Volume 14, Issue 3, March 2022

AARCH MATTERS

Your Preservation News for the Adirondack Region

"You may not always see the results of your kindness, but every bit of positive energy you contribute to the world makes it a better place for all of us."
~ Lisa Currie

March is **Women's History Month** – commemorating and encouraging the study, observance, and celebration of women's vital role in American and global history. The Adirondack region is known for its rugged and resilient people, and women are no exception to this rule.

Throughout history, **Adirondack women** have played important roles in our region and beyond. Throughout **the region** there are several virtual and in-person events celebrating **women in New York's history**.

We hope you enjoyed our Winter Newsletter, the **Faces of Fire Towers**. We wish we could have featured all the Fire Towers and friends group that work so hard to preserve this rich part of our Adirondack history. AARCH will continue to shine a spotlight on these important structures. Please keep sharing your stories and work.

March is also sugaring season, and as the sap begins to run and the snow melts we at AARCH are ready to welcome Spring. The 2022 season of AARCH programs promises both new and classic experiences. We look forward to sharing the full schedule in our summer newsletter.

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- **Mount Arab Fire Tower**
- **AARCH Webinars**
- **2021 ANNUAL GIVING**

The view from the Mount Arab Fire Tower looking over the rangers cabin.
Image: FOMA

The American Maple Museum in Croghan, NY was founded in 1977 to preserve the history and evolution of the North American maple syrup industry.

PRESERVE - MOUNT ARAB FIRE TOWER

In our ongoing effort to shine a spotlight on the **Faces of Fire Towers**, we are pleased to share the important work of the Friends of Mt. Arab. Once part of a larger network of active fire tower observation stations, Mount Arab is currently one of only two towers in Saint Lawrence County.

The observation station was established on Mount Arab in 1912, and the steel fire tower was built in 1918. The Mt. Arab hike is part of the **Fire Tower Challenge** and the **Tupper Lake Hiking Triad**.

On Earth Day 1997, a small group of citizens and DEC officials gathered at the summit of Mount Arab with the common desire to save and to share this historic facility and its magnificent views with future generations. They resolved to restore and maintain the decaying fire tower and ranger cabin located there.

That meeting led to the incorporation of the Friends of Mt. Arab (FOMA) and continued collaboration with the New York State Department of Conservation. The Friends of Mount Arab and AARCH have a long history of partnership. Upon the initial formation of FOMA, AARCH offered its service as an 'umbrella' organization for FOMA to receive donations as a non-profit organization. This relationship continued for several years until FOMA received its recognition from IRS as a 501c3 group.

Through the dedicated efforts of the Friends of Mt. Arab (FOMA), the observer's cabin has been renovated and continues to receive regular maintenance. The tower has new footings and ground anchors, completely replaced steps, landings, and tower floor. The stairway has been equipped with safety caging, the entire tower has recently been painted, and new windows have been installed. As soon as some additional work has been done on the tower roof, the renovated map table will be reinstalled. Trail work has been ongoing over the years with many thanks to the ADK trail crew, keeping the trail in good condition.

A challenge faced by ALL trails and mountain peaks in the Adirondacks has been the growing flood of visitors. Mount Arab sees over 10,000 climbers annually, a conservative estimate. However, hikes such as Mount Arab helps to relieve overuse pressure on some of the more highly visited mountains in the High Peak region.

FOMA looks forward to continuing its good husbandry of the mountain and efforts to educate future generations of the visiting public toward caring for all our wild places. Restored facilities such as fire towers add to the mountain climbing experience by injecting a bit of history, showing the effort to preserve our wild forests in the context of simultaneously enjoying great views of that wilderness from the summit and the tower.

The role of fire towers in the Adirondacks has changed greatly as their purpose is no longer to watch for and report fires but rather to help us deal with the conflagration of great numbers of the public who flock to the Adirondacks. Fire towers now help to channel that flood in a manner that does not so overwhelm our wild places as to destroy the very wilderness the public comes here to enjoy.

Thank you to the FOMA for their hard work and dedicated efforts to preserve this unique piece of Adirondack history. Thank you to Dick Bentley, the chairman of FOMA, for sharing information and especially his personal story.

"I personally have had a relationship with Mount Arab since I was 6 years old back in 1948. I have climbed this mountain so many times over the years I have no way to sum the total. I have been on a first name basis with all the DEC fire spotters since that time, and remember those occasions I rode up the mountain with great excitement in the jeep of 'Doc' LeVasseur who always called me 'Chum'. I have no idea if he thought of me as his favorite because he called everybody 'chum' as we listened to his stories of fighting off bears and wolverines. As a final note, I should mention that it was even more exciting, some might say terrifying, riding down the mountain in that jeep."
Dick Bentley

To learn more about the Friends of Mt Arab:

FOMA,
PO Box 185

Piercefield, NY 12973
Website | Facebook

LEARN - GRASSROOTS EFFORTS TO SAVE HISTORIC BUILDINGS

AARCH is partnering with thePreservation League of New York State (PLNYS) to present Preservation Roundtable: Grassroots Efforts to Save Historic Buildings.

Thursday, April 7 | 12:00 PM
Preservation Roundtable: Grassroots Efforts to Save Historic Buildings

Featuring Andy Buchanan, Project Director of Whallonsburg's Whitcomb's Garage; Shameika Ingram, Creator of Preservation in Color, spearheading effort to save Watertown's Thomas Memorial AME Zion Church; Jill Tefft, Owner/Founder of Greenwich'sGramp's Old School; and Haley Whalen, Owner of Schenectady'sArthur's 1795.

REGISTER HERE. **FREE** and open to the public.

2021 ANNUAL GIVING

Over 700 households show their enthusiasm for AARCH's mission through contributions that sustain our good work. Membership and annual appeal gifts are an important source of our revenue. Thank you to all who contributed generously to AARCH in 2021. We missed the following AARCH members in our winter newsletter. Thank you to all of you who so generously supported us in 2021.

$1,000-$4,999
Andy & Kathy Prescott

$100-$249
Robby Barnett & Susan Mandler
Collin & Carol Blakeslee-Collin
Lora & H. Craig Treiber

up to $99
Stephen Tilly, Architect & Elizabeth Martin

NEWS

Our 2021 Preservation Award Winners (from left to right): Ted Comstock–Adirondack League Club, Ben Strader & Adam

The AARCH Annual Awards Program recognizes exemplary historic preservation work throughout the Adirondack region.

For over 20 years, our annual awards program has recognized sensitive restoration, rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of historic structures that are consistent with our mission of long-term stewardship. The awards honor the organizations, businesses, and individuals who, through these projects, make the Adirondacks a better place to live, work, and visit.

Please send nominations to our Preservation Services Director Christine Bush at christine@aarch.org so that we may continue to support and highlight historic

Bailey–Blue Mountain Center, Travis Proulx–Basselin House, Beryl & Bob Ierardi–Camp Paradiso Trovato

Photo courtesy of John Eldridge.

preservation projects, both large and small, throughout the Adirondack region.

DEADLINE: June 30, 2022

To all our members and supporters, THANK YOU!

Photo of AARCH members and friends at a 2021 tour of Hitchins Pond.

ADIRONDACK ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE

1745 Main Street, Keeseville, NY 12944 | info@aarch.org | 518.834.9328

Preserving the architecture and communities of the Adirondack region through education, action, and advocacy,.

THANK YOU

To This Important Organization Member

We are most appreciative for **Friends of Stillwater Fire Tower** for their continued support.

Friends of Stillwater Fire Tower completed restoration of the 1919 steel tower in partnership with the NYSDEC and Lyme Timber in 2016.

You can learn more about fire towers and the ongoing work of the Friends of Stillwater **HERE.**

NEW YORK STATE OF OPPORTUNITY. Council on the Arts

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HNY

The mission of Humanities New York is to strengthen civil society and the bonds of community, using the humanities to foster engaged inquiry and dialogue around social and cultural concerns.

A world of AARCH exists online. Join us there.

Visit our Website