daily Messenger*, July 1973, 4-6.

⁷ *Ibid*, 4.

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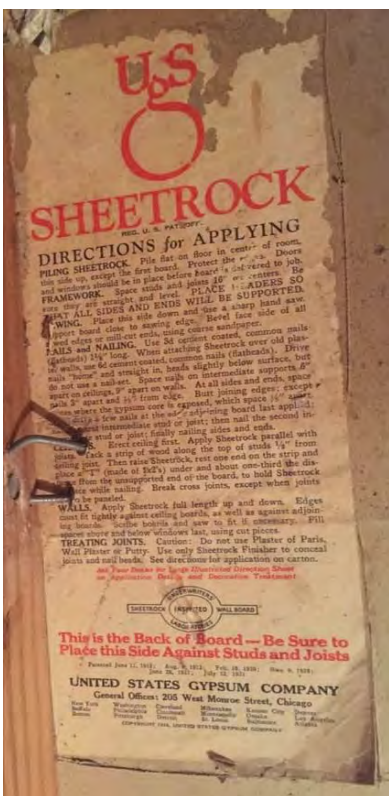
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property for \$1 and proceeded to have the nominated cottage built as staff housing, with an added section for use as a garage and apartment for a chauffeur. In addition to the cottage and garage, an attached stable connected to the west end, giving the entire assemblage a rambling character. All construction was completed well before 1928. When Esther Warren died in 1932, she left Frank the house with its attached garage and barn as well as the chicken house and 81 acres of land. Esther was a wealthy heiress from Syracuse and apparently it was her money that purchased the property and paid for construction. In 1944, Frank Warren sold his larger Seneca Point estate, but appears to have kept the house at 5680 Seneca Point Road and moved into it himself, since his obituary (1948) stated that his funeral was from his house on Seneca Point.⁸ In 1957, the house and surrounding three acres were purchased by Walter Benham, a local politician, who owned the property until 1979.

Criterion C: Architecture

James S. Lee and his family were long time summer residents of Seneca Point. James Stearns Lee (1870-1937) was born in Lawrence, Massachusetts, and grew up in Canandaigua after his father became the rector of St. John's Episcopal Church. He moved to the Boston area after the family moved to Milton in 1892 where he worked for several years as a draftsman before forming his own firm in 1900. He was largely known for his residential designs and even the school he designed for his sister in Boston resembled a four-story Colonial Revival townhouse, allowing it to blend in with the

neighboring residences on Marlborough Street.⁹ As a summer resident of Seneca Point, Lee designed his own house, known as *Bogdanit* (spelled variously as *Bog Danet*, or *Bogdanett*), built in 1896-7. It was something of a showcase for Lee and allowed him to display his considerable abilities as an architect to his friends and neighbors, resulting in additional local commissions. Other cottages designed by Lee at Seneca Point were *Gladshiem*, *Nine Oaks*, *The Hedgerow* (demolished), *Woodlodge*, *West Winds*, the McCanne house and the Schofield house, and the cottages all shared certain characteristics such as angular forms, dormers, verandas and sloping roofs with prominent elevations facing the lake. Unfortunately many of the houses were substantially renovated over the years, leaving the Warren-Benham House as the most intact example of his work.



After the Warrens bought their Seneca Point estate in 1915, the caretaker lived in a farmhouse across the road that was actually part of the Morse property. This was the farmhouse destroyed by



⁸Frank Warren, Music Critic, Dies at Age 73—Former Buffalonian was a Radio Pioneer," *Buffalo Courier Express*, 31 July, 1948, 16.

⁹James S. Lee was a from well-respected New England family with many ties to education. In addition to his sister and father being educators, his grandfather was the Rev. William Augustus Stearns who served as president of Amherst College from 1832 to 1876, served on the Massachusetts Board of Education, and was a member of the corporation of Phillips Academy and the Theological Seminary at Andover.

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fire in 1922 and the property that they acquired for \$1. A new cottage was designed for the Warrens by James S. Lee with construction beginning around 1924 as evidenced by recently uncovered sheetrock boards with the original labels from the U.S. Gypsum Company, bearing a copyright date of 1924. Other evidence is a

historic 1928 photograph that shows the original configuration of the house with the east wing cottage, one-story breezeway, garage (now the west end cottage) and barn.

