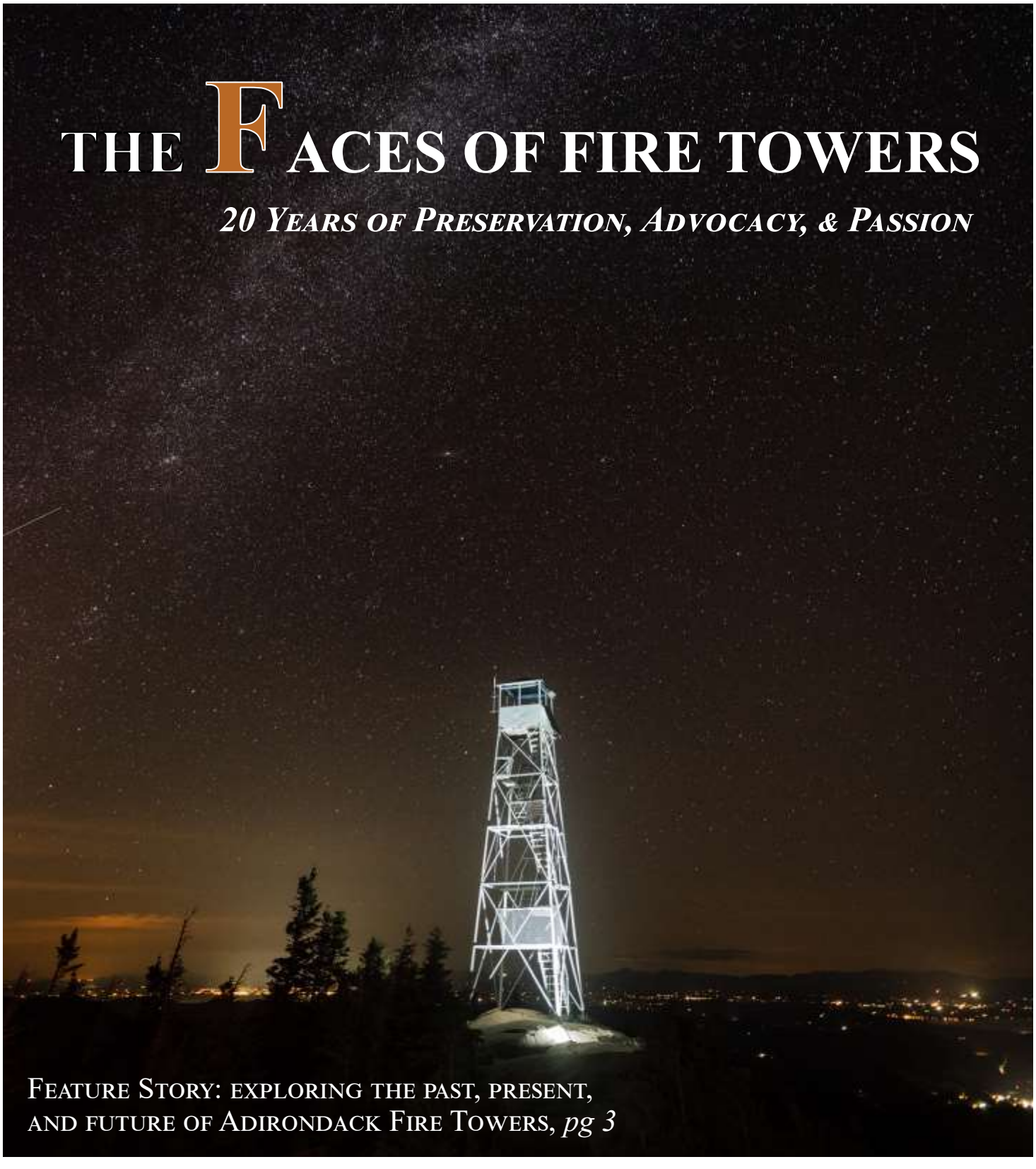
AARCH

Adirondack Architectural Heritage
NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2022 VOLUME 31 NUMBER 1

THE FACES OF FIRE TOWERS

20 Years of Preservation, Advocacy, & Passion



Feature Story: exploring the past, present, and future of Adirondack Fire Towers, *pg 3*

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

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Dear Members and Friends of AARCH,

2021 was a very exciting year for AARCH. Despite the trials of the last two years, Steven and the staff ensured AARCH's stability and forward momentum remained strong. This readied us to transition to new leadership and welcome our next Executive Director, Erin Tobin.

Steven's impact on historic preservation throughout the region was noted by many friends and colleagues gathered at the Valcour Boathouse last summer to honor his achievements and to celebrate his retirement. Having been our founding executive director, he leaves AARCH after 31 years with many accomplishments to his credit and with the organization in a strong position moving forward.

Steven's many years of work at Camp Santanoni characterize the efforts and required commitment to our preservation mission, from initial planning for stabilization in the early 1990s to the recent extensive restoration work, completed this fall prior to his retirement.

Erin joins us from the Preservation League of New York State with extensive experience in historic preservation and great enthusiasm for AARCH's potential. She looks forward to the continuation of our popular programs and to working with our creative staff in development of new and innovative programming. Follow our e-newsletters and social media posts for ongoing information on new opportunities.

Despite the financial burdens of the pandemic, we closed out 2021 in a positive and stable financial position. Support from our members, grants from public and private partners, and strong support for our summer events made this possible.

We have a very active summer planned for 2022, keeping in mind any necessary precautions to ensure health and safety for all. I hope to see you out at one or more of those programs!

Once again my deepest thanks to you, our members, for your continued support through these difficult times. We look forward to seeing you soon.

Kind Regards,

Dean

Dean Melville
Board President

Camp Santanoni. Photo courtesy of AARCH.

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This publication was made possible, in part, through the generous support of the New York State Council on the Arts, Architecture + Design Program.

