



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) *Northville House or Hotel Northville, presently called Historic Hotel Northville* _____

Address or Street Location *131 North Main St.* _____

County *Fulton* _____ Town/City *Northampton* _____ Village/Hamlet: *Northville* _____

Owner *Patricia L. Richard* _____ 121 North Main St. POB 989 Northville, NY 12134-0989 _____

Original use *Home then made into the 1st area Hotel/Restaurant*

Current use *doctor's office, storage space, and commercial space on first floor, 2nd and 3rd floors for storage and office* _____

Architect/Builder, if known *Abraham Van Arnum* _____ Date of construction, if known *1813. Front part of building burned around 1898, ad was rebuilt by 1899, second section was built mid 1800s, and rear part is the original 1813 building with hidden basement.* _____

DESCRIPTION

Materials -- please check those materials that are visible

Exterior Walls:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> wood clapboard	<input checked="" 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> metal	<input type="checkbox"/> slate
Foundation:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> stone	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> brick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> poured concrete	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> concrete block	

Other materials and their location: _____

Alterations, if known: *Front section rebuilt in 1899 due to fire. Temporary walls were erected to create doctor's office in the 1960s, but only hid original detail. Some doorways were closed off, but original woodwork is still there. Main 3 story staircase remains in excellent condition. First floor front porch enclosed with glass and railing was removed, a freight elevator was nestled into a corner where the front section joins the 2nd section behind the front part of the building on the southwest corner. The 2nd porch railing is enclosed, but, left the original on the south side was left behind new in 1950s, Most original walls, molding, doors, and floors are still in place on the 2nd and 3rd floors, and very little maintenance has been done since 1940s. Sometime in the 1960s there was a collapse of a septic tank on the north side of the building which has caused the building to shift towards the void, and require the basement in that are to require significant work. Sometime in the 1950s or 1960s a freight elevator was placed on the southwest portion where the main building joins the 2nd building.* _____

Date: *1899, 1940s, 1950s, 1960s* _____

Condition: excellent good fair deteriorated

Narrative Description of Property

Abraham Van Arnum who owned the northwest section of the village, and some parts northeast of Main St built the Hotel Northville in 1813. When built, it was intended to be the home of his daughter and son-in-law James Lobdell. Very soon after it was built Jacob Van Arnum, (brother to Abraham) opened it as the first guesthouse and restaurant in what was to become a thriving industrial, economic, and vacation area at the end of the Sacandaga River, in the foothills of the Adirondacks

The building is a three-story building with porches on the first and second floors that wrap around the south side. The building is in 3 definable sections with a fourth addition put on in the late 1960s for a loading dock.

The front section (1813 section that was rebuilt after the fire of 1898) has a typical hotel foyer; the bar/restaurant was on the right as you entered. The right side has a drop ceiling and non-weight bearing walls put in for the doctor's office, and a bathroom. To the left was the clerk's desk area with a door to the south side of the porch, and a parlor room behind it, which originally had a door to access the end of the wrapping porch on the north west side. Presently these 2 rooms have had a wall built and a bathroom put in the back, and drop ceilings put in, but the decorative wainscoting parquet is still in place in the ceiling above the drop ceiling.

Upstairs on the 2nd and 3rd floors are center hallways from front to back connecting to the front building South to North hallway both are lined with hotel rooms which still contain some unique characteristics like "Hooch" holes in the floor used during prohibition, one bathroom, which had been stripped of it's fixtures, a hallway sink, a few hidden spaces which were believed to keep the hooch refrigerated, and almost all windows and doorways are still intact.

The roofs are varied styles. The very front has a hip roof, with the second section hip roof attached in a "T" fashion to the front. The 3rd (1813) section has a gable roof, and the 4th (newest) section, which contains the loading dock area, has a saltbox roof.

The entire building is wood sided, and still contains some of the original detailed siding by the porch. The 2nd floor porch has a façade in front of the old railings on the southeast side. The 2nd floor northeast front porch was rebuilt with a different railing that matches the northeast first floor railing. The southeast first floor is enclosed with glass as a showcase window, and handicap access ramp.

The property is located directly in the center of the North Main St. business district, and is one of the few buildings that have a large off street parking lot. The property is a major focal point of the street due to its grand size, and the fact that it is closer to the street than the surrounding buildings.

