

HISTORY MATTERS

The Newsletter of HISTORIC SARANAC LAKE at the Saranac Laboratory Museum



MUSEUM EXPANSION PROGRESS

We continue to prepare for the expansion of our museum to the Trudeau Building! The museum campus will provide space to present the rich history of the Saranac Lake region, from stories of logging, guides, hunting, great camps, tuberculosis, and much more! A new film, supported by The National Endowment for the Humanities and created in consultation with John Fadden of Six Nations Iroquois Cultural Center will introduce the history of Indigenous peoples who have considered the Adirondacks a homeland for thousands of years. Asbestos abatement is underway, construction will begin soon, and fundraising continues. Since our fall newsletter, we have learned of success with a major \$500,000 NY State Main Street grant. We also received a generous gift in March from the estate of Dot and Chet Fobare to support the project as well as HSL's endowment fund at the Adirondack Foundation. See page 7 for more about this wonderful gift and other progress! What kinds of exhibits do you want to see in Saranac Lake's new expanded history museum? Fill out our survey on page 7 to share your ideas and get involved!



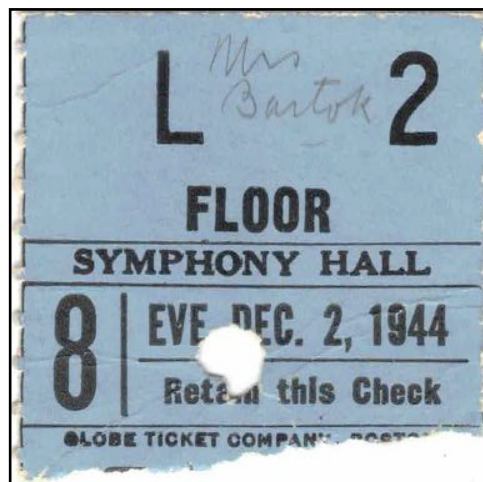
HSL staff pose with the new sign.

BARTÓK ACQUISITION

We are thrilled to announce that the museum has received a donation of personal effects that once belonged to Béla Bartók. Widely regarded as one of the greatest composers in human history, Bartók spent the last three summers of his life in Saranac Lake, in the Adirondack Mountains of Northern New York. HSL maintains the cabin where Bartók stayed the year of his death, in 1945, and shows it to the public by appointment.

The collection was a gift from the estate of Béla's son, Peter, who died in December of 2020. A special naming opportunity has been announced at the new museum to support the care and exhibition of the Bartók collection as well as the ongoing maintenance of the cabin:
www.historicsaranaclake.org/the-bartok-fund.

See the following page for a letter from our Executive Director about this important gift.



Concert ticket found in Béla Bartók's vest. The ticket was for the premiere performance of the Concerto for Orchestra, which Bartók composed in Saranac Lake. HSL collection.

COMING SOON!

Online programs celebrating the new Bartók Collection!
 See page 5 for more!

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Made possible, in part, by the NY State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the NY State Legislature.

OUR MISSION is to preserve and present area history and architecture to build a stronger community.

Walking in Bartók's Shoes

Dear Friends,

As we follow the terrible current events in Eastern Europe, we learn a bit more each day about the history, the geography, and the people of Ukraine. Recently, a package arrived at the museum that brought the news closer to home. Inside were the personal effects of one of the greatest musical composers in human history. The box contained bow ties, a vest, glasses, and a pair of concert shoes stuffed with newspaper dating to 1942. These are the clothes Béla Bartók wore to performances in Europe back before WWII.

Bartók came to Saranac Lake 80 years ago. He spent the last three summers of his life in the village, seeking respite from leukemia. Here, working in humble surroundings with little money and no piano, he found the tranquility to compose some of his greatest works, including the Concerto for Orchestra and the Third Piano Concerto.

A tiny, eccentric, brilliant man, Bartók was not interested in fame or fortune. His music can feel inaccessible to people who aren't trained musicians or familiar with folk songs of Eastern Europe. His story can seem as distant and as foreign as his music. But lifting his little shoes out of the box, it's like he walked right into the present day.