Cover photo : Hurricane Mountain Fire Tower, courtesy of Brad Wenskoski.

Poke-O-Moonshine Fire Tower 2017 centennial celebration. Photo courtesy of Nancie Battaglia.

The story of Adirondack fire tower preservation is one of communities coming together in grassroots advocacy to protect, preserve, and promote an important piece of our region's history. There is nothing quite like approaching a summit and seeing a fire tower, beckoning the hiker to ascend its steps, climb above the treeline, and experience the exceptional views from the top.

Like so much of the built environment, the significance of our fire towers is in the stories they tell as a whole throughout the Adirondacks. The 34 remaining (of an original 57) steel Adirondack fire towers speak to their vitally important history in forest fire management and communication. A 2001 thematic National Register nomination set the stage for individual fire tower designations. As of 2022, 14 Adirondack fire towers are on the National Register of Historic Places and 7 are eligible for designation. Without fire towers, Adirondack residents and visitors alike would not have a window into the critical role of fire tower observers, the tools they used, and their relative isolation.

As fire observation technology evolved and air observation became the preferred means of forest fire detection, our region's fire towers were threatened with demolition. As recently as 2010, fire towers on Hurricane and St. Regis Mountains were slated for removal as non-conforming structures in a wilderness setting, with almost unanimous agreement among environmental organizations that they should come down. AARCH supported grassroots community advocacy to save the fire towers, including multiple fire tower friends groups under our nonprofit auspices, and continuing to support both the Friends of Poke-O-Moonshine and Hurricane today. Other partners like the New York State Chapter of the Forest Fire Lookout Association (FFLA) have helped build a coalition of fire tower supporters, supporting the fire tower friends groups, and working with local volunteers to restore and steward the towers.

Another important, and wonderful, piece of the fire tower story is of organizations finding common ground despite initial policy differences. In 2010, after some controversy, the Adirondack Park Agency designated the land surrounding these National Register -listed fire towers as historic, followed by the 2014 adoption of the St. Regis and Hurricane Mountain Fire Tower Historic Area Unit Management Plans. Since then, preservation of these fire towers has been a resounding success. Recognition of the fire towers as an educational asset has helped encourage hiking beyond the heavily-used High Peaks. The 21-year-old Adirondack Mountain Club's (ADK) Adirondack Fire Tower Challenge is more popular than ever and fire tower stewards help interpret the structures for the visiting public.

In the pages that follow, you will learn more about some of these incredible, primarily volunteer-led, friends groups and the fire towers they celebrate. We wish we could have featured them all! In addition to contacting the individual groups, the NYS Chapter of the FFLA is a wonderful resource. Their website is www.nysffla.org and anyone interested in volunteering or becoming a fire tower steward is encouraged to contact them. Fire tower stewardship depends on community support and volunteers. Any support, whether through time or money, goes a long way toward preserving these Adirondack treasures for generations to come.

Volunteers at St. Regis Fire Tower. Photo courtesy of Friends of St. Regis Fire Tower.

POKE-O-MOONSHINE MOUNTAIN

With views of Lake Champlain and Vermont to the east and the High Peaks to the south, the summit of Poke-O-Moonshine ("Poke-O" to locals) is a popular destination in the northeastern Adirondacks for hikers of all ages. Whether they take the steep, 1.2-mile Ranger Trail or the gentler 2.3-mile Observers' trail, hikers are welcomed at the summit by panoramic views and the 40'-tall **Poke-O-Moonshine Fire Tower**. The steel-framed structure was prefabricated by the Aermotor Windmill Company and erected on-site in 1917 as part of a movement throughout the Adirondacks to mitigate the devastating forest fires afflicting the region.

Since 1997, the **Friends of Poke-O-Moonshine** have been dedicated to preserving both the built and natural environment of the mountain, exemplifying the intertwined nature of historic preservation and environmental conservation in the Adirondacks. Two of their primary initiatives are trail maintenance and education. With the help of volunteers, and under AARCH's nonprofit umbrella, they have been very successful in partnering with trail-building organizations, such as The Adirondack Mountain Club (ADK), the Adirondack Forty-Sixers, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), the Student Conservation Association, and Tahawus Trails, to sustainably rehabilitate the mountain's two trails as models of cutting-edge trail design. In addition to continued maintenance, they plan to add a third trail connecting the lower portion of the Ranger and Observers' trails to create a complete hiking loop.

Education plays an equally important role in preserving the fire tower and trails on Poke-O. Each summer, the fire tower is staffed by a Steward who teaches hikers about the historic role that fire observers played protecting the forest. They also teach about Poke-O's human and natural history and ideally, they educate hikers about low-impact use of the forest and of the environment. Additionally, the Friends coordinate educational outings throughout the year, from winter mammal tracking and cross-country skiing to springtime botany hikes. These provide further opportunities to teach people how they can best steward the land for the next century of hikers.

Reflecting on their achievements and success of its partnerships, Friends coordinator David Thomas-Train said, "AARCH, as co-founder of The Friends of Poke-O-Moonshine, is instrumental to our success; the organization houses our offices, and provides the financial umbrella allowing us to work as a not-for-profit and tax-exempt organization."

AARCH is proud of David and the Friends' many accomplishments, from coordinating volunteers for educational and maintenance projects to forging partnerships and securing funding to further their mission. The Friends of Poke-O-Moonshine embody the community-driven spirit that drives preservation in the Adirondacks.

Photos courtesy of the Friends of Poke-O-Moonshine.

The preservation of the **Hurricane Mountain Fire Tower** is a testament to the power we hold over shaping the way history is told. Erected in 1919, the 35-foot steel fire tower operated as a fire lookout station for the New York State fire service until it was decommissioned in 1979. The bald peak of Hurricane Mountain was ideal for fire observers because it provided clear views in every direction. However, the rise of air surveillance eventually made the fire tower obsolete, sparking decades of neglect and increasing disrepair.

