



The Saint-Gaudens Quest

Cornish, New Hampshire

Special Features: Cultural, Natural, Architectural

Physical Difficulty: Easy

Duration: 1:00

Bring: Compass and some money for the admission fee!

To get there: Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site is located off Route 12A, about two miles north of the Cornish-Windsor covered bridge (longest covered bridge in the United States); and is 12 miles south on 12A from West Lebanon, N.H. From Rt. 12A, turn onto and head up Saint-Gaudens Road. The parking lot is a half mile up the road on your right.

Overview:

Discover the beautiful home, studios and gardens of Augustus Saint-Gaudens, one of America's greatest sculptors. This National Historic Park is open daily, late May through late October, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Admission is \$5.00 per person; children 15 and under are free. As a Federal Fee Area, the Federal Golden Passes and the America the Beautiful Pass are honored. A Saint-Gaudens NHS annual pass is also available. For information: www.nps.gov/saga

Clues:

This was the place where a famous artist once dwelled
He made sculptures of people and in this he excelled
He grew up in New York City but from Ireland he came
Augustus Saint-Gaudens, you'll see was his name

The entrance booth is where you check in
The ranger there will gladly help you begin
Here you can get a map to aid with your task
And if you have questions, it's a good time to ask

Look for a very large tree in front of a home
it is in that direction that first you should roam
The tree is a honey locust, New Hampshire's largest they say

Once the house was an Inn where travelers could stay

If you look out from the porch, a tall mountain you'll see
It is all by itself and named Mount AS-CUT-NEY
To hike, and to ski, on its slopes you can go,
But it was once a volcano a very long time ago

Head for the building that has a red wall
There are white columns in front, what does that make you recall?
Saint-Gaudens loved the culture of old Greece and Rome
And he used some of their art to beautify his home

Into this building you now should go
That huge glass window is important to know
It faces due north, the sun does not directly shine in
It's the best light to work with no harsh shadows within

This building is known by a special word; STU-DI-O
It was designed as workplace for an artist to go.
Here Augustus would work with plaster and clay
To create some of the sculptures you see here today

As you walk through park two kinds of sculptures are found
Ones like Diana the huntress, you can walk all around
Some have just one side, like those on the wall
Called "reliefs" these can be very large or extremely small

Look closely at the art and you'll find great detail
And many you'll see can tell an interesting tale
Look for those of soldiers and presidents, both are on view
You'll find children and painters, and animals, too.

Return outside and past the gardens proceed
Through the hole in the hedge the pathway will lead
A dark wooden building soon will be found
Find your way inside and look all around

There are wagons and carriages and even a sleigh
If the artist went to town, he would travel this way
A strange, dark room with a thick door you will see,
It was very cold inside, why do you think that would be?

Out through the wide gate then a left you should take
Once in that field straight ahead, a right you would make
To the stucco wall with a steep sloping roof

Of the artist's talent you will here see more proof

Find the man on a stone carved with fish and a wave
He was an American admiral and was especially brave
He joined the navy as a boy and the true story is told
How he commanded a ship when just 12 years old!

Find the turtles nearby that seem to drink to excess
Through this space called an Atrium you now should progress
Around the walls of the walkways, relief sculptures are set
Can you find the one with Dunrobin, the sculptor's pet?

In the building beyond are sculptures made of real gold
People carried these in their pockets in days of old
See the small cameo jewelry, he made these as well
As a teenager he carved them from stone and from shell

Here sculptures of people you will see around,
A general, a pilgrim, a famous author are found.
Look closely at one sculpture hanging over a case
Augustus hid his own likeness in the sheepdog's face

Go back to the field - and to the row of trees all of birch
At the first opening in the hedge there continue your search
See a group of soldiers that are marching away
If the men were alive, what do you think they would say?

Led by a man on a horse, as an angel looks down,
On these soldiers of color, who are now quite renowned
In the Civil War their bravery set them apart,
Now their story is told in movies, books, and in art

Follow the birches and the next room you should enter
A mysterious figure sits in the center
It's not meant as a portrait, nor for it's meaning to be clear
It was to make people think about life as they were seated near

Continue down the path, well past the last hemlock hedge
Between the field to the left and forested edge
The sculptor once had a golf course in these fields here below
In the winter a long toboggan slide was made through the snow

Keep on walking until a white structure you'll find
When you first saw it, what came to mind?
It is made of marble mined in an old Vermont quarry

And was designed by friends of the artist to help tell a story

A century ago, an outdoor play was staged here
Actors as Greek gods and goddesses did appear
They spoke in rhyme and did dance and sing
at the end chose Saint-Gaudens to be their new king

Turn away from the Temple and look straight across
Search for the stump of the pine among the grass and moss
The hidden box is there, so write a note that you came
Augustus used this self-caricature when he signed his name.

Come back again to the park now that you're not a stranger
You can even earn a patch as a junior park ranger
There is a film you can see, forest trails to explore
Watch a real sculptor work, attend a concert and more

This Quest was created by Gregory Schwartz and Bess Klassen-Landis in 2008.