Back in the 1940s, Saranac Lakers didn't pay the great composer much notice. Not only were international visitors commonplace during the tuberculosis years, but the events of WWII were grabbing all the headlines. As more and more young men went off to war, families followed the news overseas, charting the advance of troops on maps, learning the names of far away places they had never known before. The War felt intensely personal to Bartók. From here in Saranac Lake, he worried for the safety of his eldest son who had remained in Budapest. He feared for his second son, who was serving in the Pacific in the U.S. Navy. Having lived during WWI and the Russian Revolution, the composer was acutely aware of the horror of war and its tendency to transcend borders.

Bartók's personal history moved between many present-day European countries. He was born in 1881 in the town of Nagyszentmiklós, Hungary (now Romania). After his father's sudden death, the family lived for a time in Nagyszőlős (present-day Vynohradiv, Ukraine) and then in Pozsony (present-day Bratislava, Slovakia). Young Béla studied piano in Budapest, and he developed his interest in folk music. He traveled the countryside, collecting and researching folk melodies of the Roma people.* He recorded songs in peasant villages with his wax cylinder Edison machine, notating Hungarian, Slovak, Romanian, Ukrainian, and Bulgarian folk music. He also collected melodies in Moldavia, Transylvania, Algeria, and Turkey. He incorporated elements of traditional songs into new compositions. Beloved in Hungary, Bartók performed throughout Europe. Perhaps wearing these same concert shoes, he performed in the Ukrainian cities of Kharkiv and Odessa in 1929 and 1936.

Then came WWII. Hungary joined the Axis Powers. Béla's anti-fascist views were well known, and his wife Ditta was Jewish. They fled the Nazis to New York City. Bartók left his life's work in Budapest, including hundreds of recordings of ancient folk music. Miraculously, most of the cylinder recordings survived the war, as did his sheet music transcriptions of 13,000 songs. But Bartók died in New York City in the fall of 1945 thinking his recordings were destroyed. Millions of people, entire communities, and countless melodies had been erased by antisemitism, fascism, and war.

The great composer who once walked the streets of Saranac Lake devoted his life to preserving diverse cultures of Eastern Europe. Now, the museum is honored to preserve his last few belongings. With this pair of shoes that fled the Holocaust, we remember Bartók, and we contemplate the incredible beauty and enormous tragedy of Ukraine and its neighbors.

Be well,

Amy Catania



Bartók's shoes, HSL Collection.

* Roma people were once widely referred to in the English language as "Gypsies," a term considered pejorative due to its past use as a racial slur.

WINTER RE-CAP



Saranac Lake High School students with Pandemic Perspectives panels

HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE

We wrapped up 2021 with a Holiday Open House at the museum. Visitors enjoyed cookies and shared holiday memories as part of our Oral History Project. Do you remember the horse-pulled sidewalk plow that used to keep the downtown sidewalks clear of snow?

HUMANITIES TALKS

We hosted two Humanities talks this winter with support from Humanities New York:

- Tegan Kehoe presented about her book, [Exploring American Healthcare through 50 Historic Treasures](#)
- Deborah Brown gave a presentation titled, “Exploring Vaccine Resistance Past and Present,” co-hosted with the Trudeau Institute and North County Community College

WINTER CARNIVAL FUN

The Cure Porch on Wheels joined in the Winter Carnival fun down at Lake Flower Boat Launch with a pop-up exhibit on the event’s connections to tuberculosis history. Thank you Bill Madden, Marty Rowley, Carolyn Greenburg, and Jan Dudones for their help in making this possible!

WEDDING BELLS

The Cure Porch on Wheels served as a warming hut for an outdoor winter wedding at Ampersand Bay. Congratulations, Erin and Dan, and thanks for including the CPOW in your wedding!

PANDEMIC PERSPECTIVES EXHIBIT

- In December, the Pandemic Perspectives exhibit visited Saranac Lake High School, and students completed a writing project inspired by the exhibit.
- Dr. Arden Hegele, Columbia University Narrative Medicine Program helped create a curriculum about pandemics in literature.
- This March, Pandemic Perspectives travelled to LeRay Mansion at Fort Drum for a temporary installation.