In 2001, the Adirondack Park Agency called for the removal of the fire towers atop Hurricane and St. Regis mountains and a reclassification of the land as primitive. Local groups saw this as an attempt to diminish over half a century of regional history and rallied to save the structures. After almost a decade of struggling to save the fire towers, the State designated them as historic.

The next major project for the **Friends of Hurricane Mountain** was to rehabilitate the deteriorated structure with a new roof, stairs, and landings. After weathering relentless wind for almost a century, the original roof had been torn to pieces and a new one was flown in by NYS DEC. Today, hikers who ascend the tower to take in the 360-degree views will also find two special exhibits installed by volunteers in 2020 and 2021: a map table that approximates the original used by fire tower observers and four panoramic panels identifying surrounding peaks.

The Friends of Hurricane Mountain, which operates under AARCH's nonprofit umbrella, understand well the curiosity that fire towers elicit and strive to highlight their role in the history of the Adirondacks. For the past four years, the Friends have participated in an annual fire tower lighting coordinated by the NYS Chapter of the FFLA. On the Saturday of Labor Day weekend, fire towers in the Adirondacks and Catskills are illuminated to honor their role in managing the devastating forest fires of the early 20th century.

Since 2017. Hurricane Mountain has also been fortunate to host an annual summit steward. These volunteers help the Friends further their mission of "protecting the ecological, scenic, & historical characteristics of the summit and providing a worthwhile educational experience to the public." In 2021, the Adirondack Mountain Club officially incorporated Hurricane into its summit steward project, which has expanded coverage on the summit through the fall and enables further training on the tenets of Leave No Trace. Partnerships like this have helped strengthen the new role of Adirondack fire towers. Friends coordinators Mary Jean Bland and Peter Slocum observe that, "while they once protected the forest from wildfires, they now offer a focal point for familiarizing hikers with the dangers of overcrowding and best ways to preserve the Forest for future generations." The renaissance of these supposedly obsolete structures proves that history never diminishes in value – rather its relevance adapts to fit our changing times.

Photos courtesy of the Friends of Hurricane Mountain.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Adirondack Fire Tower Challenge also has a winter category! "Climb 18 of the 23 Adirondack Mountains with fire towers and all five in the Catskills between December 21 and March 21 and you can earn a rocker for your Fire Tower Challenge patch" says the Glens Falls Chapter of the ADK. They also note that it's not necessary to climb the actual towers. To learn more, visit www.adk-gfs.org.

ST. REGIS MOUNTAIN

Built in 1918, **St. Regis Mountain's Fire Tower** has been a fixture in the landscape for over 100 years. The site was an active fire tower observation station until 1990, when it was closed and began to deteriorate. In 2013, the **Friends of St. Regis Mountain Fire Tower** officially formed and restoration work commenced after over a decade-long battle to retain the tower on St. Regis mountain. Since then, these devoted volunteers and supporters have worked to restore the tower to its former glory and it remains open to the public today. The last twenty years of the tower's history have shown just what dedicated volunteers can accomplish when they apply their passion, grit, and ingenuity. The Friends worked under the banner of AARCH for a couple of years until forming its own 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. In November 2014, NYS DEC Commissioner Joe Martens issued the final Saint Regis Mountain Fire Tower Historic Area Unit Management Plan which allowed the tower's restoration to proceed. In May 2015, the Friends and DEC signed a Volunteer Stewardship Agreement.

Later that year, the Friends, volunteers, and members of the Student Conservation Association worked for a week on the mountain summit installing railings, stairs, landings, safety fencing and replacing the floor of the cab. Donations, large and small, from numerous supporters allowed the Friends to contract out for the fabrication and installation of a new roof in July 2016. The new roof was flown to the summit by the New York State Police and DEC. Safety railings and window frames were added that September, allowing the tower to officially open to the public for the first time in twenty-six years!

Today, the restored tower remains open thanks to the hard work and stewardship of the Friends and adjacent volunteers, supporters, and dedicated locals.

Photos courtesy of Janelle Jones and the Friends of St. Regis Fire Tower.

DID YOU KNOW?

The tower on St. Regis is visible from multiple locations in the Adirondacks — from waterways in the St. Regis Canoe Area to the summit of Whiteface Mountain.

On the western edge of the Adirondacks, a gentle 2264' rise in elevation brings visitors to **Stillwater Mountain**'s summit, the site of Primary Triangulation Station Number 77 of Verplanck Colvin's 1882 Adirondack Survey and its historic, 47-foot galvanized steel fire tower that has stood since 1919.

Nearly a century later, a dedicated group of concerned citizens formed the **Friends of the Stillwater Fire Tower** (FSFT) to save and preserve the structure. Over one hundred volunteers from local communities, businesses, NYS DEC, landowner Lyme Timber, and others completed crucial tower and trail restoration work. After the tower reopened to great fanfare in July 2016, the group's thoughtful and spirited work earned them an AARCH Preservation Award and the State and National Register of Historic Places designation in 2017.

