

## EXCITING NEWS! BASEMENT PROJECT COMPLETED

The former Lake Placid train station, our Museum, was built ca. 1904 as documented on a carved shingle on the west side gable end. Ground water has been trickling into the basement ever since, requiring the need for two sump pumps, one running constantly and the other for backup. The water in the basement caused high humidity and conditions that required heat in the winter to keep the pumps going and the water from freezing. The oil burning heating system had rusted, was inefficient, and expensive to run. Last winter the pumps shut down due to loss of heat during the worst of the cold weather. The water level rose in the



Before photo of the basement

basement above the floor and froze. We had to run a propane fueled torpedo heater in front of the door for 8 hours to thaw the ice. We were able to pry the door open and bang away at the ice with a long pick until we could force our way into the basement. The Lake Placid Water

Department spent hours at the Museum pumping out water. This scenario has happened more than once! This fall, with a generous bequest from Lorraine Bryant, a gift from the Adirondack Foundation SUN Fund, and targeted donations from our members we have finally remedied the situation.



In progress photo



Completed basement project

Don Murray's Basement Systems, recommended by Wiley Lavigne, filled most of the basement with 140 tons of sand creating a crawl space with 4' of headroom. Two new pumps were installed in a gravel enclosed pit in the sand. Drainage tile was run around the perimeter of the space just below the surface. Murray's waterproofed and sealed the entire area with polyethylene sheeting; finally a dehumidifier was added that will control moisture in the future.

The antiquated heating system and oil tank were removed and Hurley Brothers has upgraded the heating system to new propane powered warm air enabling us to control the heat in four zones of the Museum.

Thank you to the Lorraine Bryant bequest and the Adirondack Foundation Sudden and Urgent Needs Fund and our members who responded to our basement appeal.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE~

Dear Friends of the Historical Society,

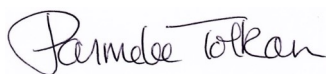
I am sitting cozily at my desk watching snow fall outdoors as winter seems to be settling here in Lake Placid. Winter, for us, is a time of work and scholarship. With the Museum closed, our focus turns to our Winter Lecture Series and preparing for a new exhibit, *Sign/Design*, which will open next spring.

This past year has been very busy as you will see in the other pages of this newsletter. I hope that you will feel the same sense of pride that I do with our little organization. We set big goals for 2019 and with your help and support we accomplished them. Now we look forward to another busy year preserving and presenting our history.

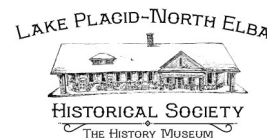
I want to mention that this newsletter will be coming to your email as well as your post office box. Please help us save trees and postage by opting out of future hard copies of this newsletter. Contact [info@lakeplacidhistory.com](mailto:info@lakeplacidhistory.com) to receive the newsletter ONLY by email. Help us go as green as possible and to save some “green” in the process.

I thank all of you who have so generously contributed to our Annual Appeal. Those contributions are vital to our operations. There is still time to think of us as 2019 closes.

I wish you all a happy, healthy holiday season.



Parmelee Tolkan  
President of the Board of Trustees



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*Director/Collections Manager*

## COMINGS & GOINGS~

### **Summer Reflection at the History Museum — Danna Libbey, Museum Assistant**

When I reached out to the Historical Society about summer employment, I wanted to share my knowledge and passion for my home with others. Though I have only lived in Lake Placid for five years, it was love at first hike. I have spent my time here working in interpretive education, with a focus on natural history. The opportunity to broaden my experience to include human and cultural history came at the perfect time. I am currently taking several museum-related courses for my degree in Educational Studies from SUNY Empire State College. The position as Museum Assistant has been an excellent companion to my college journey, as I have been able to make tangible so many of the concepts I am studying. I had several wonderful moments of teaching where I was able to connect to visitors, either Adirondackers or tourists, in such a way that we all learned something. I facilitated learning through illustrating ‘big pictures’ of Lake Placid history, such as the impact of geology, railroads, or ‘vacation’ culture. I got to share my love for my local favorites like Noah John Rondeau, Henry Van Hoevenburg, and John Brown. On days when there weren’t as many visitors, I spent time working in collections. Learning to clean artifacts like the glass plate collection, accessioning items, and creating finding aids were all incredible learning opportunities for me. I have grown in many ways this summer, not only as an educator, but as a proud Lake Placid resident. I hope to continue learning with the Lake Placid-North Elba Historical Society for years to come.

## NEW & RETIRING TRUSTEES-

Our Board welcomed four new trustees in September: Sue Cameron, Mike Butler, Keith Clark, and Erin Perkins  
Retiring: Dean Dietrich, Patty Clark, and Beverley Reid

-Sue Cameron returns to the Board and will be working on membership and the design of our future newsletters.

-Mike Butler joins the Board. The Butler's provided hospitality for residents and visitors for over 50 years; that's history!

-Keith Clark continues the service of his family by joining us. We look forward to expanding our school collaborations with Keith's help.

-Erin Perkins will be working with Sue Cameron on membership and on the Museum Committee as we ready new exhibits.

*We wish our departing trustees well and thank them for many years of service and contributions to the Society!*

-Patty Clark served on the Board as President and Vice President. Her great help in getting parties off the ground will be missed.

-Dean Dietrich was most instrumental in getting the 4th grade hands-on history week established at the elementary school. He was also a moving force behind the historic walking map.

-As Beverley Reid leaves us we will be without the Town Historian on the Board for the first time within memory. We know she's just a phone call away, but she will be sorely missed. You will notice that the "Bev's Bits" column is no longer in the newsletter, we will miss her history lessons.

## MUSEUM/GALLERY NEWS

-We dismantled our *Suffrage Centennial: Women's Place in Society* exhibit and are beginning the planning for next year's new exhibit: Sign/Design will feature many examples of lettering and signs from our collection. It should be a fun exhibit that will cover signs down the years and remind us of past Lake Placid establishments. If anyone has a sign that they would like us to consider please be in touch with Courtney Bastian at [director@lakeplacidhistory.com](mailto:director@lakeplacidhistory.com)

-Thanks to a grant from the **Lake Placid Horseshow** we are digitizing archival film footage of horses being trained. This will be on display in the Mary McKenzie Gallery next year.

-August 17 the Society celebrated it's annual Heritage Fair. **Capital District Physician's Health Plan** sponsored the event. Due to the CDPHP sponsorship we had Julie Robards and Friends play for two hours. Many visitors shopped the book sale, the bake sale, the thrift table and enjoyed the Museum exhibits. There were old fashioned children's games organized by the museum assistant, Danna Libbey, and food was provided by Dacy Meadow Farm. A good time was had by all!



Entering the North Elba Cemetery chapel

-Under a full moon on Friday September 13 the Historical Society partnered with Digital Abraham on a tour of local cemeteries. We gathered at Digital Abraham's home in the old White Church on Barkeater Way for a glass of wine and some hors d'oeuvres hosted by Digital Abraham.

The Essex County trolley took us on a loop that included:

- The Saint Agnes Cemetery.
- The gravesite at John Brown's farm that is the final resting place of John Brown and many of his Harper's Ferry rebels.
- The North Elba cemetery where we had an excellent walking tour led by Board member Cindy Smith.
- The Lake Placid Synagogue Cemetery.



Photo from the Suffrage Centennial exhibit

Digital Abraham is a 501c3 organization whose mission is "A historical preservation project encompassing, digitally documenting the Town of North Elba Cemetery and restoring 4 Barkeater Way (built in 1875), to create a new chapter for this historic building." For more information please visit: <http://digitalabraham.com/>

# 2019 PROJECT SUPPORTERS~

Thank you to all our donors this year! We have accomplished all these projects with their generous support.

Stewart's Holiday Match Grant: In the fall of 2018 the Lake Placid 8th graders visited the Museum and gave us feedback on improvements and updates they would like to see. One of the most common suggestions was to develop an audio guide in the Mary McKenzie Gallery. A grant from the Stewart's Holiday Match provided us the funding for this project. The audio guide will be installed next spring!

Town of North Elba: General operating support.

Essex County Cultural Assistant Program: Exhibit upgrades.

Rotary Club of Lake Placid: Support from Rotary Club of Lake Placid allowed us to reprint our Historic Walking Tour maps of Lake Placid. Copies are available at the History Museum and local attractions in town!

Lake Placid Education Foundation: General operating support.

Lake Placid Horse Show: A grant to digitize historic footage of horses training. It will be included in the updated Lake Placid Horse Show exhibit this spring.

Cloudsplitter Foundation: A donation from the Cloudsplitter Foundation added to existing funds allowed us to replace and repair the Freight House roof, protecting the artifacts housed inside.

Uihlein Foundation: General operating support.

Adirondack Foundation SUN Fund: Provided funding to finish off the basement project.

## THE FREIGHT HOUSE HAS A NEW ROOF! ~

The 1900s era Freight House housing part of our collections has a new roof. The worn out splitting shingles have been replaced and the sagging eaves have been straightened. The Buildings and Grounds Committee members supervised and helped with the project. Committee member Mike Mahoney particularly helped in his area of expertise, structural integrity, advising on the support of the drooping eaves. The existing eave supports were not adequate for the weight of the deep overhangs. The supports were beefed up with 2"x6" 's.

Over the years the fascia had rotted in many locations. It was removed and replaced with new 2"x6" facings. As the fascia was applied the line of the eaves was straightened and braced by the new fascia.

K & G Building then removed the old shingles and repaired the roof deck where it had rotted and was leaking into the collection storage area. (Don't worry, many tarps had been spread out during the years. However, the new roof is a big improvement on plastic sheeting!) An Ice and Water Shield was run around the edge of the roof and Owens Corning Duration architectural grade shingles completed the job.



In progress photo of the Freight House being repaired

A big thanks to our volunteer Buildings & Grounds Committee and Kenny Giambalvo and Devin Kelly of K & G Building who did a fine job in a timely manner so that the building was ready for winter.

A generous grant from the [Cloudsplitter Foundation](#) allowed us to do this important job.

## 2020 SOCIETY EVENTS

### FROM THE COLLECTIONS

An ongoing project at the Historical Society is cataloging artifact donations and filing archives. Making the collections more accessible for researchers, scholars, and everyone else interested in North Elba

history is an important part of our mission. We accept artifacts, photographs, and archival donations throughout the year that meet our Collections Policy standards.

Two recent additions we found fun and interesting are



Photo of the anagram set

from the Dewey Collection and are old fashioned games. The above set of letters is for playing anagrams and originally belonged to Henry Van Hoevenberg, then to

Godfrey Dewey.

The second game consists of fifty differently shaped wooden pieces called 'Babel.' The instructions have been lost over the years, so if you know how to play please contact



The game 'Babel'

us! The cover of the box says: "Pat. Applied for. Chas. F. Maeulen & Co., 145 Elm Street, New York."

### WINTER LECTURE SERIES

*If the venue has a restaurant please support them by a pre-lecture meal. Come early, we start on time!*

#### January 15—

Presented by: Amy Godine

Location: 4 Seasons Room at the Golden Arrow, 7 pm

#### February 5— Victor Herbert

Presented by: Parmelee Tolkan

Location: Lake Placid Center for the Arts, 7pm

#### March 18— 7,000 Miles to a Wilderness Ethic

Presented by: Tyler Socash, Adirondack Mountain Club

Location: Hotel Northwoods, 7 pm

#### April 1— The Fools Rushed In: Murray's Fools

Presented by: Ivy Gocker, Adirondack Experience:

The Museum of Blue Mountain Lake

Location: Crowne Plaza, 7pm

#### May 25—Museum opens for the season

#### June 27—Exhibition Reception: Sign/Design





#### August 18—The Heritage Fair

#### August 20—Annual Meeting

*All members are encouraged to attend.*

#### September 10—Historic Fall Tour

### Contact us:

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 [info@lakeplacidhistory.com](mailto:info@lakeplacidhistory.com)  
 **The History Museum** (518) 523-1608  
 **Historical Society office** (518) 523-3830



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**Interested in volunteering?**

We are always seeking new volunteers to help with events, collections, mass mailings, and other projects! If you would like to donate your time please contact Courtney Bastian at [director@lakeplacidhistory.com](mailto:director@lakeplacidhistory.com).