

Book shines a light on secretive Thousand Island castle

DICK CASE

POST-STANDARD COLUMNIST



It's time to kick back and read a book. Here are two ideas.

Syracusans Robert and Patty Mondore have put together a neat collection of images for Arcadia Publishing books. This new one is "Singer Castle," in the familiar sepia-covered "Images of America" series.

It has 128 pages and sells for \$19.99.

Singer Castle — aka "castle

of mysteries" — is the 100-year-old landmark in the St. Lawrence River (Seaway) about 14 miles east of Alexandria Bay, off the U.S. Chippewa Bay.

The castle — filled with dungeons, turrets, labyrinths and secret passageways — was designed on Dark Island by architect Ernest Flagg for Frederick Bourne, president of Singer Sewing Machine Co. It remained in the Bourne family until 1962 and in later years was a private religious retreat.

In 2002, the island was bought by a group of investors known as Dark Island Tours. It's been through an "amazing" restora-

tion, according to Patty Mondore, and is open in October for public tours via the Empire and Uncle Sam tour boats in Alex Bay.

The Mondores work at Upstate Medical University. Patty is in the pediatric residency program, her husband in clinical data. They live in Jamesville and have a summer place on the river within sight of Singer Castle.

Patty and Robert are adopted river rats whose company, Gold-Mountain, has produced documentary videos about the Thousand Islands region, including one called "Dark Island's Castle of Mysteries." The videos include Patty's original music.

The local history publishing tradition in the southern Madison County hamlet of Brookfield chugs along.

The historians are students at Brookfield Central School, the charges of Jack Henke, a 30-year Brookfield social studies teacher. Every year since 1990, Jack's had a senior class working on a project to capture, and publish, community history.

Brookfield's book No.10 is out and ready to buy.

It's called "Across the Distance: Letters and Documents of World War II from the Brookfield Area."

The 123-page illustrated book

SCHOOL, PAGE B-2

The book cover features a sepia-toned photograph of Singer Castle, a large stone structure with multiple towers and turrets, situated on a rocky island in the middle of a river. The title "Singer Castle" is printed in a serif font within a dark, arched banner at the top. Above the banner, the words "Images of America" are written in a smaller, lighter font. At the bottom of the cover, the authors' names "Robert and Patty Mondore" are visible in a small, dark box.

IMAGES
of America
SINGER CASTLE

Robert and Patty Mondore

Courtesy Arcadia Publishing

ROBERT AND Patty Mondore have collaborated on a book about Singer Castle.