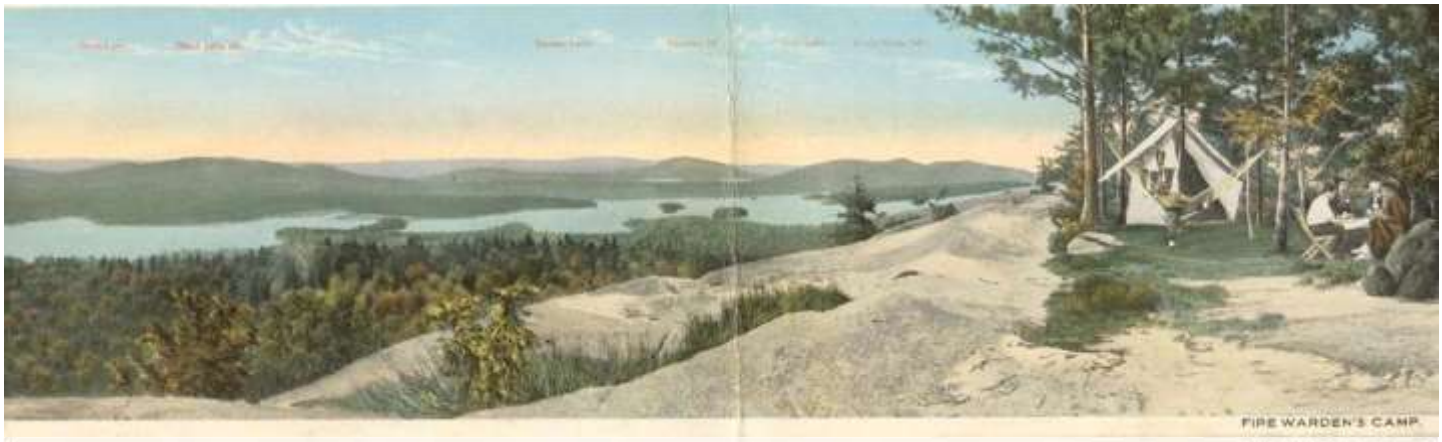
Jim Fox, one of the main faces of the effort, shared that the site's remote, lower-lying location did not historically draw scores of visitors. However, he explained that the tower's restoration helped put Stillwater on the map as a destination for hikers, families, and those completing the Fire Tower Challenge. Similarly, FSFT volunteer Harry Peck surmised that fire towers at lower elevations like Stillwater's offer more accessible, shorter hikes for elderly folks or families looking for an easier climb.

Explaining why fire towers continue to rise in popularity, Jim posits that "being out in the fresh air of the wilds requires healthy exercise which increases heart rate, lung capacity and muscle tone that every doctor, fitness coach, and gym teacher swears is good for you." Capturing the feel of the experience here, Jim explains that the best "moments that keeps Stillwater Fire Tower climbers coming back are when they sense the wind blowing stronger as the stairs rise above the treetops and closer to the cab. Then an internal wow escapes when the High Peaks horizon appears behind the flag out Stillwater's Northeast window." Jim concludes that "the biggest draw for hikers to all fire towers lie around a wonderful day when precious memories unfold with fond friends and family."

Both Jim and Harry mention that more off-the-beaten-track trails like Stillwater help take pressure off the heavily trafficked High Peaks, and they look forward to interacting with visitors post-COVID, and both hope for a larger parking lot in the future to help ease road congestion at the trailhead. Recently, the FSFT have partnered with the NYS Chapter of the Forest Fire Lookout Association to manage the site and continue its stellar stewardship and education efforts in sharing the significance, history, and special allure of this place.

Photos courtesy of Friends of Stillwater Fire Tower.

BALD MOUNTAIN



Early observers on Bald Mountain lived in tents, but later built cabins as the need arose for more weather-resistant shelters.

In May of 2002, members of the Rochester-based Genesee Valley Chapter of the Adirondack Mountain Club organized a meeting in Old Forge, NY for anyone interested in forming a committee to develop a restoration plan for the **Bald Mountain Fire Tower**. The 1917 tower, known also as **Rondaxe Fire Tower**, was closed by the NYS DEC in 1990. More than 10 years of harsh weather and a lack of maintenance left the historic tower in need of repairs.

The DEC and the **Friends of Bald Mountain** (FoBM) signed a formal five-year "Adopt-A-Natural-Resource" agreement. In addition to restoring the tower, the Friends worked with DEC on trail maintenance, improved signage, and an educating hikers on good conservation practices, including fire prevention. AARCH served as the nonprofit sponsor for the project's first five years.

In 2005, thanks to grassroot fundraising efforts and the work of numerous dedicated volunteers, FoBM and DEC met on the summit in June 2005 for a dedication ceremony and formal reopening of the historic tower.

More than 30,000 hikers have signed the register over the past several years according to DEC, which likely only accounts for half of the hikers! For the past two years, local Fire Departments have held 9/11 memorial ceremonies on the summit. The events are organized by FoBM volunteer and Old Forge FD volunteer Carol Perkins to pay tribute to all the first responders who lost their lives that day.

Restoration work on the Bald Mountain Fire Tower is ongoing. The tower remains a destination for thousands of visitors and a tangible link to the dedicated foresters and observers who have helped preserve thousands of acres of forest lands in the Adirondack Park over the past century.

Fun Fact: Unique to Bald Mountain were its three women fire observers (1926-1936, 1989) and one observer with his wife and two babies (1951-1953).

Photos courtesy of Friends of Bald Mountain.

DID YOU KNOW?

Hallie Morse Daggett was the first woman hired as a fire lookout by the United States Forest Service. Daggett worked at Eddy's Gulch Lookout Station atop of Klamath Peak in the Klamath National Forest in northern California from 1913 to 1928.

She was one of the most effective lookouts on the Klamath National Forest, typically reporting fires before others did. Of the approximately forty fires she reported that first season, fewer than five acres burned.