The architecture is typical of the Adirondacks with it's simplicity, and functionality, yet abounding with great character. It is the only hotel left to preserve the social and historical significance of the once famous vacation spot, which entertained 99,000 people in the summer of 1908. It is in a community that would send out 100 loads of logs a day, and welcome hunting parties, and entice illegal gambling on "cock fights" in the basement of the hotel. The hotel had a very important role as it welcomed famous people like JD Rockefeller, and other notable artisans, actors, and actresses. The hotel was a refuge during prohibition for those who wanted to enter what was once called "the lawless town" since it often ignored the "hooch" being produced from the apple cider delivered from the FJ&G Railroad.

The building contains many important papers and artifacts from the late 1800s and early to mid 1900s. There are signs for the dining room, lamps, ceramic plates and cups, clothing from Robert Brownell, and a whole area which shows layers of the past years treasures in the soil, that is excitingly revealing more about the town, people and building.

Narrative Description of Significance:

The Historic Hotel Northville is the first public house in the town of Northampton. Due to many tragic events, all but this hotel succumbed to demolition, decay, or fire. It holds many stories in the unturned soil under the middle section of the building. Folklore tales are that the hotel was part of the Underground Railroad, which brought many black people to freedom. One location of the Underground Railroad has been identified 5 miles from the hotel, in Edinburg. In 1844 Abel Brown, (a well known abolitionist) was excitedly welcomed to Edinburg with a grand celebration. It was in that same year that the Baptist Church which was then located on the north end of the neighboring lot, also welcomed the Freedom Party to use their facilities. The owner of the hotel was also linked to these activities and establishments. There is a room, which was discovered in the spring of 2003 by the present owner. The room has been authenticated by a Historical Architect, to be part of the 1813 building. Archeologists have looked at the site, and an expert on the Underground Railroad has visited the room. These experts have requested that we have an archeological dig of the virgin soil in which a Civil war tin cup, pottery, and old glass was found at the edge of a soil layer. At present the area has been resealed until experts can perform the excavation and authentication of the findings. The "hidden" room under the 1813 section of the building was accessed originally through holes in the floor. These holes were not evident from the first floor. With the items that were found it was definitely used as a place during prohibition for drinking, since there are many bottles, and remnants of a wood or coal burning stove, chairs, barrels, and a

hidden hole in the floor covered by wooden planks. Areas of the stonewalls are bricked up, and why that was done will not be known until the bricks can be examined/removed. There is much enthusiasm from the experts who have looked at the site, and they are hoping to find more evidence as they dig in the "hidden" room connecting this location with the Underground Railroad.

What we don't yet know about the building is just as exciting as what we have discovered. The building was purchased in 1988 to prevent it from being torn down, and used for a parking lot. It's future was still as mysterious as it's past. In the past 6 years documents that were left in the attic from the early 1900s have been preserved. There are so many papers, bills from local merchants and the railroad, a draft notification, personal letters, advertisements, hotel register pages, and other articles like clothing with monograms of the owner, it will take a person working full time to catalog and preserve each item. The historian and owner have worked at this task, and we seem to find more and more each time we enter the building.

The location of the hotel directly in the center of the village makes it so important to the past and future of the village. It housed loggers, tourists, hunters, businessmen, and fed many local and out of town guests. It's hotel ledger is a wonderful source of information on the social gatherings of the times, and provides much information on who was a regular for lunch, to who came for parties, or which people would come as groups for dinner. There is an elusive code in the books that has not been figured out as to what it means, but with further research, we hope to know what activities are associated with this code.

Restoration, renovation, education, and giving back to the community.

As the owners we purchased the building to prevent it from being torn down. Our first goal was accomplished, and we began to uncover the riches within the building. We realized how significant it was to the community historically, and as a social center of the town. We have had many suggestions for the use of the building, from leaving it as it is, to making a hotel out of it again, to putting in small stores. The most important thing is that we want the building to give back to the community, which once richly gave to it. We are pursuing many different areas it can give back to the community. First we want to preserve the building and the structural damage from the collapsed septic, and also restoration of the façade as close as is possible to the 1899 façade. This will improve the aesthetics of North Main St. significantly. Our second part is the restoration of the interior by renovation and restoration projects that will keep the ambience of the early 1900s, yet meet our present code requirements. The 3rd area is to do more research, and archeological work to preserve the artifacts, and make them available to the public for viewing, and educating in the school. If it is found that the "hidden" room is significant enough to preserve as a place for the public to see, we are going to create access for the public to see the room, and know the historical significance of that particular room. Our 4th and greatest desire is to meet a need that no one has met in the community. We desire to make senior housing that is aesthetically inviting, and will meet many of the high priority needs that the planning board discovered when they made a survey in 2002.

