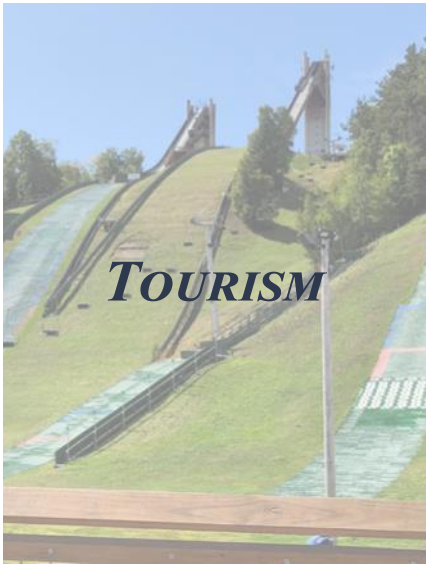
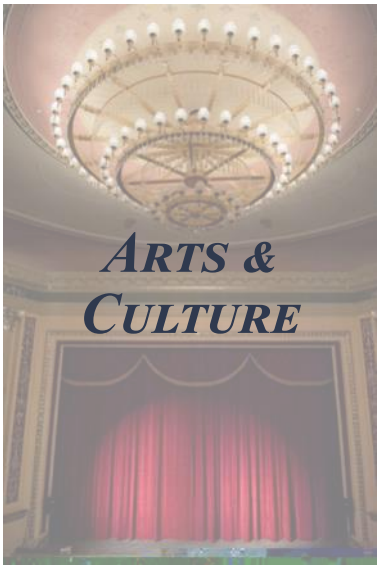
Adirondack Architectural Heritage

# NEWSLETTER

YEAR IN REVIEW 2022

HISTORIC PRESERVATION





# *Preservation Builds Strong Communities*

In our 2022 Year in Review, we explore the ways in which our buildings, structures, and landscapes shape and strengthen our communities. Through our activities this year and beyond, we continue to highlight how preservation builds strong communities. Preservation is at the heart of so many community endeavors, from traditional trades workforce development to providing quality affordable housing for that workforce, protecting our environment through reuse of our existing buildings, creating economic development, and amplifying social justice. These themes, detailed below, thread through everything we do at AARCH, connected by our vision to preserve the architecture and communities of the Adirondack region.

We are increasingly aware of the importance of repairing what we have, rather than replacing, and the same holds true for our existing buildings. Existing buildings play a vital role in mitigating climate change and **protecting our environment**, a topic AARCH continues to speak about in our educational programs and community presentations. Repairing existing buildings avoids the emissions created through the production and delivery of new building material, keeps construction waste out of landfills, consumes less energy than building demolition and new construction, and stimulates the local economy through job creation. Additionally, studies show how we can increase the energy efficiency of existing buildings through integrating traditional and modern technologies.

*Restoring Wood Windows Workshop*

As anyone with an old building in need of repair knows, we have a shortage of **traditional building trades** workers. The need for increased training in the traditional trades was identified as a priority by the Preservation Priorities Task Force of the National Preservation Partners Network and National Trust for Historic Preservation. As a member of this task force, AARCH is helping to find ways that we can promote traditional trades development in the Adirondacks. Towards that goal, AARCH hosted three hands-on workshops this year, empowering homeowners to learn and practice preservation trades. These workshops focused on historic plaster repair, using power tools, and repairing wood windows, and were funded in part by the National Trust for Historic Preservation's John E. Streb Fund.

*Champlain Valley Senior Community (former Willsboro Central School)*

The Adirondack region has a dearth of **affordable housing**, but also a number of vacant buildings, as highlighted in an October report by North Country Public Radio. At AARCH we have been engaged in fostering more affordable housing through participation in AdkAction's Land Bank Incubator Project, which investigated how land banks could preserve, protect, and promote affordable housing in the North Country. Rehabilitation of historic buildings offers an opportunity to address the current housing need and eliminate building vacancy throughout the region.

Preservation incentives, such as the New York State and Federal Historic Tax Credits, are often used in adaptive use projects to create housing. The Champlain Valley Senior Community in the former Willsboro Central School, which received an AARCH Preservation Award in 2014, demonstrates how existing buildings can be rehabilitated for housing using **historic and community development incentives**. The current rehabilitation of the former Oval Wood Dish factory in Tupper Lake, which will include multiple levels of housing affordability, provides another example of the integration of workforce housing with historic preservation, while also providing economic development in the village of Tupper Lake.

As buildings evolve away from their initial uses, **arts and cultural organizations** are also key to reviving or adapting structures such as historic dance halls, churches, and theaters for new uses. The Sandy Hill Arts Center in Hudson Falls, the recipient of a 2022 AARCH Preservation Award, demonstrates how a Masonic hall can be reinvented for a variety of uses, from galleries and artist studios to office space and a restaurant. In Fulton County, the Caroga Arts Collective demonstrates how bringing the arts into historic buildings supports community economic development through their adaptive use of the historic Sherman's Amusement Park in Caroga Lake, a site we explored on one of this year's educational programs.

Walkable neighborhoods and lively main streets are also integral to creating communities where people want to live and work. In June, we participated in the Common Ground Alliance Forum's *Vibrant Communities* session, discussing the ways that the built environment contributes to communities, in particular providing those necessary "third places" beyond home and work that support healthy communities. We received funding from the Adirondack Foundation's Generous Acts grant program to create a series of community-focused webinars on preservation as **sustainable economic development**. These webinars, ongoing this fall, share information on the preservation incentives that help to spark investment in existing historic buildings, from agricultural buildings to main streets.