Photo courtesy of the Forest History Society

Over 50 organizations, municipalities, businesses, and foundations show their enthusiasm for AARCH's mission through contributions that sustain our good work. We especially value our business partners' commitment to sponsoring our annual benefit event, raffle, and other special events. Please help us thank them by supporting them with your business.
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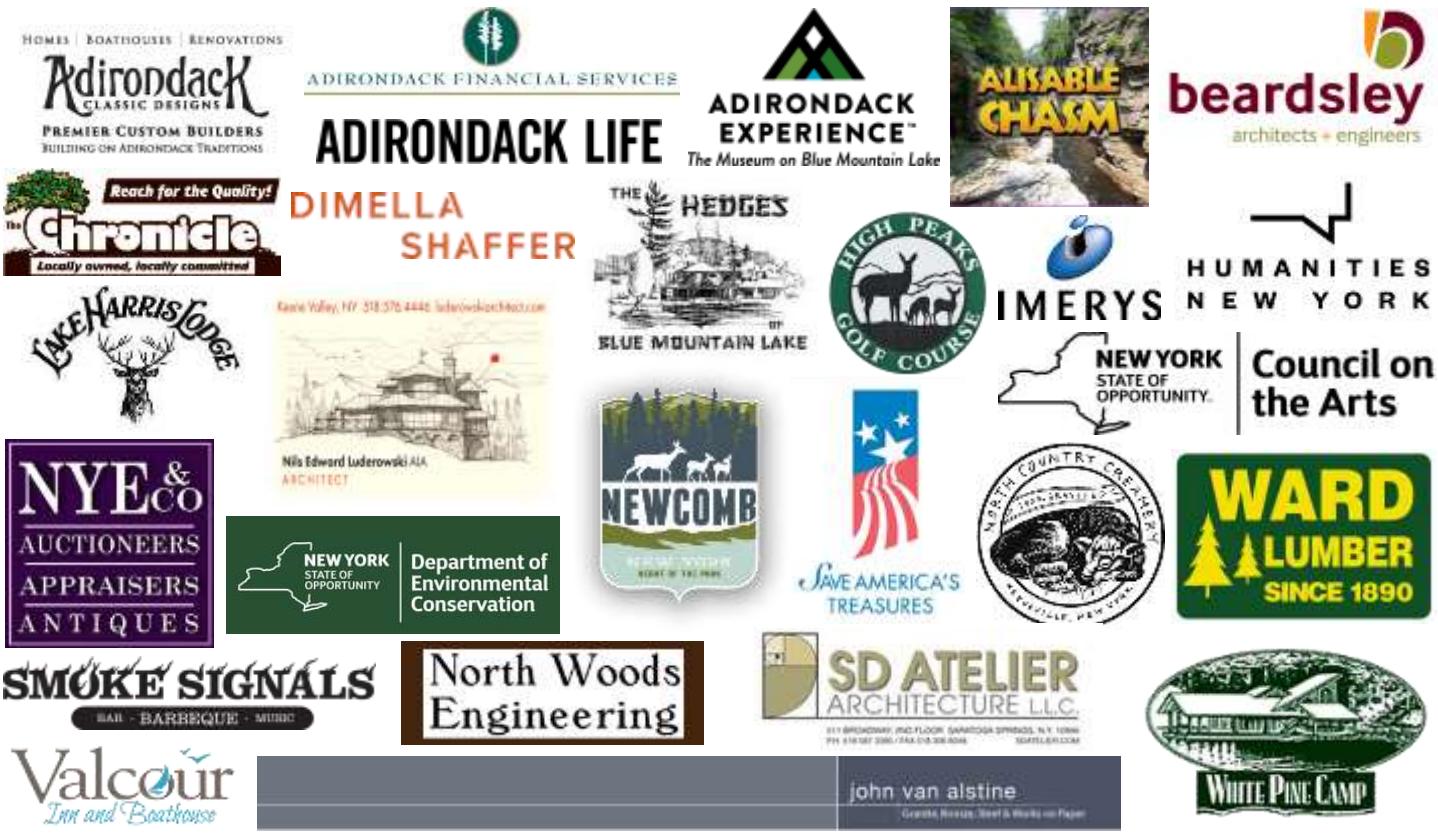

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Renee & Christopher Wiles
Donald R. Williams
Sarah Woodin & David Wethey
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Jacob Albert
John Winthrop Aldrich
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Hillary Exter
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Gregory & Kathleen Harper
Margaret Harris
Anthony & Kelly Hart
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Alicia Lambert
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Meredith Leonard & Ed Pitts
Katherine Lewis
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Jane McCloskey & Charles Carson
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Randy Merrill
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Robert Miller
Tim & Sue Mitchell
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Francis Morigi
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Ashley Morse
Robert & Joanne Muller
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Eileen Murray
Gail Murray
Neil V. Murray
Irwin & Julie Nathanson
Helen Allen Nerska
Stefanie Noble
Carol Nordmann
J. Arthur Norton
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Kathy O'Kane
Jane Oppenlander
Maureen Organ
Robert Ormerod
Kimberly Pacala
Cynthia & Bill Palen
Kay Papin
Sheila Parkert
Ann B. Parks
Kathleen Parrish

