 architectural styles and new families to discover the charm of this Institution, community and its lovely grounds. At this later time brick and stone gave a feeling of permanence.

How does one describe the Chautauqua experience? Chautauqua’s season is a cultural cafeteria – giving an EDUCATIONAL spread – while adding and ARTS banquet – combining a SPIRITUAL repast – around a RECREATIONAL feast – with a family menu!

Chautauqua Institution is “a place, a frame of mind; but to describe it, you might as well describe why a rose is beautiful.” ~ Post Journal.

ARCHITECTURE:
On June 19, 1973, the designation of National Register of Historic Places was established for the central grounds. On June 29, 1989, the entire grounds was designated as a National Historic Landmark Site. Earlier the Miller Cottage (1875) was dedicated as a National Historic Landmark on December 23, 1965.

Edward B. Green, the legendary architect of Buffalo, NY, was the official Chautauqua architect for some 15 years. He had a 70 year career with his firm of Green & Wicks.

His buildings include:
1906 Hall of Philosophy
1909 Colonade & Post Office
original Chautauqua School
1910 Art & Craft Quad
1911 Sherwood Studio
Miller Bell Tower
1916 Pier Building

Franklin Kidd and William Kidd from his firm completed the work
1920 Children’s School,
1922 the Hotel Annex
Auto Station
1923 Smith Wilkes Hall
the summer school dorm,
1925 Brick Grange,
1928 Women’s Club
1931 Smith Library

Many of the cottages have been lovingly maintained and restored through several generations. newer sections added in a semi circle, especially to the north, have brought later contemporary architectural styles and new families to discover the charm of this Institution, community and its lovely grounds. At this later time brick and stone gave a feeling of permanence.

A Walking Tour of the Peaks of Chautauqua

Author - Joan A. Smith
Photographs - Jane Currie

Dedicated to Chautauqua’s Ambience
January 2010
HISTORY:
The founding of Chautauqua Institution in 1874 was almost an immediate success. The first season at Fairpoint (the original name), was two weeks in August with about 2500 participants, mostly educators. The original 50 acres (today 750 acres) were designed with rows of 40’ x 50’ lots for tent sites. Many cottages were built using these wooden tent platforms. The original grounds had only 12 streets, 135 structures, and many canvas tents.

An Introduction to the Knob and Collars of the Roof peaks located on scattered Chautauqua Cottages within the grounds of Chautauqua Institution.

Definitions:
* hip knob is the end ornament or finial on the point of a gable or on top of the hip
* collar is a decorated belt or band or moulding to tie the barge boards rafters at the gable peak

To find and enjoy more of Chautauqua’s decorative termination ornamentations on its gables, we invite you to take a step back in time and explore our community of both historical and architectural significance. Take your walk on the grounds, particularly in the older sections, giving yourself a sense of place to discover the magic of some of our delightful cottages. Look up to the vertical effect of the pointed gables and slender finials at the peaks.

We often refer to our late 19th and early 20th century cottages as being created with sawn art, complete with Chautauqua wood “lace” gingerbread. The distinctive characteristic here was to provide easy access to the out of doors. Chautauqua is an escape from the stresses of today’s world into the rocking chairs of many porches, placed intentionally in close visiting proximity.

These architectural gems, created by individual carpenters, were often original and unique, but could also be found in pattern books and trade journals of the 19th and 20th centuries. The natural beauty found in the many trees and the picturesque lake give a charm to the cottages these early carpenter builders produced in their vernacular mode, often combining several styles. Chautauqua’s “Victorian” look period overlaps various styles: Revival, Italianate, cottage, Second Empire, Queen Anne, Eastlake, stick, Romanesque, Arts & Crafts, Georgian, Tudor, Carpenter Gothic, Steamboat Gothic, Shingle, Bungalow.*

* STYLES:
The Victorian Period 1837-1901 was called picturesque and included various styles. (approximate dates)

- Greek Revival - 1815-1850 (columns)
- Gothic Revival - 1830-1860 (vertical)
- Italianate - 1845-1885 (roofing)
- Cottage - 1840-1890 (vernacular)
- Second Empire - 1855-1885 (mansard)
- Queen Anne - 1875-1900 (turret)
- Eastlake/Stick - 1880-1895 (board & batten)
- Romanesque - 1885-1910 (symmetrical)
- Arts & Crafts - 1900-1930 (shingle)
- Georgian - 1885-1925 (quoins)
- Classical Revival - 1900-1920 (massive)
- Tudor - 1900-1930 (half timber)

The vision for this venture was that of Lois Miller, a manufacturer from Akron, Ohio. He later extended an invitation to John Vincent, a minister from New Jersey, to join him in this community endeavor. Today, a nine week season is featured, still honoring the extensive program based on the four pillars: Arts, Education, Religion, Recreation.