*Sandy Hill Arts Center*

Lastly, **social justice** is a key component in creating sustainable communities where all can feel seen, heard, and welcome. Two of our winter webinars earlier this year explored the intersection of historic preservation and social justice. These included a presentation by Paul Miller on his film, *Searching for Timbuctoo*, the story of a community in the Adirondacks created in the 19th century to give Black men the right to vote through property ownership, and a talk by Clarence Jefferson Hall on his book, *A Prison in the Woods*, which explores North Country prisons and their connection to the environmental movement in the region. This conversation about the history of incarceration in the North Country led to our current project, *Rethinking Vacant Historic Adirondack Prisons*. The project, funded by an action grant from Humanities New York, brings together individuals across multiple perspectives to focus on vacant North Country prisons and the communities that formed in and around those institutions. The conversation will explore how communities might reuse these structures as a means of community investment while honoring their history.

*Camp Gabriels*

Looking ahead to 2023, AARCH will launch the **Adirondack Rural Revitalization Program (ARRP)**, funded through a Paul Bruhn Historic Revitalization Grant from the National Park Service. Through capital rehabilitation grants, the ARRP will nurture economic development and a sense of place in our communities by investing in historic main streets and agricultural buildings. In the last two years, regional nonprofits, municipalities, and state agencies have all come together with the common goal of promoting economic development in Adirondack hamlets and villages, supporting rehabilitation of vacant buildings to create affordable housing, and fostering increased community pride and sense of place. The ARRP responds to this initiative with the first regional preservation grant program of its kind. Stay tuned as we work to create this program in early 2023.

All of this work is made possible by your support. Above all, thank you for being a part of AARCH. Becoming a part of this community has been a privilege and an honor. Our region is second to none and we look forward to continuing our work in the coming year.

*Erin*

# National Register & Technical Assistance Work

**National Register**

Each year, AARCH prepares National Register nominations for hire and provides technical assistance to people writing nominations. Listing on the National Register of Historic Places provides special stature to historic properties and allows owners to access grant opportunities as well as participate in state and federal tax credit programs for funding their preservation projects. This year, we have been working on projects throughout the Adirondack region. These nominations reflect the North Country's great range of architectural styles, communities, and historical periods.

In September, the **Graves Mansion** in Au Sable Forks was listed on the New York State Historic Register and will soon be listed on the National Register. The 15,000 square foot mansard-roofed mansion was built in 1878 for Henry Graves. Despite several well-intentioned efforts to restore the building, the last decade has seen it deteriorate. New owners are taking up the challenge to restore this Victorian-era gem. Listing on the National Register will also enable the owners to take advantage of the state and federal historic tax credit programs.

As 2022 draws to a close, we will wrap up National Register nominations on several projects, including **Camp Veery** on Big Moose Lake, the **Foote-Legge-Stocking Tavern** in Heuvelton, and the **Malone Residential Historic District**.

Accessible only by boat, **Camp Veery** on Echo Island was built for Theodore Page in 1901 and is architecturally and historically significant as an intact example of the unique and distinctive Adirondack Rustic Style of architecture. The owners have completed extensive work to restore and stabilize the camp's buildings.

The Halfway House (locally called the **Foote-Legge-Stocking Tavern**) was built in 1807 by Stillman Foote after he was awarded the franchise for carrying the mail between Ogdensburg and Canton. The route was a dirt, corduroy, toll road, and the fees were collected at the tavern. This federal-style building retains much of its original architectural character and boasts a rich history.

This year we will complete a large residential historic district in Malone. The **Malone Residential Historic District** is a largely intact 19th-century residential neighborhood which has escaped development pressure for most of the 20th century. Funding for this project comes from the Village of Malone, the Malone Revitalization Foundation, and a Preserve New York grant from the Preservation League of New York State.

We also have National Register nominations for which we are currently completing fieldwork and will prepare during winter and spring of 2023. These include the **St. Lawrence Government Complex** in Canton and the **Hamlet of Schuyler Falls Historic District.**

The historic district in Schuyler Falls emerged out of a town-wide reconnaissance survey of we completed in 2021. Through this survey, we identified three, possibly four, potential National Register historic districts. Working with the New York State Office of Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation, boundaries for the **Hamlet of Schuyler Falls Historic District** were established. The Town of Schuyler Falls received a Preserve New York grant from the Preservation League of NYS to complete the National Register Historic District nomination.

AARCH continues to aid several property owners in preparing preliminary eligibility determination forms and reviewing draft nominations.

**Technical Assistance**

AARCH continues to provide technical assistance to individuals, businesses, nonprofit organizations, and municipalities to further historic preservation projects. We provide information on a range of topics from National Register listing to more complex issues such as solving conservation problems. Sometimes, these initial inquiries lead to the start of partnerships and projects that overlap with other aspects of AARCH's work. Such is the case at the **Graves Mansion** and the **Immaculate Heart of Mary,** as detailed below.

In May, a concerned citizen reached out to us about the **Immaculate Heart of Mary**, a Roman Catholic church in Churubusco suffering from neglect and the potential removal of its exquisite

*Photos: The Graves Mansion, residential buildings in Malone, Camp Veery, The Foot-Legge-Stocking Tavern (photo by J. Bixby), St Lawrence Court House, and residential building in Schuyler Falls.*

*Immaculate Heart of Mary, Churubusco*

stained glass windows. Her research led her to AARCH through Educational Program Director Nolan Cool's research on the church's builder Isaac Johnson, a prolific African American stone mason and master builder.