2021 ANNUAL GIVING

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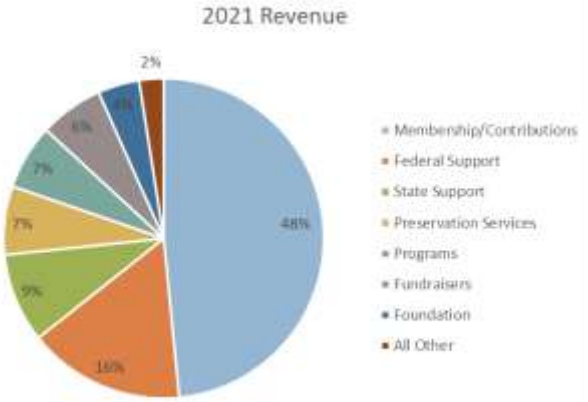
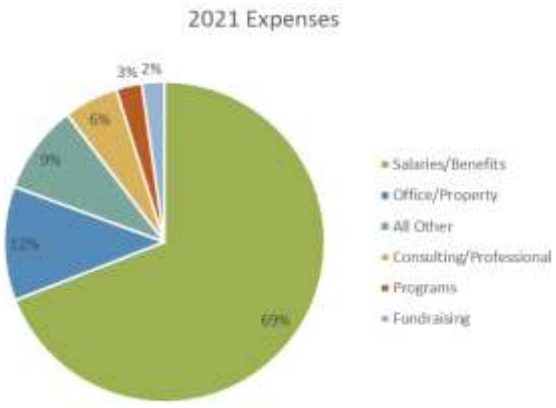
Mary Passage
Marilyn Kay Paul
Gary Peacock
Brian & Irene Penney
James Peterson
Mr. Edward D. Petty
Lorraine Plauth
Judy Pliquett
Tom Podhrazsky
Colleen & Peter R. Prescott
Seymour Preston, Jr.
Travis Proulx
Emily & James Pugsley
Jean Quattrocchi
Mary Racicot
Linda Ramirez
Mary Ann Randall
Donald & Ruth Reed
Patricia E. Reed
Peter Regan
Deanne Rehm
Daniel D. Reiff
Connie L. Reitz
Judith Renzulli & Curtis Reitz
Gail Rheingold
Sandra Rhoades
Carla Richards
Nicholas Robinson
Mark & Nietta Rogers
Keela & Jim Rogers
Kitty Rooney
Renato Roque
Carol Rothenberg
John & Louise Rourke
Brian & Virginia Ruder
Lynn & Bill Russom
Colleen Ryan
Stephen Sama & Bronwen Perkins
Anne Savage
Thomas & Charlene Schaffer
Eleanor Scheidelman
Mark Scheidelman
Janet K. Schloat
John & Eileen Schneider
Richard & Zoanne Schnell
James Scholten & Amy Lepak
Douglas W. Scott, AIA & June Deery
Donald Seauvageau
Dr. Robert & Susan Segaul
Majken Sellar
Scott Sheffield
Sara Sheldon
Lawrence Shipps
Jon & Nicole Simms
Peter Slocum & Ann Sayers
Peter Smeallie
Robert O. Smyth
Joel & Nancy Solomon
Jan-Marie Spanard & Andrew Cullen
James W. Spring
Aura Stauffer
Carl D. Stearns
Susan Y. Stewart
Richard Strean
Ms. Neville E. Strumpf
Jane Subramanian
Patricia Sullivan
Carolyn Summers
Madison Sutherland
Jack S. Swan
Julia Tansor
Christine L. Tebbutt
Richard Terry & Margaret Doran
Spencer Thew
Carol Thiel & Peter Collinge
Nancy Thorn
Elizabeth Thorndike
Stephen Tilly & Elizabeth Martin
Becky Timmons
Christopher & Cathy Townsend
Michael & Nancy Tracy
Rex & Kathleen Trobridge
Pamela W. Tunnell
Josey Twombly
Emily Tyner
Gilbert VanGuilder
Rev. Steve & Susan Vekasy
Joseph & Sharon Vito
Thomas Vollaro
Holly Wahlberg
Robert Mark & Ruth Ward
Lee Warren
Dr. & Mrs. Mark Webster
Caroline Welsh
Mrs. Helen R. Weltman
Mary Jo Whalen
Don & Betsy Wickman
Ralph & Cecelia Williams
Richard Williams
Chris & Savanah Wilson
Lynn O. Wilson
Elizabeth Wolf
Deana Wood
Charlene Wood
Elizabeth Yokum
Deb Yokum & Hal Moore
C. Zebley
Ingrid Zimmermann





2021 FINANCIAL REPORT

Thanks to the enduring support of our members and friends, the New York State Council on the Arts and Humanities NY, private foundation support, our generous individual supporters, and federal support through the Payment Protection Program, AARCH has been able to continue its good work throughout the pandemic. The following is our brief 2021 (Operating) Financial Report. Revenue in excess of expenses went into AARCH's long-term reserve fund & carried forward for 2022 projects.

Revenue

Membership & Contributions	$307,802
Federal Support	100,710
State Support	57,440
Preservation Services	44,085
Programs	41,736
Fundraisers	41,028
Foundation	26,758
All Other	15,650
	$635,209

Expenses

Salaries/Benefits	267,060
Office/Property	44,642
All Other	34,820
Consulting/Professional	21,300
Programs	10,061
Fundraising	8,731
	$386,614

2022 PROGRAMS

Coming back together in 2021 for nearly 30 outings with devoted AARCH tour-goers was joyous, exciting, and reenergizing! We explored new locations, took in rich stories, and interrogated the deeper narratives that define places and communities across the Adirondack landscape. From the Twitchell Lake Inn's rustic porches to the downtown streets of Malone and Gloversville, to the home of the fiery suffragist and champion of equality Inez Milholland – we hope the sites, sounds, and stories of last season helped folks center themselves in the rich tapestry of Adirondack history.

In the coming year, as we again regroup and strategize for a year of safe, effective, and fun programming, we're proud to offer you all the quality experiences you know and love, along with some exciting new opportunities as well. Outside of our traditional summer slate, we are offering a few new virtual events for folks to attend during winter months. Keep an eye out for discussions on fire tower preservation, a documentary filmmaker discussion exploring the story of Timbuctoo, a 19th-century African American community in Essex and Franklin Counties, and a dialog about the deeper history and architectural legacies of Adirondack prisons. See below for information on where to register or watch later if you miss them live!

AARCH will of course offer numerous in-depth and exciting tours, workshops, and outings throughout the Adirondack region. Thanks to a National Trust of Historic Preservation grant, we are offering hands-on workshops for participants to learn about restoring historic plaster and wood windows as well as a women-only power tools primer. Beyond these hands-on offerings, we're hard at work planning new and classic tours from the fertile fields of the Champlain Valley to the quarries of the Slate Valley, to the storied landscapes, buildings, and places that seamlessly blend with their natural surroundings. There will be experiences for everyone this coming year so stay tuned!

UPCOMING WEBINAR: Visit https://aarch.org/adventure/talks-presentations/ to register for the following webinar.