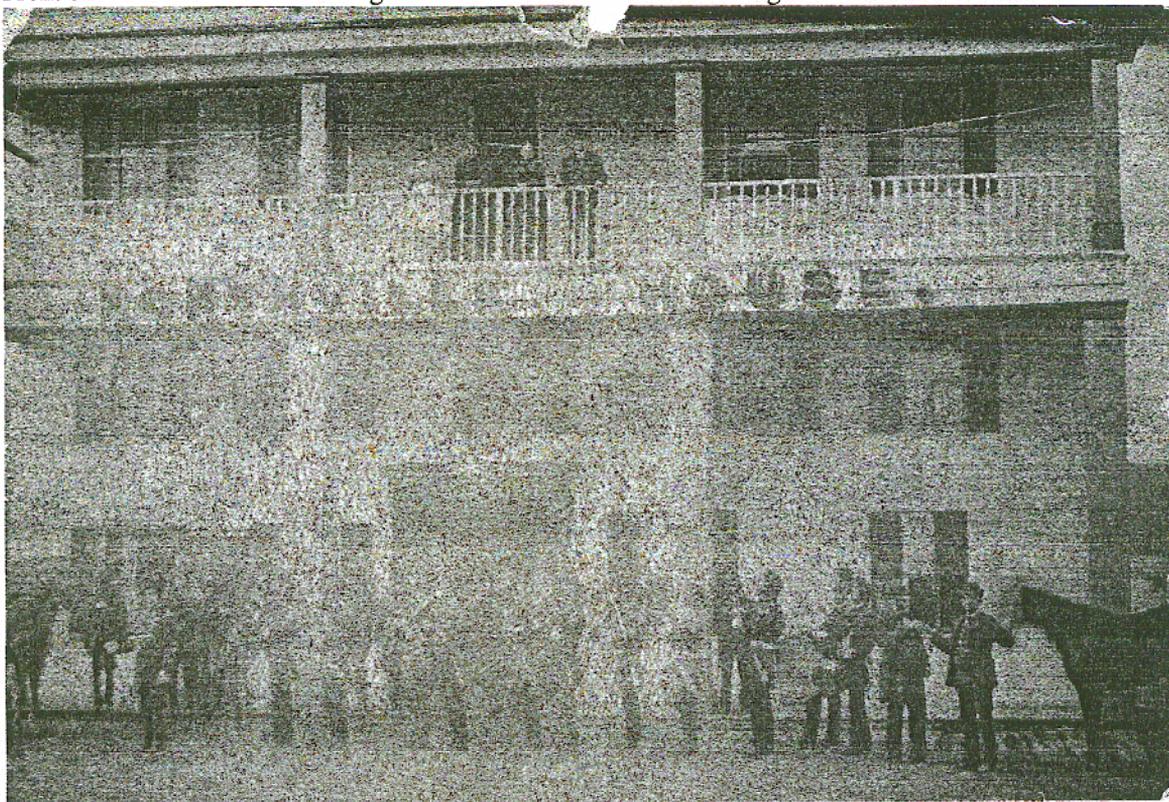
The building will serve as a community within the community, so our senior population of the village will not have to leave their hometown, family, and friends to find a place to live that does not require all the expenses and work of the homes many have lived in for over 50 years. This population is growing, and we have few resources for them in our community. Most can't afford the apartments in town because of utilities and rent. Some can't get around because the places available are not centrally located. The Historic Hotel Northville is within walking distance from the grocery store, pharmacy, post office, bank, restaurants, gift/general purpose shops, and hardware store. Our restoration plans include energy efficient heating, quality products and skilled craftsmanship, to give life back to the building, and the building back to the community.