After an initial conversation, it was clear that a preliminary conditions assessment was needed for the Diocese and concerned community members to understand the extent of deterioration and establish a framework for collaborating to preserve the building. AARCH prepared a conditions assessment that identified issues of immediate concern and a basis for creating preliminary cost estimates for restoration. Our site visit also provided an opportunity to engage with the community, town, and Diocese about options for saving the church.

Since its construction, the church has served as the heart of the community. Not only is it a stunning example of a Gothic Revival style, rural stone church but also a surviving example of Isaac Johnson's work. It serves as a fascinating window into the history of late 19th-century masonry buildings and their craftspeople in the North Country. AARCH will keep this church on our radar and continue to support the group's efforts to save it from demolition and repurpose it for a community use.

In addition to writing its National Register nomination, we continue to support the owner of the **Graves Mansion** with information and guidance on finding consultants, craftspeople, and specialized building materials; utilizing tax credit incentives; and developing a strategy for completing this large project. We have also collaborated with the owner to use the mansion for hands-on preservation trades training workshops. It is inspiring to see the owners learn new skills and engage the community as part of the restoration process.

**Workshops and Webinars**

As we all know, restoring an old house can be a daunting task, and knowing where to start, what to restore, what to replace, and what you can do yourself versus calling a professional makes all the difference. The most frequent inquiry we receive from homeowners is where to start and how to find a reliable, skilled contractor. The importance and value of skilled craftworkers can not be overstated. These jobs require specialized skills and knowledge to properly preserve historic structures and materials. However, with some basic knowledge and a bit of practice, historic building owners can tackle many maintenance and repairs themselves.

AARCH is committed to providing people with the tools to help. Thanks in part to funding from the John E. Streb Fund from the National Trust for Historic Preservation, we held three hands-on workshops this summer. Led by master craftspeople, our *Preserving Historic Plaster*, *Power Tools for Women*, and *Restoring Wood Windows* workshops provided opportunities for participants to gain first-hand experience and develop the skills needed to tackle their projects. Recordings of these workshops are available on our YouTube channel and we are working to expand our workshop offerings in 2023.

*Top: Historic Plaster Workshop; Middle: Power Tools for Women Workshop; Bottom: Restoring Wood Windows Workshop.*

Another common question we receive concerns funding for the restoration and repair of historic buildings. Thanks in part to a grant from the Adirondack Foundation's Generous Acts Program, we are offering a three-part webinar series on Funding Preservation Projects. If you missed our first webinar, *Preserving Historic Barns*, you can find it on our YouTube channel. Visit our website to learn more and register for our upcoming webinars: *Funding Preservation Projects: Historic Tax Credits (*November 16, 2022, 4:00 – 6:00 PM) and *Funding Preservation Projects: Grants (*December 7, 2022, 4:00 – 6:00 PM).

# *Educational Adventures*

This year, we launched our programming with a simple, but powerful theme – ***Hope***. We find hope in places big and small, in buildings and landscapes across the Adirondacks, and in North Country communities with innumerable stories to tell. As we reflect on a busy year of diverse tours, workshops, webinars, and other educational offerings, we see that the places we visit and the stories we help share leave us hopeful for a healthier, more vibrant tomorrow, where historic places are as valued and treasured as the communities that they call home.

AARCH's popular series of events brought more than a few surprises this year! We offered an exciting line-up of over 40 educational programs including 16 brand-new day-long tours, a slate of virtual webinars, and some unforgettable hands-on workshops. Together, these programs helped us continue working to save places that matter; helping folks discover new stories that excite, challenge, and inspire them; and empowering the DIY crowd to learn and practice preservation trades. Each time members, enthusiasts, friends, and colleagues meet at AARCH events, we learn something new about our region and ourselves. These shared experiences create the environment of curiosity and hopefulness that has come to define our programming.

Appearing in so many of our programs are not just the stories of the built environment, but the people who shaped it. This past season, our adventures brought us numerous multi-layered stories that excited and challenged us in places like Gabriels, Tupper Lake, and Caroga Lake, just to name a few.

Two large tour groups explored the themes of rehabilitation, curing, education, mass incarceration, and others at **Camp Gabriels**, which began its life in the late 1890s as Gabriels Sanitorium, a regional Catholic tuberculosis curing institution. The site not only served as a curing facility but was later a satellite campus for the Paul Smith's College Forestry Program in the 1960s and '70s, and most recently, as a minimum-security prison between 1982 and 2009. Today, the site features six late 19th and early 20th century buildings from its earlier life, including structures built by Saranac Lake contractors from Branch & Callanan and designed by noted architects Isaac Perry and John Russell Pope. These substantial buildings stand alongside several unique historic features like the site's old root cellar and a now-wooded shrine. Touring this abandoned historic site and learning about the stories, lives, and labors tied to it reminded us about the power of place.