Mar. 3: Exploring Carceral Architecture in the Adirondacks

Since the mid-19th century, New York State and federal corrections planners have adapted existing infrastructure in the Adirondack Park into sites of incarceration. Some of the region's prison architecture began as rehabilitative spaces for Tuberculosis curing in places like Gabriels and Ray Brook while some boast rich architectural legacies like the historic Clinton Correctional Facility in Dannemora. Each of these buildings' unique histories remain profoundly connected to communities large and small across the North Country.

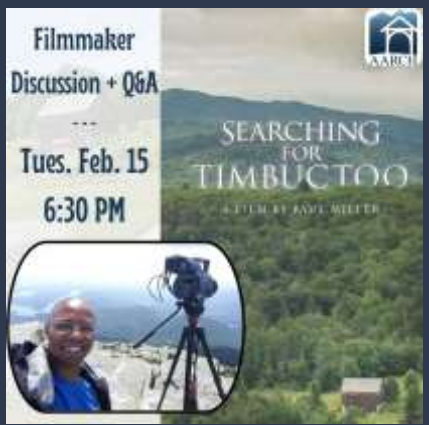
Clarence Jefferson Hall Jr. is author of *A Prison in the Woods: Environment and Incarceration in New York's North Country* published by UMass Press 2020. He is a North Country native, historian, and Assistant Professor of History at Queensborough Community College (CUNY). Dr. Hall's work explores the intersection of prisons and the Adirondack Park's environmental conservation movement and highlights the deeper history of the region's carceral spaces.

In this webinar, followed by a Q&A period, Dr. Hall will discuss the role of architecture and reuse in these intersecting histories of Adirondack prisons.

You can find recordings of previous webinars on our YouTube channel:

Poke-O-Moonshine and Adirondack Fire Towers is now available: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oc5wUogEXlc

Keep an eye out for the recording of *Searching for Timbuctoo Filmmaker Discussion and Q&A* — coming soon!



Please send us information about preservation projects and issues in your community. We do our best to keep track of what's happening in the region but need your eyes and ears to help us do so.

GRANT AWARDS

Oval Wood Dish Factory, a historic, shuttered wood products complex in Tupper Lake is slated for rehabilitation. Oval Wood operators plan to build a mix of housing, training, and commercial space and received a $2.5 million state grant to help in what may be more than $30 million in investment. This project will use Historic Tax Credits.

In addition this December, Gov. Kathy Hochul's administration announced that Tupper Lake will receive $10 million from the Downtown Revitalization Initiative will help fund economic development projects.

Clinton County Historical Association (CCHA), received a Conservation Treatment Grant from the Greater Hudson Heritage Network for the conservation of diorama by Adirondack artist Arto Monaco.

The diorama was a gift from the Plattsburgh Rotary who commissioned the work for the 1976 United States Bicentennial celebration and has been moved to several locations over the years before finally resting at the CCHA's Museum in Plattsburgh.

Historic Saranac Lake received a $500,000 grant from the New York Main Street Downtown Anchor program of NYS Homes & Community Renewal for the rehabilitation of the Trudeau Building in downtown Saranac Lake. Historic Saranac Lake has received almost $3 million in public and private support for expansion of the Saranac Laboratory Museum.

ALBANY: NATIONAL REGISTER

Several Adirondack properties were recently listed on the State and/or National Registers of Historic Places. National Register listing provides recognition for historic properties and gives owners access to grant and tax credit program opportunities.

Theodore Basselin House, Lewis County — Originally constructed in 1855 and subsequently expanded in the center of the village of Croghan, this property, with a residence, office, and barn, was home to regional lumber magnate and philanthropist Theodore Basselin. Basselin was one of New York State's first three Forest Commissioners and was instrumental in the creation of the Adirondack Park. The property operated as a general store from 1855 to 1900 and later housed the village's first bank. It's restoration earned it a 2021 AARCH Preservation Award.

Mountainside Free Library, Warren County — In operation since its 1904 construction, this simple wood-frame community library is in the town of Queensbury, in the Lake George/ Dunham Bay region. Regional author, historian, and educator Edward Eggleston founded the library, initially donating some of his personal books. Eggleston was a regional novelist who wrote about the American frontier experience. His nearby home, Owl's Nest, was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1971. The library has long been run by volunteers and has no paid staff.

Church of the Ascension Chapel & Rectory, Franklin County – Located in the Adirondack hamlet of Saranac Inn, this rustic log church was completed in 1884 in the Gothic Revival style. The church was a response to the popularity of tourism to the nearby Saranac Inn, originally called the Prospect House Resort, which no longer exists. Expanded in 1903, it includes stained-glass windows donated by visiting families who spent their summers in the area. A modest wood-frame Craftsman-style bungalow serves as the rectory.

NEWS

The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation (OPRHP) has released its 2021-2026 Historic Preservation Plan. This document is the result of two years of planning and extensive public engagement by OPRHP staff.

The Plan identifies eight topics in preservation, illustrative of ongoing challenges preservation advocates and professionals encounter today as well as those they may encounter in the years ahead. Presented in no particular order of importance, these topics illustrate various components of broad themes occurring in preservation: Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, & Access • Survey, Designation, & Protection • Economic Development & Recovery • Environmental Sustainability • Disaster Planning and Resilience • Local Preservation • Partnerships • Public Outreach & Education

Access the full report at parks.ny.gov/documents/shpo/preservation-plan/NewYorkStateHistoricPreservationPlan20212026.pdf.

Debar Pond Lodge Bills Introduced

AARCH continues to work closely with the Debar Pond Institute and Preservation League of NYS in support of preserving Debar Pond Lodge through a constitutional land exchange amendment. This fall, AARCH took part in a very productive meeting with the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. Assemblymember Billy Jones and Senator Dan Stec introduced bills in the NYS Assembly (A.7535) and Senate (S.7868) to advance the amendment to preserve Debar Pond Lodge. Thank you to Assemblymembers Matt Simpson and Steve Englebright for their bill co-sponsorship. Please contact your NYS Assemblymember and Senator to express your support.