Historic Hotel Northville
121 North Main Street
Northville, New York
12134-1157

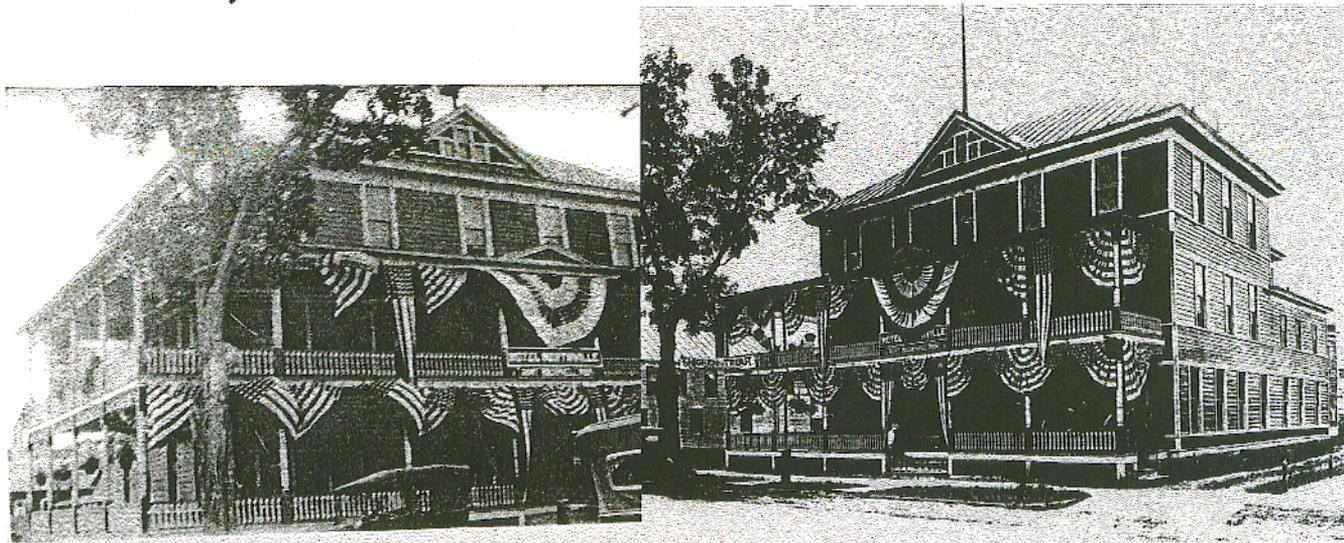


Photos :

(A) Front of Northville House building before it burned in 1898 celebrating with the Northville Band.



(B) Hotel Northville early 1900s after front section was rebuilt. View from the North side looking south on Main St.

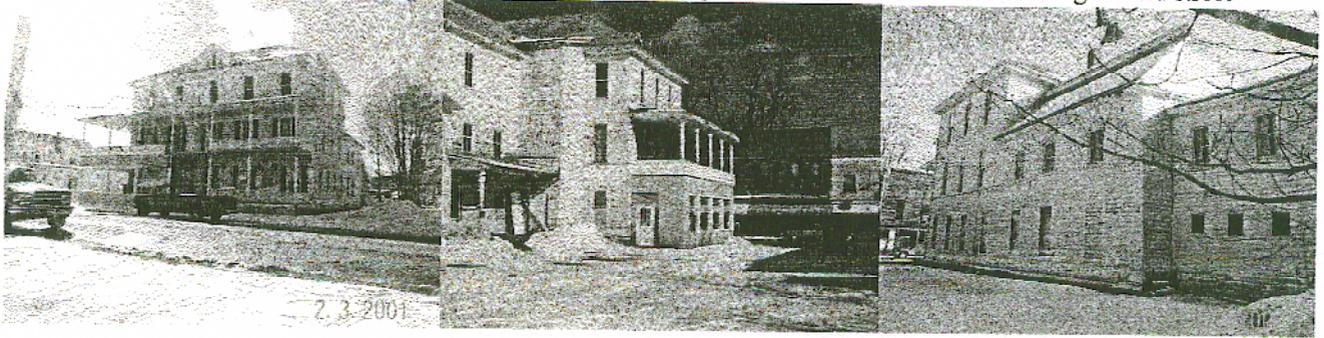


(C) Present day picture of the "hotel"