*Former Camp Gabriels Commissary Clerk Ara Newman discusses the site with an AARCH tour group in front of one of two 1926 dormitory buildings.*

*A shot from our developer-led tour of the former Oval Wood Dish factory.*

Similarly in **Tupper Lake**, an outing in late September took tour-goers to three iconic historic sites around the village highlighting its medical, religious, and industrial history. Sunmount, a former hospital for World War I veterans recovering from tuberculosis, remains standing as a facility supporting people with developmental disabilities. Beth Joseph Synagogue, among the oldest and largest of its kind in the Adirondacks, stood at the center of the sizable and prosperous local Jewish community in the early 20th century. Lastly, we visited Oval Wood Dish, an iconic industrial complex slated for new life as a mixed-use redevelopment project that will meet housing and local business needs. Taken together, these distinct sites showed us that communities in our region have always been places of socioeconomic change, where buildings evolve to fulfill the needs of intersecting peoples who came to call our region home.

In the southern Adirondack community of **Caroga Lake**, tour-goers experienced the places that blend past and present in the area's rich arts scene. Each place we traveled to – the Caroga Historical Association Museum, a whimsical camp where an early 20th-century artist's colony started, and an amusement park-turned-arts venue at Sherman's Amusement Park – showcased how preservationists can simultaneously retain the character of repurposed old buildings and serve the present-day community. The Caroga Arts Collective brings a lively arts scene to the historic Sherman's Amusement Park through a refined lakeside concert series, artist housing, volunteer-led projects, and even the rehabilitation of its colorful carousel. These details highlight how preservation can keep places thriving.

## NOLAN'S TOUR NOTES

**Tour Miles on Nolan's Car:** 2,868. We're working to reduce our carbon emissions – help us out by carpooling when you can on future outings!

**Crowd Favorite:** The most sought-after outing was *A Day on Big Wolf Lake* which featured a Howie Kirschenbaum-led guided paddle, historic camp tour, and a picnic lunch.

**New Outing Sure to Become a Classic:** *Thousand Island Park* – This outing, led by our great friend Tom French, offered so much breadth, spectacular scenery, vibrant buildings, and an unforgettable suspension bridge. There is still much more to explore here!

**Best Weather:** *Biking the Boquet Valley* – A perfect, sunny, autumn day in the mid-60s, perfect for a bike ride.

**Hottest:** Both *Wind and Solar* and *Thousand Island Park* featured tons of sun, high humidity, and high temps. Fortunately, the plateaus and wind turbines of Churubusco and a river boat ride on the St. Lawrence helped a bit.

**Coldest:** *Otis Mountain Camps* — A brisk and chilly morning jaunt helped warm the group up as we ascended Otis Mountain to see its wonderful historic camps and scenic views!

**Hidden Gem:** There were so many "hidden gems" this year from exploring a surprising powerhouse in Altona on *A Dam Too Far*, to the depth, stories, and history at Camp Gabriels, to the vibrant arts scene happening at some of Caroga Lake's most storied places!

*The scenic McGregor Powerhouse in Altona.*

Beyond these three **brand-new tours,** we also experienced other unique adventures. Each new tour added value and illustrated the depth and reach of what we hope is an infectious regional preservation ethic. Alongside our spectacular new hands-on workshops detailed previously, our experiences took us to many corners of the region. We trekked to a massive early 20th-century "million-dollar dam" in the wilds of the Altona Flat Rock as well as its successor, the striking Spanish Revival-style McGregor Powerhouse hovering above the fast-moving Great Chazy River. Here, we learned about the lasting historical and environmental effects of William H. Miner's colossal hydroelectric projects that powered Chazy's Heart's Delight Farm. We toured buildings throughout Schuyler Falls for the first time to learn about its agricultural and early industrial history, along with current investments in historic preservation. We also explored the infrastructure, landscapes, and foodways associated with growing grains at Champlain Valley farms; toured wind and solar sites to look more closely at the architecture of renewable energy; gathered for an excursion to Thousand Island Park to see its vibrant and colorful historic structures and scenic environs; and even experienced a special, behind-the-scenes evening tour of the recently-restored Pavilion at Fort Ticonderoga. These fresh outings offered great variety and we hope they inspired folks to keep fostering the spirit of good stewardship in our own backyards.

Of course, we also took the opportunity to bring back some **classic tours,** including exploring Raquette Lake's rustic architecture; boating to and hiking Valcour Island; and visiting the Slate Valley in Washington County, as well as others like Loon Lake, Brews at the Barracks, several visits to Camp Santanoni, and a repeat of last year's popular tour of Greenwich. Outings that we have previously hosted in some form or another received an update or a new twist, including a paddling trip on Big Wolf Lake with Howie Kirschenbaum; the addition the Indian Carry to our popular Bartlett Carry Club tour; an "open studio" at the historic mill and art studios of sculptors John Van Alstine and Caroline Ramersdorfer; new additions to the Stone Houses Open House; and lastly, a biking tour of the Boquet Valley in Essex led by Steven Engelhart.

*Participants of our Architectural Sketching Workshop in Keeseville.*

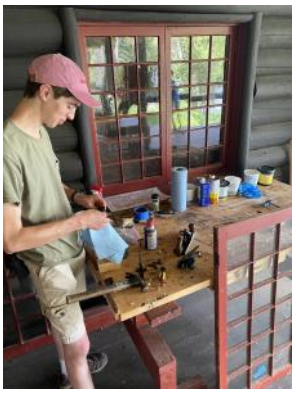
Where there are historic places that are rich with narratives of success, struggle, passion, and persistence, there's *hope*. Preserving places that matter to us and sharing their stories help us create a mirror for understanding and navigating the trajectory of our past and present. This is why preservation matters. It ties together the depth and layers of community life in a tangible way and strengthens the bonds we all share. In all our adventures this year, our sincerest hope is that these places underscored the strong sense of kinship and affinity we share with the region, its communities, its history, and among each other.