Pandemic Perspectives and the curriculum kit for using the exhibit in a classroom are available online on the museum website!

SCHOOL PROGRAMS & TOURS

This winter we have presented to many students and groups both at the museum and offsite:

- We visited Bloomingdale Elementary and Petrova Elementary 5th grade classes for presentations on Winter Carnival history.
- Clarkson University interns from the Trudeau Institute visited the Laboratory to learn about the research that was done here.
- Students from SUNY ESF Ranger School visited the museum to learn about regional history and interpretation.
- Residents from Will Rogers toured the museum and shared some memories of their own.



The Cure Porch on Wheels celebrated Winter Carnival at the Ice Palace!

Special thanks to the Stewart's Foundation and the Golub Foundation for their continued support of our educational programs!

COLLECTIONS



William Schuster (center) with unidentified men outside a curing tent at Ray Brook Sanatorium, c. 1909. HSL Collection. Courtesy of John Cromie.

IMAGE DIGITIZATION UNDERWAY

Work is beginning on some exciting photograph digitization! This fall, we were awarded a generous grant from the Northern New York Library Network (NNYLN) to fund digitization of images in our collection, with a focus on photographs of TB patients. The images to be scanned were cataloged as part of the ongoing IMLS-funded image cataloging project. The NNYLN grant also included the purchase of an overhead camera setup to photograph fragile photo albums and scrapbooks without damaging their bindings. Once the project is complete, these images will be made available both on our PastPerfect Online catalog and on New York Heritage Digital Collections. Thanks to NNYLN for their ongoing support. Stay tuned this summer as we start to publish these scans online!

BOOK COLLECTION WORK

As we work to revamp our exhibits in the Saranac Laboratory Museum, we are returning the John Black Room to its original function as a library space! The room will now serve as visible storage for the museum's book collection. This work is facilitated by a huge volunteer-led project to inventory and catalog the books in our collection so they can be included in our online catalog and used by the public. We have also made security improvements to the bookcases to protect the books while allowing visitors to browse the collection. The modern improvements to the John Black Room are made possible by a generous grant from the Robert and Esther Black Family Foundation Fund of the Richland County Foundation.

IMLS-FUNDED IMAGE CATALOGING

Our Archivist/Curator Chessie Monks-Kelly is continuing work on the IMLS-funded image cataloging project. The records are being added to our online collections database on a daily basis, so check back often! The project will continue until September 2022, and we will create catalog records for 2,000+ images.

MARK TWAIN HOUSE & MUSEUM VISIT

We were recently visited by Jodi DeBruyne and Mallory Howard, both curatorial staff at the Mark Twain House & Museum in Connecticut. Jodi and Mallory visited to research the Clemens family's visit to Saranac Lake in 1901 as part of planning for a 2023 exhibit on the family's summer vacations. This and several other research trips were funded by a planning grant from CT Humanities. We learned a lot during their visit, and look forward to continuing the relationship between our two organizations!

RECENT DONATIONS

- A medicine cabinet from a cure cottage on Helen Hill. Courtesy of Emily Bell Dinan.
- A c. 1885 bottle from the F. M. Bull Drug Store on Main Street. Courtesy of Dick Monroe.
- Nurse's cape and caps worn by Eileen Plumley while working at Stony Wold Sanatorium in the 1940s. Courtesy of Sandra Aery.

Do you have something to donate to our collection? Contact our Archivist/Curator, Chessie Monks-Kelly, at chessie@historicsaranaclake.org or 518-891-4606. Visit www.historicsaranaclake.org/collections for more information.

WHAT'S NEW AT THE MUSEUM



Patients curing in the fresh air at Adirondack Cottage Sanatorium, c. 1897. Historic Saranac Lake Collection.

PEACE

TB patients spent most of their time outdoors on cure porches. There, many developed an appreciation for the natural world. Saranac Lake's cure porches were designed to provide fresh air, sunlight, and if possible, a beautiful view.

"I know that you don't believe it, but indeed, life will bring you through. You will live it down in time. What you need now is fresh air, fresh air, fresh air!"
 — Fyodor Dostoevsky, *Crime and Punishment*

How have you found PEACE during the time of Covid-19?