Main Street-looking at front and north side

South side looking toward street

North side looking toward street

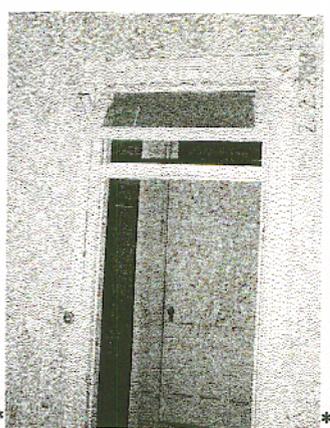
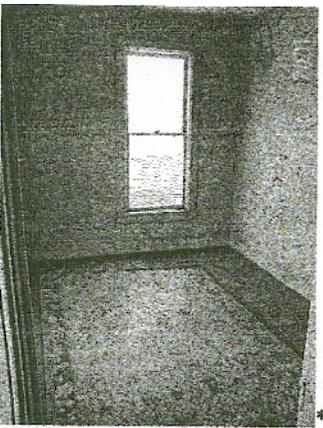


(D) Inside of the building.

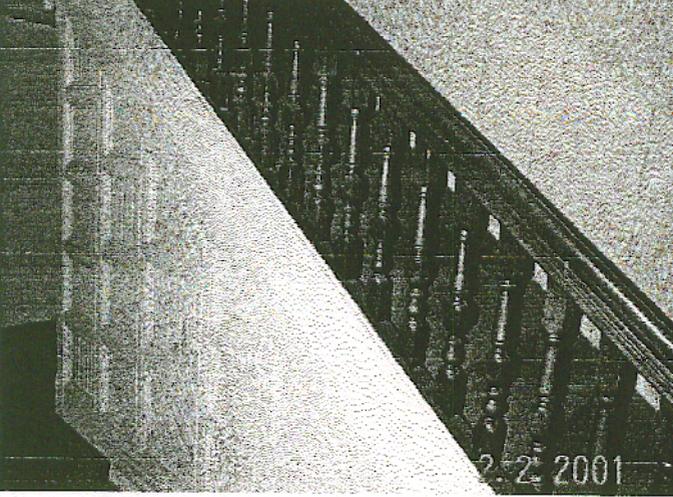
Front bedroom

Door with transom and bell

rear area where building is sinking into septic hole



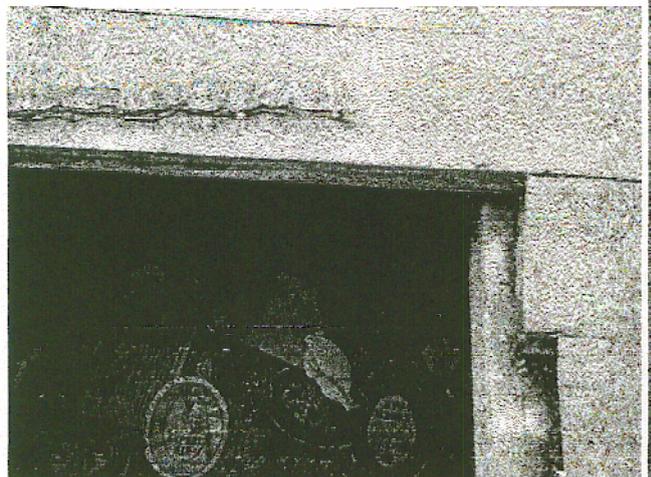
Part of railing on first floor with parquet wainscoting details, and third floor where railing ends by attic door.



(E) Many Artifacts were found in the building during cleaning and plaster removal. The Northampton Museum has Hotel Register pages. Some containing famous people like John D. Rockefeller.

Admiral Tomlinson *John D. Rockefeller*
John D. Rockefeller *Wendell Phillips*
Bill Hausman *Etc.*

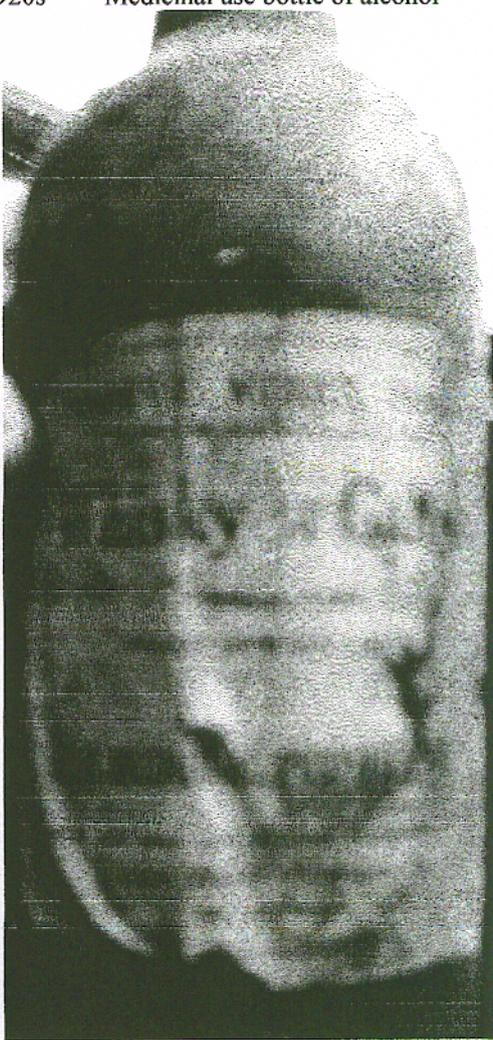
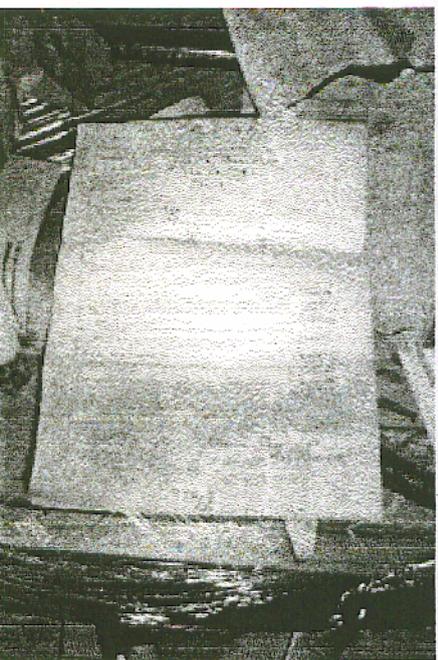
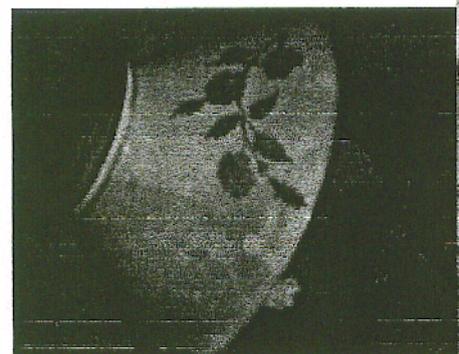
“Hooch Holes” used during prohibition still containing bottles and labels.



Old Pull Chain Oil Lamp

Income Taxes-Robert Brownell – Prop.1920s

“Medicinal use bottle of alcohol”



There are many other items that were found that were used to date the structures, and lead to more research on the uses of the building including the stash of bottles in the secret room only accessible by crawling through part of the basement to get to the 1813 basement area. There are 2 holes that were apparently used to get into the area, or to access a storage area that may have

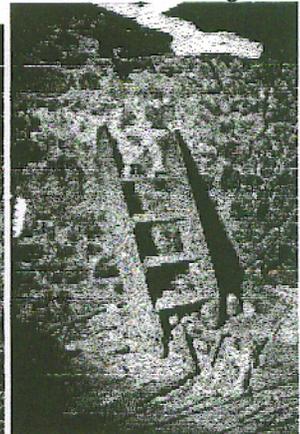
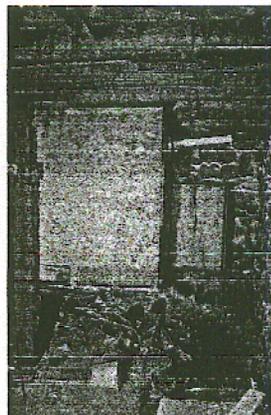
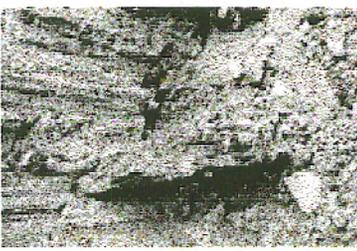
been used as an "icebox" at some time. An Archeologist and Historic Architect have both looked at the area and asked that we do an archeological dig to uncover the artifacts hidden in the basement crawl space area, which have not been disturbed since the early 1900s.