Historic Barn Rehabilitation Tax Credit
State Senator Michelle Hinchey (SD-46) and Assemblymember Didi Barrett (AD-106) recently announced that bill S.6042/A.6947 to create a tax program to help landowners restore historic barns across rural and upstate New York was signed into law by Governor Hochul. Thanks to the legislation, property owners will soon be eligible to apply with the State Historic Preservation Office for a 25% tax credit to restore barns constructed before 1945 back to productive use or into small businesses such as craft breweries, event spaces, and the like, to foster economic growth.

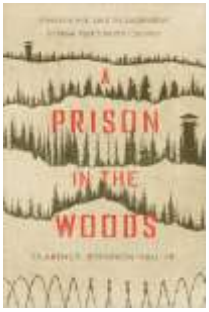
Dr. Michael Tomlan, President of the New York State Barn Coalition, said, "The need to rehabilitate the barns across the Empire State has never been greater. The support of the Senate and Assembly members and the Governor is a tremendous step forward, energizing the economy and assisting property owners and thousands of rural communities."

Keeseville's Historic Bridges Win Three Awards From *The Bridgehunter's Chronicles* – Located on the Au Sable River at the Essex-Clinton County border, Keeseville has a collection of rare and unique historic bridges, including a continuous pony truss bridge, a suspension built by a company that specialized in lenticular truss bridges, a two-span through truss bridge built by a company that specialized in building railroad cars, and its iconic 1843 stone arch bridge. Each one has a unique history but have one thing in common — they have been neglected for too long. Residents in the community have strongly advocated for the structures' restoration and continue to request involvement from the two counties and even the state of New York.

The Bridges of Keeseville were in the running in the Bridgehunter Awards in the categories of Bridge Tour Guide USA, Bridge of the Year and Endangered T.R.U.S.S. (Top Ranked Unique Salvageable Structure). In all three categories the community made a huge statement to the rest of the nation and the world through landslide wins, emphasizing that "Our Bridges Matter!" By a record-setting margin, Keeseville won the triple crown, thanks to the ongoing efforts of Save Keeseville's Historic Bridges.

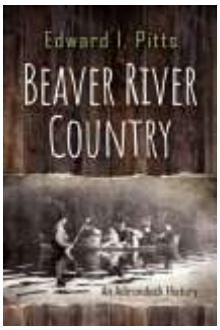
BOOKS

A Prison in the Woods:
Environment and Incarceration in New York's North Country
By Clarence Jefferson Hall
2020 paperback, University of Massachusetts Press, 288 pp



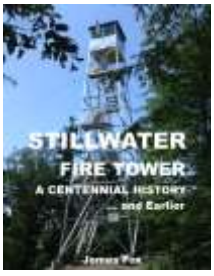
Since the mid-19th century, Americans have known the Adirondack Mountains of upstate New York as a site of industrial production, a place to heal from disease, and a sprawling outdoor playground that must be preserved in its wild state. Less known, however, has been the area's role in hosting a network of state and federal prisons. In *A Prison in the Woods,* C. Jefferson Hall traces the planning, construction, and operation of penitentiaries in five Adirondack Park communities from the 1840s through the early 2000s to demonstrate that the histories of mass incarceration and environmental consciousness are interconnected. For more information on the book or how to order a copy, see www.umasspress.com/9781625345356/a-prison-in-the-woods/. **Join AARCH for a webinar with Dr. Hall exploring his work and the role of architecture and perseveration related to Adirondack prisons on March 3 at 6:30 pm. See pg. 13 for details.**

Beaver River Country: An Adirondack History
By Edward I. Pitts
2022 paperback, Syracuse University Press, 288 pp



Encompassing lands immediately surrounding the upper reaches of the Beaver River from its headwaters at Lake Lila to Beaver Lake at the settlement of Number Four, Beaver River country is the largest undisturbed tract of forest in the entire northeastern United States. During the nineteenth century it was widely considered to be the very heart of the Adirondacks and was visited by thousands of tourists seeking outdoor recreation. The area boasted a busy railroad station, two grand hotels, an exclusive resort, and an elaborate great camp, as well as dozens of guides camps and sporting clubs. Filled with rare vintage photographs, this book is a vivid portrait of this wild region, revealing how it came to be and why it survives. For more information on the book or how to order a copy, see press.syr.edu/supressbooks/4377/beaver-river-country.

Stillwater Fire Tower:
A Centennial History….and Earlier
By James Fox
2020 paperback, 56 pp



Jim Fox's recent book details over a century of rich history that has happened atop Stillwater Mountain, from early Adirondack surveys to the restoration and preservation of its 19th century fire tower. It features several vintage photos, maps and lithographs recounting the story of Stillwater. For more information on the book or how to order a copy, see www.friendsofstillwaterfiretower.com/book.html.

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PRESERVING THE ARCHITECTURE AND COMMUNITIES OF THE ADIRONDACKS THROUGH EDUCATION, ACTION, AND ADVOCACY

PRESERVE

NOMINATE A PROJECT FOR A 2022 PRESERVATION AWARD

Nominations are now being accepted for the 2022 AARCH Preservation Awards, which recognize exemplary preservation projects throughout the Adirondacks. The awards honor businesses, organizations, and individuals who, through their preservation and stewardship work, have made the Adirondacks a better place to live, work, and visit.

For more information on the awards and to submit a nomination, visit our website at www.aarch.org or contact Preservation Services Director Christine Bush by email at christine@aarch.org or phone (518) 834-9328.

SUPPORT

AARCH relies on the support of individuals, organizations, businesses, and communities throughout the Adirondacks to do its good work.

Even the smallest gift goes a long way! Scan this code to donate to AARCH securely online today: