

= Clemuel Ricketts Mansion =

The Clemuel Ricketts Mansion (also known as the Stone House , the William R. Ricketts House , and Ganoga) is a Georgian @-@ style house made of sandstone , built in 1852 or 1855 on the shore of Ganoga Lake in Colley Township , Sullivan County , Pennsylvania in the United States . It was home to several generations of the Ricketts family , including R. Bruce Ricketts and William Reynolds Ricketts . Originally built as a hunting lodge , it was also a tavern and post office , and served as part of a hotel for much of the 19th century .

After 1903 the house served as the Ricketts family 's summer home ; they kept it even as they sold over 65 @,@ 000 acres (26 @,@ 000 ha) to the state of Pennsylvania from 1920 to 1950 . The house was included in the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) in 1936 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) in 1983 . A group of investors bought the lake , surrounding land , and house in 1957 and developed them privately for housing and recreation . The house became the Ganoga Lake Association 's clubhouse , and is not open to the public .

The original mansion is an L @-@ shaped structure , two @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half stories high , with stone walls 2 feet (0 @.@ 6 m) thick . It was built in a clearing surrounded by old @-@ growth forest with a view to the lake 900 feet (270 m) to the east . In 1913 a 2 1 ? 2 @-@ story wing was added to the north side of the house and the original structure was renovated . The house has twenty @-@ eight rooms , four porches , and its original hardware and woodwork . Dormers and some windows were added in the renovation , and electrical wiring and modern plumbing have been added since . According to the NRHP nomination form , the Clemuel Ricketts Mansion " is a stunning example of Georgian vernacular architecture " .

= = Location = =

The Clemuel Ricketts Mansion is on the southwest shore of Ganoga Lake in Colley Township in the southeastern part of Sullivan County . The mansion and lake are on a part of the Allegheny Plateau known as North Mountain ; the plateau formed about 300 to 250 million years ago in the Alleghenian orogeny . Rocks ? gray sandstone with conglomerates and some siltstone ? of the Mississippian Pocono Formation more than 340 million years old , underlie the house and lake . The lake is in a shallow valley , 13 feet (4 @.@ 0 m) deep , which is impounded by glacial till up to 30 feet (9 @.@ 1 m) thick at the southeast end , where Kitchen Creek exits .

The earliest recorded inhabitants of the region were the Susquehannocks , who left or died out by 1675 . The land then came under the control of the Iroquois , who sold it to the British in the Treaty of Fort Stanwix in 1768 . The land on which the house was later built was first part of Northumberland County , then became part of Lycoming County in 1795 . The Susquehanna and Tioga Turnpike , which followed the lake 's western shore , was built between 1822 and 1827 ; it connected the Pennsylvania communities of Berwick in the south and Towanda in the north . The lake was then known as Long Pond , and the Long Pond Tavern , just north of where the house was later built , was a lunch stop for the stagecoach on the turnpike . Sullivan County was formed from Lycoming County in 1847 , and two years later Colley Township was formed from Cherry Township .

= = History = =

= = = Lodge and tavern = = =

Brothers Clemuel Ricketts (1794 ? 1858) and Elijah G. Ricketts (1803 ? 1877) were frustrated at having to spend the night on a hotel 's parlor floor while on a hunting trip on Loyalsock Creek north of Ganoga Lake in 1850 , and wanted their own hunting preserve . They bought the lake , Long Pond Tavern , and 5 @,@ 000 acres (2 @,@ 000 ha) of surrounding land in the early 1850s and soon began building a stone house between the turnpike and the lake shore to replace the log

tavern . According to William Reynolds Ricketts ' HABS history of the house , Petrillo 's history of the region Ghost Towns of North Mountain , and the house 's NRHP nomination form , the Ricketts brothers bought the lake and surrounding land in 1851 , began building the stone house that year , and finished it in 1852 . The year 1852 is also carved in stone on the front (west side) of the house , which faced the highway . However , according to Tomasak 's The Life and Times of Robert Bruce Ricketts , the brothers purchased the lake , tavern , and land on April 13 , 1853 , for \$ 550 (approximately \$ 16 @, @ 000 in 2016) , and had the house built from 1854 to 1855 .

According to Ricketts family tradition , Gad Seward built the mansion . While it was originally known as " Ricketts Folly " for its isolated location in the wilderness , the official name was the Stone House . The house served as the brothers ' lodge and as a tavern for travelers on the turnpike . Clemuel was named postmaster of a new post office at the lake on October 3 , 1853 , and received a tavern license from Sullivan County on August 7 , 1854 . When Clemuel died in 1858 , Elijah bought his share of the house and land . The post office closed April 12 , 1860 .

Elijah 's son Robert Bruce Ricketts (1839 ? 1918) , for whom the nearby Ricketts Glen State Park is named , joined the Union Army as a private at the outbreak of the American Civil War in 1861 , and rose through the ranks to become a colonel in the artillery . After the war , R. B. Ricketts returned to Pennsylvania and purchased the stone house , lake , and some of the land around it from his father on September 25 , 1869 , for \$ 3 @, @ 969 @. @ 81 (approximately \$ 71 @, @ 000 in 2016) ; eventually he controlled or owned more than 80 @, @ 000 acres (32 @, @ 000 ha) , including the lake and the park 's glens and waterfalls .

From 1872 to 1875 Ricketts and his partners operated a sawmill 0 @. @ 5 miles (0 @. @ 8 km) southeast of his house . In 1872 Ricketts used lumber from the mill to build a three @- @ story wooden addition about 100 feet (30 m) north of the stone house , with a verandah connecting the two . The addition cost \$ 45 @, @ 000 (approximately \$ 889 @, @ 000 in 2016) , and was known as the Ark for its resemblance to Noah 's Ark . That same year Ricketts put new white birch floors in the stone house , which are still there as of 2008 .

= = = Hotel = = =

The Ark and stone house together formed the North Mountain House hotel , which opened in 1873 , and was managed by Ricketts ' brother Frank until 1898 . Many of the guests , who came from Wilkes @- @ Barre , Philadelphia , New York City , and other places , were Ricketts ' friends and relations . The hotel was open year @- @ round ; in summer , guests frequently arrived after school let out in June and stayed until school resumed in September . In 1876 and 1877 , Ricketts ran the first summer school in the United States at his house and hotel ; one of the teachers was Joseph Rothrock , later known as the " Father of Forestry " in Pennsylvania .

By 1874 Ricketts had renamed Long Pond as Highland Lake , and by 1875 had named the highest waterfall on Kitchen Creek as Ganoga Falls . That year the North Mountain House hotel was featured in John B. Bachelder 's travel guide Popular resorts , and how to reach them , which praised its location in a virgin forest , the lake and nearby waterfalls , and opportunities for hunting , fishing , and hiking . In 1881 , Ricketts renamed Highland Lake as Ganoga Lake . Pennsylvania senator Charles R. Buckalew suggested the name Ganoga , an Iroquoian word which he said meant " water on the mountain " in the Seneca language .

The house and hotel were on the east side of the old turnpike ; a 100 @- @ acre (40 ha) field on the other side of the road had a small herd of milk cows and a vegetable garden to provide for the guests ' needs . The field also had a rifle range and a nine @- @ hole golf course . Guests could enjoy tennis and croquet , and a lawn stretched from the house east to the lake , which offered boating and bathing . There was an outlook point 0 @. @ 5 miles (0 @. @ 8 km) southwest of the house , and Ricketts built a 40 @- @ foot (12 m) observation tower at the highest point on North Mountain , 3 @. @ 5 miles (5 @. @ 6 km) south . After the first tower collapsed , he built a 100 @- @ foot (30 m) replacement , and named the site Grand View .

Ricketts was a lumberman who made his fortune clearcutting nearly all his land , but no logging was allowed within 0 @. @ 5 @- @ mile (0 @. @ 8 km) of the lake , and the glens and their waterfalls in

the state park were " saved from the lumberman 's axe through the foresight of the Ricketts family " . One hemlock tree cut near the lake to clear land for a building in 1893 was 6 feet (1 @. @ 8 m) in diameter and 532 years old . The North Mountain House hotel was threatened by a forest fire in 1900 ; the subsequent loss of much of the surrounding old @-@ growth forest led to decreased numbers of hotel guests . Changing tastes may have also played a role in the decline in popularity ; the hotel had over 150 guests in August 1878 , but only about 70 guests in August 1894 .

In 1903 another large fire on North Mountain threatened the sawmill in the lumber town of Ricketts northeast of the lake . Beginning in 1893 , a 3 @. @ 85 @-@ mile (6 @. @ 20 km) branch line of the Lehigh Valley Railroad ran from Ricketts to a log station at the north end of the lake ; a boardwalk and coach service brought guests from the station to the hotel . There was daily passenger service to Wilkes @-@ Barre and Towanda , and the line also served freight trains hauling ice from the lake for use in refrigeration from 1895 .

The North Mountain House was long known for its rustic charms ; it was heated with open fireplaces , decorated with animal skins and hatracks made of antlers , and had two live black bears on chains in the field across the road from the house . In 1895 and 1900 the stone house was refurbished , and telephone service , acetylene lighting , and steam heat were added . In 1900 The Sullivan Review newspaper recalled its former state and wrote of the changes : " We hardly call that an improvement When the North Mountain House is lighted by gas , heated by a modern furnace , etc . , its great charm is gone . "

= = = House = = =

The wooden addition to the stone house was torn down in either 1897 or 1903 , and the land became a garden . The hotel closed in November 1903 , and passenger train service ended at that time . The sawmills at Ricketts closed when the timber was exhausted in 1913 , and the ice company closed in 1915 . The stone house remained the Ricketts ' summer home . Ricketts proposed moving the highway from his front yard in 1904 ; the Pennsylvania General Assembly approved this in 1908 , after he paid for the construction of the new highway , 1 @. @ 5 miles (2 @. @ 4 km) east of the house . Thomas Henry Atherton of Wilkes @-@ Barre was the architect for a new wing that was added to the stone house in 1913 , as well as renovations to the original structure . Ricketts died in 1918 at the stone house ; his wife died a few days after and they are buried in the small Ricketts family cemetery near the north end of the lake . As part of Ricketts ' will , the stone house and its outbuildings were valued at \$ 12 @, @ 000 in 1918 (approximately \$ 189 @, @ 000 in 2016) .

R. B. Ricketts and his wife had three children ; their son William Reynolds Ricketts (1869 ? 1956) lived in the house after his parents ' deaths . Beginning in 1920 , the Ricketts heirs began selling land to the state of Pennsylvania , but still owned over 12 @, @ 000 acres (4 @, @ 900 ha) surrounding the house , Ganoga Lake , and the glens with their waterfalls . The stone house was included in the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) in 1936 as the William R. Ricketts House . Atherton , the architect for the 1913 addition , helped prepare the HABS architectural drawings , which gave the house 's name as " Ganoga " . William Reynolds Ricketts ' history for the HABS refers to it as the stone house . The area was approved as a national park site in the 1930s ; a 1935 article in The New York Times reported that the federal government planned to purchase 22 @, @ 000 acres (8 @, @ 900 ha) in the area , mentioning the waterfalls and the Ricketts estate and house , which it called " the oldest stone hotel in Pennsylvania " . The National Park Service operated a Civilian Conservation Corps camp at " Ricketts Glynn " (sic) , but budget problems and World War II brought an end to national plans for development .

In 1942 the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania began buying the glens and their waterfalls from the heirs for \$ 82 @, @ 000 (approximately \$ 1 @, @ 188 @, @ 000 in 2016) and opened Ricketts Glen State Park in 1944 ; from 1920 to 1950 the state bought more than 65 @, @ 000 acres (26 @, @ 000 ha) from the Ricketts family for the park and Pennsylvania State Game Lands . William Reynolds Ricketts died in 1956 and the lake and surrounding land were sold in October 1957 for \$ 109 @, @ 000 (approximately \$ 918 @, @ 000 in 2016) . The Department of Forests and Waters (

predecessor of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources) bid on the 3 @, @ 140 acres (1 @, @ 270 ha) including the house and lake , but were outbid by a group of private investors . These " formed the Lake Ganoga Association in September 1959 to regulate and preserve the recreation and residential facilities at Lake Ganoga " . The association built a road around the lake , cleared some land at its southern end , and its members built about 50 houses on the lake shore . In 1983 the stone house was listed on the National Register of Historic Places as the Clemuel Ricketts Mansion ; it serves as the association 's headquarters and clubhouse , and is used for association meetings , weddings , and picnics . As part of a private development , the house and lake are not open to the public : " To all outsiders that have no property around the lake , the lake and grounds are off limits . "

= = Architecture = =

Clemuel Ricketts , the architect of the stone house , was very interested in architecture from the colonial period and had traveled widely . In the 1840s he published a book which examined the British and European sources of colonial architecture in the United States . Clemuel designed the house in the colonial or Georgian style in the early 1850s ; construction began in either 1851 or 1854 and finished the next year .

The Clemuel Ricketts Mansion lies 900 feet (270 m) west of Ganoga Lake , on what the HABS map described as a 2 @. @ 2 @-@ acre (0 @. @ 89 ha) " clearing completely surrounded by primeval forest " , with a view to the lake . The house was originally on the east side of the turnpike and faced it , but when what became Pennsylvania Route 487 was built in 1907 , the course of the highway was changed so that it now runs on the other (east) side of the lake . Since then , the house is on a private road 1 @. @ 5 miles (2 @. @ 4 km) from the highway .

The original house built in the 1850s is L @-@ shaped . According to the architectural drawings made for the HABS , the bottom of the L is 60 feet 4 inches (18 @. @ 39 m) north ? south by 35 feet 8 inches (10 @. @ 87 m) east ? west . In 1935 the ground floor of this part of the house included the main door and entrance hall , living room , parlor , library , and stairs . The main entrance is on the west side , which has a porch 60 feet 4 inches (18 @. @ 39 m) wide by 12 feet (3 @. @ 7 m) deep , supported by pairs of square pillars with stairs on the north , south , and west sides . The top of the L is 24 feet 2 inches (7 @. @ 37 m) north ? south by 40 feet 6 inches (12 @. @ 34 m) east ? west , and in 1935 the ground floor of the top of the L had the dining room , gun room , " brush up room " , toilet , stairs , and a passage to the 1913 addition . The inside corner of the L has a two @-@ story covered porch along the south side , and an open terrace on the east side 's ground floor . In 1935 the second story of the original house had four bedrooms and a bathroom in the lower part of the L and two bedrooms and a bath in the upper part , as well as two staircases and hallways .

The mansion 's stone walls are 2 feet (0 @. @ 6 m) thick ; the individual building stones are " field sandstone about 17 inches square , of various thicknesses " (17 inches is 43 cm) . There is a basement below the original house . The lower part of the L is five bays by two bays ; the original double @-@ hung sash windows in each bay of the 1850s house have six panes of glass per sash . All the original windows have shutters , these are paneled on the first floor and louvered on the second . The main door is in the Federal style with a large fanlight above the door and sidelights on either side . The attic in the 1850s part of the house is not finished , and the gable roof has " boxed cornices with returns " .

In 1897 or 1903 a formal garden was added north of the stone house , on the site of the razed wooden structure where most of the hotel guests had stayed . In 1913 a two @-@ and @-@ half story wing was added on the north side of the original house , which was renovated ; Thomas Henry Atherton was the architect . The new wing is 48 feet 3 inches (14 @. @ 71 m) north ? south and 20 feet 4 inches (6 @. @ 20 m) east ? west , with a large enclosed one @-@ story porch on the north and east sides . In 1935 the addition had the kitchen , pantry , storage and refrigeration rooms , and a " maid 's dining room " on the first floor , two bedrooms and a bathroom on the second floor , and two servant rooms and a bath in the finished attic .

The new wing has six dormers (three on a side) , and six dormers were added to the old house in the 1913 renovation (four on the east side , two on the west) . The windows on the first floor of the new wing matched the old windows , but the windows in the second story of the addition have twelve panes in the upper sash and eight in the lower . As part of the renovation work , four new windows were placed in the 1850s house : two just west of the new wing , and two on the east wall of the lower part of the L. A small porch was added in the corner where the west wall of the new wing meets the north wall of the old house , and all the old porches were restored . In the original house two chimneys were restored and two replaced , and new fireplaces were installed in the living room , library , and dining room . The house has a total of 28 rooms .

The NRHP nomination form lists two other structures on the property : a utility building made of brick and covered in stucco east of the house , and a large barn to the southwest . Since the house 's 1913 renovation , the only changes have been the installation of electrical wiring and modernization of the plumbing . The original hardware and woodwork are still present inside the house . According to the NRHP nomination form , the Clemuel Ricketts Mansion " is a stunning example of Georgian vernacular architecture " which " represents the manifestations of one man 's architectural dream preserved within the wilderness for over a century " .