(F) Picture of the "hidden" room (1813 building) being researched at present, but known to be used during prohibition, and from research, folklore, and historical information it is believed to have been used in the Underground Railroad of the 1830s-1840s.

Items found in basement room

Layer of molten glass from intense heat from the fire in 1898

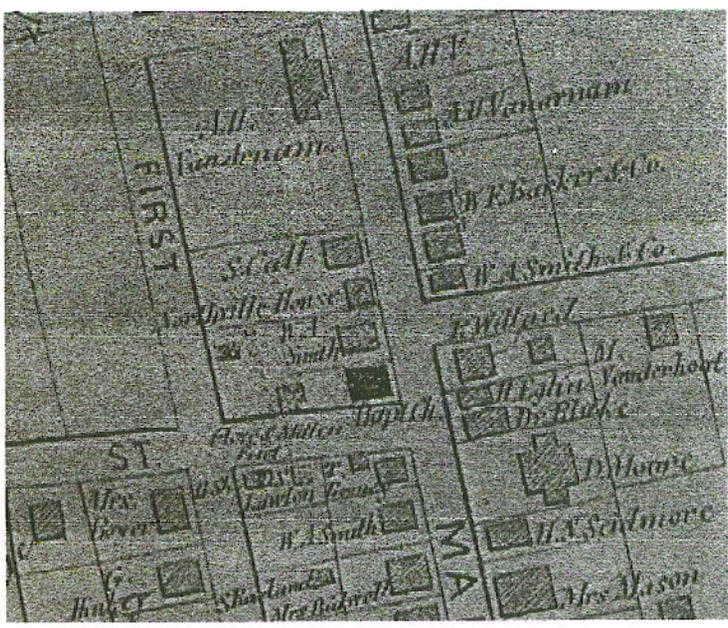
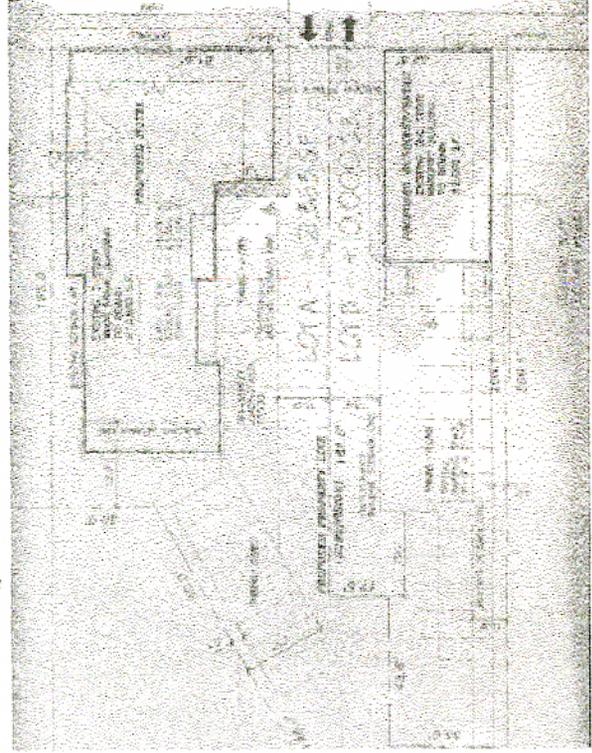
Makeshift stairs to get into hole



The "ICE BOX" shown looking from back of building

Maps: Lot map of hotel and adjacent building which are in the center of North Main St. (Present Hotel is on Left)

Map of 1868 showing the location of the "Northville House".



Prepared by Patricia L. Richard _____ address 121 N. Main St POB 989 Northville, NY 12134-0989 _____

Telephone: (518) 863 8290 _____ email historichotelnorthville@frontiernet.net _____ Date 2/13/2004 _____

PLEASE PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION
IF YOU ARE PREPARING A NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION, PLEASE REFER TO THE ATTACHED INSTRUCTIONS

Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
 An Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Agency