Several signs point to the building being built in stages. The basement foundation of poured concrete was limited to the east end cottage with the rest of the building sections resting on concrete slabs. The east portion of the house reflected Lee's work on Cape Cod by using the same design form with its sloping roof and two dormer windows over the first story.

According to 1921-22 correspondence, staged construction was also used by Lee at another Seneca Point house designed for W. Roy McCanne. When the design produced a building that was initially beyond the McCanne's original budget, Lee redesigned it to be smaller and later added an annex. Lee's arrangements with his customer-friends were so flexible and casual that he never provided a formal bill for the work. When McCanne paid him \$191.77 for the design, Lee returned \$91.77.

Both *Bogdanit* and the Warren-Benham House share similar characteristic features of Lee's work. The core of the buildings were low profile two-story or one and one-half story construction that at first glance from the lake, had the appearance of a Cape Cod or Dutch colonial house. Dormer windows were evenly placed overlooking broad porches that capitalized on the extraordinary lake views for those living on the point. Working from that core, Lee added angled sections that provided provocative spaces and dimensions that when viewed from the exterior, provided visual interest while adding functional interior spaces characterized by soft light. His inclination for using dramatic angles and asymmetry became his signature feature. Both *Bogdanit* and the Warren-Benham House share the feature of a 45 degree dogleg.

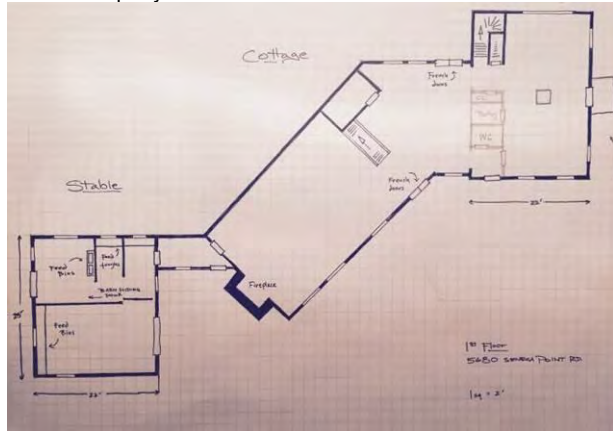
In the house at 5680 Seneca Point Road, symmetry was provided by the east and west wings along with the attached stable at the extreme west end that were nearly identical in size, shape, and orientation to the east end cottage. Lee started with the familiar Cape Cod form but with a stucco exterior instead of shingle or clapboard. He then combined it with the dogleg of the garage wing, creating an approach with the sweep of a villa courtyard. The resulting drama of the building's architectural design was further heightened by its location, and the fact that the diagonal sweep of the central structure followed the contours of the hill on the north side. The central wing section gave Lee the liberty to build the lower story directly into the base of the hill.

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Design of Bogdanit

Lee's dramatic approach to the design of the garage allowed for what was originally staff housing to have a separate aesthetic identity. Once the Warrens commissioned the building, it was no longer simply the cottage home of the local handyman, but a respectable Seneca Point residence. Being set back from the shoreline, it still maintained a prominent location along the glen and was highly visible from the road. Also, while the structure looked like a large, rambling residence from the outside, it was in fact very modestly proportioned. At the time it was built, the usable interior for residential purposes consisted of a one and one-half story Cape Cod approximately 22-feet by 25-feet. The garage wing was larger than the residential wing, and the third wing was a stable for horses with space for a utility cart or wagon used for farming and local hauling. The upstairs in the garage was presumed to be additional living space for a chauffeur-mechanic.