# *Camp Santanoni*

This year, our work preserving and interpreting Great Camp Santanoni continued, along with our decades-long partnership with the Town of Newcomb and NYS Department of Environmental Conservation.

Our summer staff, Kevin Jensen and Leigh Robertson, accomplished a tremendous amount during the busy season. Kevin joined the Camp Santanoni team coming from the Hanford Mills Museum in Delaware County, where he worked as a Mill Research and Interpretation Specialist. Leigh came to us from the University of Maryland, where she is completing a degree in history with a minor in public history.

At the Santanoni Main Camp, in addition to daily tours, Kevin and Leigh reglazed and repaired many casement windows, built new Adirondack chairs and benches for the porch and gazebo, organized and rehung the photo exhibit, reinstalled the historic kitchen sink, and built new directional signage as well as interpretive signs for the servants' quarters model in the kitchen, along with many other projects to restore and maintain the historic camp. Santanoni Interpretive Coordinator Jennifer Betsworth worked with Kevin and Leigh to address the conservation of the stair-rail at the Main Camp, where we have now installed a UV-filtering interior storm window to protect the bark on the historic railing.



*Some of the projects that Kevin Jensen and Leigh Robertson completed at the Main Camp when not giving tours.*

At the Santanoni Farm, Kevin and Leigh continued last year's work painting the Manager's Cottage and created additional interpretive signs for the barn and farm complex models, as well as the barn artifacts in the Gardener's Cottage. Our Santanoni Farm work days continued to restore the agricultural landscape in the Santanoni Historic Area. Visitors to the farm can now walk directly to the Smokehouse, along with the Hot House and other ruins. Thank you to Howie Kirschenbaum for organizing and running the farm days and all who volunteer their time and energy!

AARCH and the Friends of Camp Santanoni led several special tours and programs this summer and early fall. Jennifer created a new tour, *Women of Santanoni*, and led Gate Lodge Tours and Bike Excursions into the Main Camp. Volunteer and AARCH Advisory Councilmember, Chuck Higgerson, led a sold-out *Architects of Santanoni* tour, while artist and educator Jean Mackay led a new workshop, *Drawn to Nature at Camp Santanoni*, focused on nature journaling.

As always, thank you to the Town of Newcomb for their financial support of the seasonal staff at Camp Santanoni and to the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation for their stewardship support and partnership.

Looking forward to 2023, AARCH is incredibly grateful to receive support from the NYS Environmental Protection Fund. This grant will primarily fund fire protection investigation and implementation, a critical need to protect this historic camp, along with funding our site management. Thank you to the Office of Governor Kathy Hochul and the NYS Legislature for their recognition of this National Historic Landmark and all that it contributes to our Adirondack and New York State history.

*Top: Erin Tobin, Chuck Higgerson, Howie Kirschenbaum, and Bill Fibiger at a 2022 Farm Work Day. Bottom: Jennifer Betsworth leading a tour at the Main Camp.*

**Debar Pond Lodge, Town of Duane**

AARCH continues to work with the Debar Pond Institute to advocate for the preservation of Debar Pond Lodge, one of our preservation priorities for over 15 years. This National Register-listed complex overlooking Debar Pond in Franklin County was initially threatened when the state announced plans to demolish the buildings in 2020, leading to widespread public support for the site's preservation.

Howie Kirschenbaum, AARCH board member and president of the Debar Pond Institute, has offered a plan to preserve Debar Pond Lodge and over the past year AARCH has worked closely with the Institute, our North Country legislators Assemblymember Billy Jones and Senator Dan Stec, and the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, on a constitutional amendment to transfer approximately six acres of land to the nonprofit Debar Pond Institute, who will provide public programming and educational opportunities at the site. In exchange for that transfer, 400 acres of nearby land in the Debar Mountain Wild Forest will be added to the Forest Preserve.

Along with the Debar Pond Institute, we worked with the legislature to advocate for the passage of the Debar Pond Lodge constitutional amendment. While happily, the Assembly did pass the amendment bill with a unanimous vote in the last day of session, the bill did not make it through both houses before session ended.

We will continue working to support passage of the Debar Pond Lodge constitutional amendment and look forward to the start of the upcoming legislative session.

**Cornell Cooperative Extension Building, Essex County Fairgrounds, Town of Westport**

Westport's National Register-listed Essex County Fairgrounds is a regional treasure and the Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) Building anchors its eastern entrance. The Friends of the Essex County Fairgrounds has worked diligently over the last year, successfully demonstrating that the cost of rehabilitation of the CCE Building would be equivalent to demolition and new construction through a historic property assessment report completed by Crawford & Stearns Architects, funded by a grant from the Cloudsplitter Foundation.

The Friends of the Essex County Fairgrounds continues to advocate for the CCE Building's preservation, with AARCH's advocacy support as well as our support in serving as a fiscal sponsor for their fundraising efforts. We are hopeful that the county will use the state and federal funding it has received to preserve, not replace, this important regional landmark.

**Stephen Keese Smith Farm, Peru**

Stephen Keese Smith was a Quaker abolitionist who housed individuals fleeing enslavement and on their way to Canada. For many years, the North Country Underground Railroad Association has led tours and preservation efforts at the Stephen Keese Smith Farm in Peru through an agreement with the farm's owners. With the farm now on the market, the North Country Underground Railroad Association is working to preserve and protect this important historic site. AARCH supports the work of the North Country Underground Railroad Association, and is working with them and the property owner on a National Register eligibility determination, which could open up funding possibilities for the site.