UPCOMING EVENTS

Bartók Programs — We are looking forward to hosting several online programs by musicians inspired by the life and music of Béla Bartók. Stay tuned to our events page for details about online programs presented by Pete Malinverni, Lucian Ban, and Catherine Beeson.

Cure Porch Programs — We are planning several upcoming events at the museum and the Cure Porch on Wheels around the Pandemic Perspectives Exhibit and to participate in community programs. Watch the events page for announcements!

Spring and Summer Tours — Soon we will announce our new schedule of spring and summer tours, including tours of the former Trudeau Sanatorium property, Little Red and the Trudeau Statue, historic downtown, and the Bartók Cabin. Stay tuned for details!

PANDEMIC PERSPECTIVES

This spring we will unveil twelve new Pandemic Perspectives exhibit panels in the John Black Room. The panels have been reformatted and printed in a larger and more accessible format, as shown, left. The smaller exhibit panels are made for traveling, so contact us to arrange to borrow the exhibit! The updated exhibit is also available to view online at: www.historicsaranaclake.org/pandemic-perspectives

SARANAC LABORATORY IMPROVEMENTS

Thanks to generous support from the office of NY State Assemblyman Billy Jones, the Saranac Laboratory Museum is getting some TLC this spring! To reduce heat loss and protect exhibits from UV light, we will be installing interior storm windows for the seven large laboratory windows. Exterior doors will be refinished, trim will be painted, and repairs will be made to the front stone steps. A grant from the Franklin County Energize New York program is supporting the installation of air conditioning in the John Black Room.

NEW TECHNOLOGY

A generous grant from the Glenn & Carol Pearsall Adirondack Foundation has supported the purchase of new equipment for creating video content and hosting hybrid events. Thanks to a grant from the Network of the National Library of Medicine, Region 7, the John Black Room now hosts a new video screen and cart, which allows us to show our short films in a flexible way to groups of various sizes.

PHARMACY EXHIBIT

We continue to work to organize and catalog the extensive collection of historic pharmacy items donated from Post Office Pharmacy. We will re-create an old fashioned pharmacy space in the laboratory. Beautiful antique cabinets received from the estate of Buz Graves will display these items soon.

Thank you, volunteers!

Bob Bevilaqua, John Fadden, Lee Foster, Priscilla Goss, Carolyn Greenberg, Stephen Horne, Amy and Peter Jones, Andy Kelly, Bill Madden, Karen Morris, Mary Hotaling, Kathy O'Kane, Kevan Moss, Dan Nardiello, Marty Rowley, Rob Russell, Sara Sheldon, Karen Sligh, Marc Wanner, and Margaret Worden.

PRESERVATION



Kim and Jack Alvarez of Landmark Consulting, LLC discuss plans for the rehabilitation of the Trudeau Building on a visit in February.

TRUDEAU BUILDING TAX CREDITS!

Historic tax credits work to revitalize historic buildings and neighborhoods throughout New York. We are thrilled to be making use of the program to help finance the rehabilitation of the Trudeau Building. Tax credits will bring approximately \$900,000 into the project. We are happy to provide advice to other nonprofits interested in this program. Contact us to find out more!

PROPERTIES WE ARE WATCHING

NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation oversees Camp Colby, the former home of talent agent William Morris. The main building is vacant and in disrepair. We hope DEC will plan for rehabilitation and reuse of the National Register-listed building. We are also monitoring the Union Depot in Saranac Lake, which is currently overseen by NYS Dept. of Transportation. HSL led the effort to rehabilitate the depot in the mid 1990s.

NEW LEADERSHIP AT AARCH

A well-known expert in the preservation community has been named the new Executive Director of Adirondack Architectural Heritage (AARCH), the private, nonprofit organization educating and advocating for the built environment and communities for New York State's Adirondack region. Erin Tobin will build upon the work of Steven Engelhart who has nurtured the organization over the last 27 years, bringing it to its place of prominence, with programs in public education, advocacy, and technical assistance for the built environment and communities throughout the Adirondacks. Congratulations, Erin, and best wishes to you in your well-deserved retirement, Steven!