In 1957, the house was sold to Walter and Emily Benham. Walter C. Benham was the owner-operator of the W. Case Benham Elevator-Ontario Grain Company, a former mayor of Canandaigua, councilman for the Town of South Bristol and was later elected to the position of Ontario County Clerk.¹⁰ The Benhams bought the house at the conclusion of his mayoral duties. Shortly after, they converted it to a full-time residence that would accommodate a growing family. During renovations, most historic details were retained and alterations followed the same style. The most significant change was to the garage, which was converted into living space. Two large garage doors on the façade were replaced with new casement windows and two pairs of French doors; a tall stucco-clad chimney with a terra-cotta chimney pot was added on the west gable end, and the breezeway was enclosed and received a new entrance with Tudor Revival half-timbering. Two new dormer windows were added for natural lighting, one of them adding light and ventilation into the upper story bathroom in the east cottage. On the interior, a fireplace with inglenook was built on the west end of the newly converted garage.

During the renovations, the nearby brick School Number 1 (the oldest one-room school house in the vicinity) was decommissioned and torn down. The Benhams collected and reused a significant portion of the materials from the school, most notably the exterior brick that was used to resurface the ground floor of the former garage wing. Exposed beams were added to a common room reflecting Lee's Tudor Revival exterior. They added built-in cabinets under the stairs and

¹⁰Talomie, Benham Seek County Clerk Job," *Geneva Times*, 5 February 1970, 6.

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an unusual water feature (koi pond) situated toward the back of the house in the enclosed dog leg. French doors were added to the enclosed breezeway that opened onto a small rear patio, featuring more of the brick from the schoolhouse. As for the barn on the west end, the Benhams left it essentially unaltered from the date of its original construction, retaining all the original feed bins, a vertical feed chute from the loft, and two sliding barn doors on their original roller tracks.

Renovations made by the Benhams were the last significant changes made to the house. Retaining the form and the use of similar period elements (casement windows, French doors, etc.) revealed a clarity of vision to see the historic value in Lee's structure and to adapt it in a responsible and aesthetically sensitive way to full residential use. The reuse of historic materials from the demolished school added to the character of the house, fully complementing Lee's architecture in ways that enhanced the design. The evolution of the Warren-Benham House offers an interesting glimpse into the history of Seneca Point and its summer community. From the commission of the Warrens through the Benham's use, the house remained one of James S. Lee's signature cottages built on the point.

Agriculture and tourism remain an important part of the South Bristol economy. Vineyards and wineries stretch across the hills above Seneca Point, which draw tourists from throughout the region. Steamboats disappeared long ago, replaced by personal watercraft and automobile traffic, but Seneca Point remains a desirable destination for seasonal and year-round residents. The vibrant historic lakeside community that developed in the early twentieth century still exists although recently built condominiums are placing new development pressures on the locality. In an effort to keep part of Seneca Point forever wild, a group of friends of author and local historian Richard Morse purchased 64 acres of woodland and fields, partnering with the Finger Lakes Land Trust to create the Richard M. Morse Conservation Preserve. It runs along the Seneca Glen Creek south of the house at 5680 Seneca Point Road and north of a town-owned property on the nominated property's north side, ensuring that the house's view of the glen be preserved. The land across the street is also held in trust by a small group of lakeside residents, allowing the house to be seen from Canandaigua Lake. Other of James S. Lee's buildings are obscured from street view by mature trees and plantings, but they remain a unique collection of his work outside of New England.

Warren-Benham House
Name of Property

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- "Tis a Beautiful Place. Seneca Point the Queen of Inland Lake Resorts." *Elmira Telegram*, 19 July 1891, 4.
- "Trustee of Hobart Given \$10,000 Estate—Children Come into Million Dollar Estate—Frank H. Warren Named Guardian of Persons Under Will." *Geneva Daily Times*, 7 May 1932, 7.

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Webster, Clarence. "Meet the Mayor—Drama Training Comes in Hand for Canandaigua City Leader." *Rochester Democrat and Chronicle*, 8 June 1957, 13.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
 previously listed in the National Register
 previously determined eligible by the National Register
 designated a National Historic Landmark
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other
Name of repository: Ontario County Historical Society

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property ±3.65 acres
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>18N</u> Zone	<u>308444</u> Easting	<u>4735105</u> Northing	3	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing
2	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing	4	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary is indicated by a heavy line on the enclosed map with scale.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary is the same as for the period of significance.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Christopher Bennem & Lisa Moore (Edited by Virginia L. Bartos, Ph.D., NYS-OPRHP)
organization _____ date June 2017
street & number 5680 Seneca Point Road telephone N/A
city or town Naples State NY zip code 14512
e-mail virginia.bartos@parks.ny.gov

Additional Documentation

Warren-Benham House

Ontario County, NY
County and State

Name of Property

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Warren-Benham House

City or Vicinity: Bristol Springs vicinity

County: Ontario State: New York

Photographer: Virginia L. Bartos (photos 0002 thru
Chris Bennem (photo 0001)

Date Photographed: 5 March 2017 (photo 0001 dated 2016)

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

- 0001 of 0018: South elevation of Warren-Benham House, view looking north.
- 0002 of 0018: East end cottage, view looking west.
- 0003 of 0018: East and north elevations of house showing hillside, view looking southwest.
- 0004 of 0018: Detail view of enclosed breezeway, view looking north.
- 0005 of 0018: Former garage, now common area, view looking north.
- 0006 of 0018: Connecting portion between house and barn, view looking northwest.
- 0007 of 0018: Barn, west end of house, view looking northwest.
- 0008 of 0018: West elevation of barn, view looking east.
- 0009 of 0018: Interior view of barn showing original door.
- 0010 of 0018: Interior view of barn.
- 0011 of 0018: Interior view of barn showing feed bins.
- 0012 of 0018: Interior view of passage from house to barn.
- 0013 of 0018: Brick fireplace, west wall of former garage.
- 0014 of 0018: Detail view of south door to east end cottage.
- 0015 of 0018: Dining Room in east end cottage.
- 0016 of 0018: Second floor stair landing, east end cottage.
- 0017 of 0018: Second floor bedroom, east end of cottage.
- 0018 of 0018: Second floor room, former chauffeurs quarters.

Warren-Benham House
Name of Property

Ontario County, NY
County and State

Property Owner:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Chris Bennem & Lisa Moore
street & number 5680 Seneca Point Road telephone N/A
city or town Naples state NY zip code 14512

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

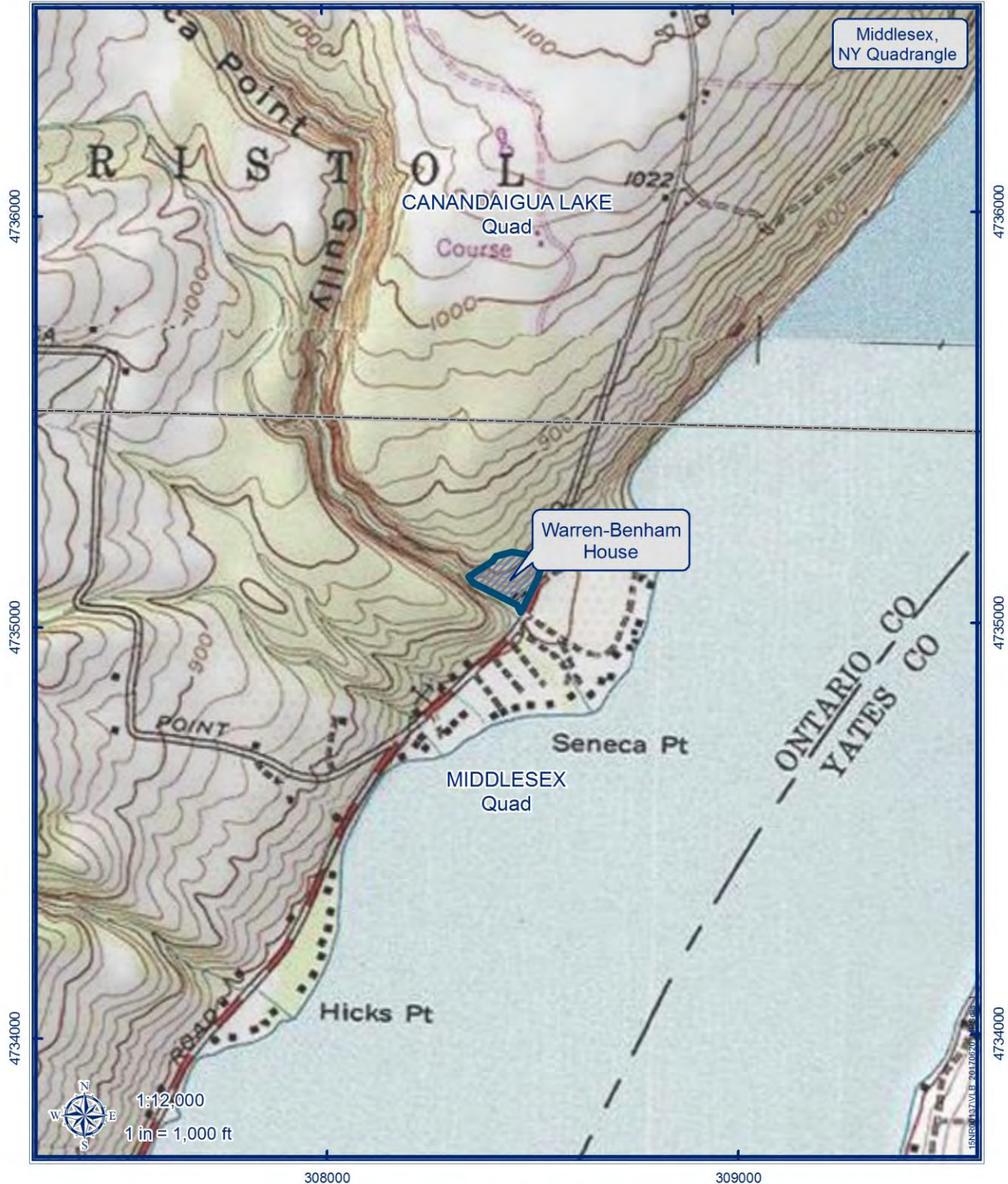
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Warren-Benham House
Name of Property

Ontario County, NY
County and State

Warren-Benham House
South Bristol, Ontario Co., NY

5680 Seneca Point Road
South Bristol, NY 14512



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter



Warren-Benham House



Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation

Warren-Benham House
Name of Property

Ontario County, NY
County and State

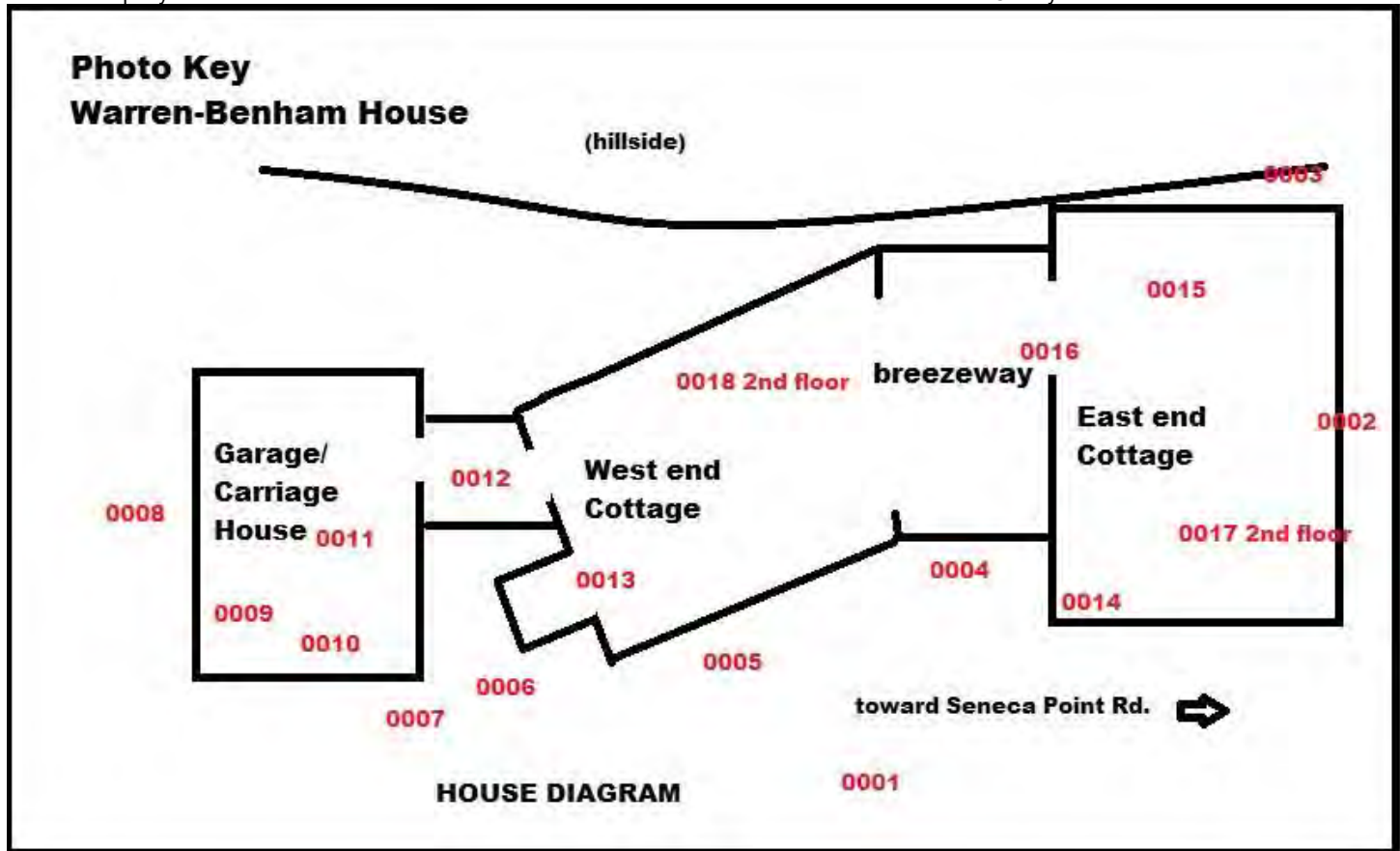
Warren-Benham House
South Bristol, Ontario Co., NY

5680 Seneca Point Road
South Bristol, NY 14512



Warren-Benham House
Name of Property

Ontario County, NY
County and State













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Transfer
585-272-0741

















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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received: 9/25/2017 Date of Pending List: 10/26/2017 Date of 16th Day: 11/13/2017 Date of 45th Day: 11/9/2017 Date of Weekly List: 11/9/2017

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

Accept Return Reject 11/9/2017 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments:

Recommendation/ Criteria

Reviewer Alexis Abernathy Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2236 Date _____

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



**Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation**

ANDREW M. CUOMO
Governor

ROSE HARVEY
Commissioner



22 September 2017

Alexis Abernathy
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places

Mail Stop 7228

1849 C Street NW
Washington DC 20240

Re: National Register Nominations

Dear Ms. Abernathy:

I am pleased to submit the following twelve nominations, all on disc, to be considered for listing by the Keeper of the National Register:

Holy Cross African Orthodox Pro-Cathedral, New York County
Bethel Christian Avenue Historic District, Suffolk County
Old Bethel Cemetery, Suffolk County
Spear and Company Factory, Queens County
Saugerties and New York Steamboat Company Warehouses, Ulster County
Lefferts Manor Historic District (Boundary Increase), Kings County
Ellis Squires Jr, House, Suffolk County
William A. Farnum Boathouse, Suffolk County
Warren-Benham House, Ontario County
Oswego & Syracuse Railroad Freight House, Oswego County
Forest Hill Cemetery, Oneida County
Caffe Cino, New York County

Please note that the last nomination, Caffè Cino, is the fourth of five nominations submitted under our Underrepresented Communities grant for LGBT sites in New York City. The fifth is scheduled for review at our next board meeting in December.

In addition, I am also enclosing a CD with better photos of the Charles and Anna Bates House, Suffolk County, as requested. Please feel free to call me at 518.268.2165 if you have any questions.

Sincerely:

Kathleen LaFrank
National Register Coordinator
New York State Historic Preservation Office