# AARCH Special Events

*Our special events are highlights of the year that allow us to gather with our members and friends. We are always grateful for the opportunity to connect, share inspiring stories, and celebrate preservation throughout the Adirondack region.*

## *AARCH Gratitude*
## "No Vacancy," Indian Lake

We thanked our Patron-level donors at AARCH Gratitude on July 14. AARCH members Sally and Sandy Berk graciously hosted the event at their camp, "No Vacancy," on Lake Adirondack in Indian Lake. It was a wonderful evening of beautiful architecture, French food, and celebrating some of our dearest supporters who make our work possible.

*Left: courtesy of Sally & Sandy Berk*

## *Summer Celebration Honoring Howard Kirschenbaum*
## Northbrook Lodge, Paul Smiths

On August 13, the AARCH community gathered on the shores of Osgood Pond for an exceptional summer afternoon celebrating our organization and honoring our founding president, Howie Kirschenbaum. AARCH member Jeff Robillard generously hosted us at Northbrook Lodge, a seasonal camp designed and built by Benjamin A. Muncil in 1919 in the spirit of the Adirondack Great Camps. The afternoon featured remarks by some of Howie's long-term colleagues as well as music by Hui Cox. The food and drinks were expertly crafted by Kevin McCarthy and Zachary Blair, respectively.

*Right: courtesy of Zachary Blair; Below: courtesy of John Eldridge*

## *Friendraiser at Camp Winnetaska*
## Upper St. Regis Lake

On August 24, AARCH held a "Friendraiser" at Camp Winnetaska, Duncan and Caroline Cameron's camp on Upper St. Regis Lake. The event was organized and cohosted by the Camerons and their neighbors, Anne Van Ingen and Wes Haynes, who invited their community to come learn about AARCH and consider supporting our work. We love opportunities like this to meet new people who share our love of the Adirondack region.

### *Annual Meeting & 27th Annual Preservation Awards*

This year, we held our Annual Meeting and Preservation Awards event at the vibrant and recently rehabilitated Sandy Hill Arts Center in Hudson Falls, one of this year's awardees. In addition to the usual business, the Annual Meeting included remarks from NYS Assemblywoman Carrie Woerner, a longtime supporter of historic preservation. She reflected on the vital role that preservation plays in the health of our communities.

We also welcomed two new members to our Board of Directors, J.B. Clancy and Stefanie Noble. Some of you might recognize J.B. from his expert leadership of our architectural sketching workshop, which we held for the second time this year. We are delighted that Stefanie, whose work with AARCH began with a Santanoni internship, rejoined the board this year. Both J.B. and Stefanie have long supported AARCH and we are grateful for their partnership and expertise. You can read more about them below.

This year, we also bid farewell to the following board members: Samantha Bosshart, Susan Darrin, Darcey Hale, and Wester Miga. We thank them for their service and look forward to working with them on the Advisory Council. Our new slate of officers is as follows:

**President**: Dean Melville

**Vice President**: Ed Hodges

**Secretary**: Susan Arena

**Treasurer**: Jim Van Hoven

Our 27th Annual Preservation Awards Ceremony followed the Annual Meeting, honoring seven exemplary accomplishments in historic preservation throughout the Adirondack region. *See pages 12-15 for more information on this year's award winners.*

## J.B. Clancy

J.B. Clancy's relationship with the Adirondacks dates back several generations, as his parents and grandparents have lived in North Creek and Diamond Point on Lake George. He earned a bachelor's degree in architectural studies at Brown University and then completed a masters' program in architecture at Yale University, earning an award in urban planning and design. He currently both works and lives in Boston, where he is a member of the firm Albert, Righter, and Tittmann Architects.

## Stefanie Noble

Stefanie Noble's experience with AARCH began with a Santanoni internship and she previously served on our board of directors. She earned a bachelor's degree in electronic media art and communication from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI), then did graduate studies in historic preservation at Cornell University, and in documentary film and history at Syracuse University. Stefanie lives in the Syracuse area, where she serves as Vice-President for Marketing and Communication for YMCA of Central New York.

# *2022 AARCH Preservation Awards*

***Our Annual Preservation Awards*** *recognize exemplary historic preservation work throughout the region. We honor examples of sensitive restoration, adaptive reuse, community revitalization, lifetime achievement, and long-term stewardship. Our 2022 recipients represent the wide range of projects, places, and people who are helping to preserve and enhance the unique heritage and built environment of the Adirondacks. Visit our website to learn more about this year's awardees.*

Our 2022 Preservation Award Winners. *Photo courtesy of John Eldridge.*

## Wes Haynes, *Lifetime achievement award for preservation leadership in the Adirondacks*

*Photo courtesy of Anne Van Ingen.*

Wes Haynes has advanced important preservation endeavors throughout the Adirondacks for over four decades as a key collaborator and leader in efforts throughout the region, partnering with AARCH and other organizations like The New York Landmarks Conservancy and the Preservation League of New York State.

From 1983 to 1987, Wes was the program manager at The New York Landmarks Conservancy and in 1986, he helped launch the Sacred Sites Program, which has helped numerous active places of worship in the Adirondacks and throughout the state care for their historic structures and continue to serve their communities.

As a consultant to the Preservation League of New York State, Wes helped create the Technical Assistance Center (TAC), serving as its first director and providing valuable conditions assessments to communities throughout the Adirondacks.

Wes worked with the Preservation League and AARCH to save Great Camp Santanoni, where his diligent research and excellent building reports continue to guide the site's management in partnership with the Town of Newcomb and the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation.

Furthermore, Wes wrote the thematic National Register of Historic Places nomination for Adirondack fire towers. This not only cataloged the history of fire observation stations throughout the region but also formed the basis of many advocacy groups' efforts to save fire towers from demolition and rehabilitate them.

Wes is a consummate preservation professional whose passion for historic places is evident in his engaging writing and superb leadership. His contributions to historic preservation echo throughout the Adirondack region and beyond.

## John and Margot Ernst, *for the restoration and rehabilitation of Elk Lake Lodge*

**Town of North Hudson, Essex County**

*Photo courtesy of Nancie Battaglia.*

Built in 1904 by Myron Bruce, Elk Lake Lodge sits at the heart of a 12,000-acre private preserve ringed by the Adirondack Park's High Peaks Wilderness. The hand-hewn beams, vertical log walls, and cedar shakes were harvested from the surrounding forest preserve. Over 100 years later, guests can still enjoy the serene forest environment, uninterrupted by TV, cellular or radio service, and minimal internet.

The Elk Lake Lodge property is notable not only for its architecture but also for being protected by the first conservation easement in the Adirondack Forest Preserve, which protected the shoreline and islands of Elk Lake beginning in the 1960s.

Current owners, John and Margot Ernst, have continued the property's excellent stewardship, preserving the site's architecture and expanding the easement in 2013 to include the entire 12,000-acre parcel surrounding Elk Lake.

In 2020 and 2021, the Ernsts undertook a privately-funded restoration and rehabilitation project to ensure the longevity of the original log structure by completing the following:

- Rebuilding the foundation and constructing new first floor framing to ensure structural stability and proper insulation
- Restoring the original vertical log wall construction to retain their exposure
- Installing a sprinkler system integrated into the log structure while retaining the original logs and ceiling
- Rebuilding the wraparound porch to maintain original features
- Residing the building with cedar shakes
- Expanding the small library for quiet reading and small gatherings
- Upgrading the electrical and plumbing systems

Elk Lake Lodge exemplifies the interconnected nature of environmental and building stewardship in the Adirondacks.

## The Fort Ticonderoga Association, *for the restoration of The Pavilion at Fort Ticonderoga*

**Town of Ticonderoga, Essex County**

*Photo courtesy of Fort Ticonderoga Association.*

William Ferris Pell built the Pavilion as a summer home in 1826 and his family occupied it through the 1830s. From 1840 to 1900, the house served as a hotel for travelers passing through Ticonderoga as they traveled by steamboat on Lake George and Lake Champlain. It accommodated such guests as Robert Todd Lincoln, son of President Abraham Lincoln; the prominent French & Indian War historian Francis Parkman; and prolific Adirondack photographer Seneca Ray Stoddard. When William Ferris Pell's great-grandson, Stephen H.P., and his wife Sarah G.T. Pell began the restoration of Fort Ticonderoga in 1909, they simultaneously undertook the restoration of the Pavilion and used the house as a summer residence for many years. After Stephen Pell's death in 1950, his son John occupied the house until 1987.

By the beginning of the 21st century, though, the Pavilion was in deep disrepair. Even so, it remained one of the most significant pieces of Adirondack architecture, central to telling the site's twin stories of war and peace.

The Pavilion's restoration began with extensive research on the building's architectural history, documenting changes and current conditions. A dendrochronological study revealed how the structure evolved over centuries, as it grew in stages to finally encompass two symmetrical out-buildings connected to the main hall with twin wings. Hand-painted floors were also uncovered underneath more recent floor coverings.

The Pavilion's restoration helps illustrate Fort Ticonderoga's rich heritage and its long history of preservation.

## Nettle Meadow Farm, *for the restoration and revitalization of The Hitching Post*

**Town of Lake Luzerne, Warren County**

*Photo courtesy of Sheila Flanagan.*

Built in 1939 by Svend Munck as a dining hall for all of the local dude ranches, The Hitching Post also served as an event space, general store, saloon, dance hall, and hotel over the years. Generations of patrons fondly recall their time eating, drinking, dancing, and even getting married at this local landmark.

The enormous hand-hewn logs used to construct the building came from nearby forests and one of the main support beams is 70 feet long. The building also has three stone fireplaces, including one in the former dining/dance hall that is considered the largest in the southern Adirondacks.

After decades of deterioration, Nettle Meadow Farm acquired the property and set about reviving it as a retail space, tavern, and cheese plant while maintaining the structure's historic integrity. The sprawling 14,000 square-foot building has been thoughtfully adapted to accommodate Nettle Meadow's expanding, award-winning artisan cheese production.

Nettle Meadow Farm lovingly preserved the tavern down to the names and initials carved into its beams decades ago and is once again a thriving community hub. Important infrastructure work was done to upgrade the kitchen, repair the roof, upgrade the electrical and HVAC, and install a new septic system.

In what is now the cheese plant, health and safety requirements dictated the materials used for the walls, ceiling, and floor but owners Sheila Flanagan and Lorraine Lambiase enclosed the formidable fireplace and two five-foot-diameter log pillars in glass so they could still be seen from the newly-created viewing room. The adjacent viewing room was created out of unused logs found around the building and original windows found in the basement were installed to allow visitors to watch the talented artisans. The stone aging cellars now house racks filled with bloomy and hard rind cheeses. The basement, in addition to housing updated mechanicals for the building, also provides the space for packaging the cheese for national distribution.

## Robert and Michelle Timmons, *for the revitalization and rehabilitation the Black Brook General Store*

**Town of Black Brook, Clinton County**

*Photo courtesy of Nancie Battaglia.*

Visiting the village of Black Brook today, it is difficult to imagine the town as it was forty years ago. During the 19th-century boom of the iron industry and later paper industries, Black Brook and the surrounding communities flourished. But when the mills closed for good in the 1970s, so did many shops and services as people moved away, searching for more opportunities. As tourism and other local industries have begun to attract a new generation of visitors and permanent residents to the region, Black Brook is starting to reinvent itself with the help of people like Robert and Michelle Timmons.

The 3,200-square-foot St. Matthew Catholic Church was built in 1876 as a hub for the French Catholic community. However, after years of a dwindling congregation, the last official mass was held in 2013 and the church closed in 2015, leaving this once vibrant building vacant and neglected.

When a for-sale sign appeared in front of the church in March 2020, the Timmons saw an opportunity to fill a much-needed hole in the community. The pair breathed new life into this local icon, utilizing Robert's skills as a contractor to convert the church into a "true general store" to serve the community's needs. They were sensitive to the building's history throughout the process, maintaining as many historic elements as possible, such as the high ceilings and stained-glass windows. The church had previously removed the pews, leaving a versatile open space once Robert had leveled the floor and installing new flooring. A new electrical system, water line, bathroom, shelving, and coolers transformed the space into a store. The former choir loft provides space for indoor eating.

The store provides deli meats, artisan crafts, camping supplies, and much more, and we are confident that they have the only beer cave in the Adirondacks with a stained-glass window. While Black Brook may not have returned to its once bustling days, the general store has been a much-needed resource and gathering spot for locals and visitors alike.

## Peter R. Prescott and Colleen C. Prescott Camp Trust, *for the long-term stewardship of The Prescott Camp*

**Port Douglass, Town of Chesterfield, Essex County**

*Photo courtesy of Kelly Prescott-Frady.*

In 1923, Rufus Prescott of R. Prescott & Sons built a summer home in Port Douglass on the shores of Lake Champlain. Since then, five generations of the Prescott family and their friends have gathered there every summer.

Over the years, the family adapted the camp to suit their needs. Many of these changes were also necessitated by occasional flooding, but in 1998, a large flood washed out a significant portion of the building. The family immediately restored the camp, raising the living room 6 feet, replacing the floor, and salvaging brick from the destroyed fireplace for a new wood stove hearth.

Despite such obstacles, the Prescott family has faithfully preserved and maintained the camp, ensuring that almost all the original fixtures and furnishings remain. The most recent additions to the camp are brass nameplates that have been affixed to the bedroom doors bearing the names of their original occupants.

When Rufus and his wife Margaret passed, they left the camp to their five children, Romeyn, Susan, Jane, Charles, and John, who continued to gather each summer at the camp with their families. As the camp passed to the next generation in the 1980s, Romeyn's son, Peter R. Prescott, bought out his aunts and uncles.

The family rule, however, is that anyone in the family is welcome at any time. The camp remains a strong part of the family's heritage and when Peter R. Prescott passed away in January 2022 it was still one of his favorite spots. His celebration of life was held at the camp in July and some of his remains now have a special place there. Such enduring dedication ensures that the Prescott camp will remain a haven for family and friends for generations to come.

## The Sandy Hill Arts Center, *for the restoration and revitalization of The Sandy Hill Arts Center*

**Village of Hudson Falls, Washington County**

*Photo courtesy of Kendall McKernon.*

Housed in the former 1901 Masonic Temple located in the historic downtown of Hudson Falls, the 22,000 square foot, five-story brick structure had been occupied by a variety of tenants, including the U.S. Post Office, Town Hall, Village police station, a barber shop, a supermarket, a community center, law offices, and other local businesses.

Unfortunately, the scale of the building presented huge overhead and maintenance costs, which the Masons could no longer afford when they lost it to a tax sale in 1983. In the following decades, four different owners attempted to revive the building. Bill Nikas, a life-long resident of Hudson Falls, became troubled as he watched it continue to deteriorate, affecting the values and economic viability of the downtown business district.

Following foreclosure in 2014 and driven by love for the building and community, Bill purchased the property in 2015, taking on the daunting challenge of restoration. After five years of extensive renovation, the building reopened as the Sandy Hill Arts Center, home to artisan spaces and studios, retail stores, office spaces, and a restaurant as well as large event spaces available for rental.

Bill's ability to assemble an exceptional team of partners to facilitate the project and bring his vision to light became a catalyst for revitalizing the historic downtown business district, illustrating how communities can reinvent themselves, revitalizing one building at a time. It also exemplifies how preserving our historic buildings brings people together.

***Want to nominate a project for a 2023 Award?*** CONTACT CHRISTINE BUSH AT christine@aarch.org

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*Today, AARCH has over 1,200 members from all corners of the Adirondack region, four countries, and 38 states!*

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*Cover: "Adaptive Use" photo courtesy of Nancie Battaglia.*

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