STAFF

MUSEUM ASSISTANT



We are thrilled to introduce our new Museum Assistant, Emily Banach. Emily is a recent graduate of the M.S. in Library and Information Science program at Syracuse University, where she focused her studies on historical materials and worked for the SU Archives. Emily also attended SUNY Binghamton

and has a bachelor's degree in English and Classical Languages. She has lived in Upstate New York her entire life and is excited to learn more about Saranac Lake and its history by working at HSL.

THANK YOU, INTERNS!



Matthew Marlow (left) has been a great help as our spring intern! He is finishing his studies in history at Endicott College. Matt is staffing the front desk, doing research for the wiki, and helping catalog ledgers from the Post Office Pharmacy collection. We very much enjoyed working this winter with **Lauren Gulbicki** (right), a senior at St. Lawrence University. After graduating this spring, Lauren hopes to pursue a career in global public health with a focus on infectious disease. Thank you, Matt and Lauren, and best of luck in your next adventures!

Our thanks to these businesses for their membership and support!

Adirondack Daily Enterprise, Absolutely Adirondacks, Adirondack Massage Therapy, Adirondack Experience, Ampersand Biosciences, Blue Moon Home Builders, Carcuzzi Car Care Center, Essex Community Heritage Organization (ECHO), Fogarty's Bed and Breakfast, Geomatics Land Surveying, PC, Happy Camper, Hoffman's Auto, Madden's Transfer and Storage, North Woods Engineering, Owl and Fern, LLC (DBA Wilkins Agency) Prescott House ADK, Saranac Lake Free Library, St. Regis Canoe Outfitters, T.F. Finnigan, Inc. Winter Carnival Committee

THE MUSEUM EXPANSION



Dot and Chet Fobare

GENEROUS GIFT RECEIVED

Historic Saranac Lake has received a very meaningful gift from the estate of Dorothy and Chester Fobare. Dot was a founding member of Historic Saranac Lake, and she came back to serve on the board in recent years. She was a dear friend and an energetic advocate for all things HSL. She truly believed that our community's future rests on our ability to come together across divides and think about our past.

The board decided to allocate a portion of Chet and Dot's gift of \$107,000 to support the Trudeau Building Museum Expansion project. This will be the lead gift for the Community Member Naming Opportunity in the front parlor space. We look forward to inviting the entire community to join us in this effort. We want everyone to be a part of the new museum!

Dot and Chet believed in saving and investing wisely, and we will allocate a portion of their gift to the Historic Saranac Lake fund at the Adirondack Foundation, bringing our fund balance to about \$400,000. We thank those of you who are members of HSL's Legacy Society, and we look forward to growing our endowment in Dot's honor in the years to come.

COMPLETE OUR SURVEY! The future history museum of the Saranac Lake region belongs to YOU! Please fill out this survey to help us understand what you need and want from the new museum. You may return the survey to us by mail or complete it online at <https://tinyurl.com/HSLSurvey2022>

1) Why do you care about the museum? Why does it matter to you? _____

2) What local history topics are most important to you? (Circle as many as you like!)

- | | |
|---|--|
| Indigenous history | Environmental history / Adirondack Park / APA |
| Early development (logging, hotels, RR, guides) | Local legends / Famous visitors |
| Hunting traditions | Tuberculosis history / Dr. Trudeau |
| Winter Carnival | Community life (organizations, sports, churches, businesses, arts) |
| Other: _____ | |

3) What towns / hamlets / Lake communities would you like to see included in the new museum? (Circle as many as you like!)

- | | | | |
|-----------------|--------------------|--------------|--------------------|
| Bloomingtondale | Loon Lake | Paul Smiths | Saranac Inn |
| Gabriels | Lower Saranac Lake | Rainbow Lake | Upper Saranac Lake |
| Lake Clear | Onchiota | Ray Brook | Vermontville |

4) What types of exhibits would you like to see in the new museum? (Multimedia, oral history, children's exhibits, etc.)

JOIN OUR LEGACY SOCIETY! You can ensure the preservation of our rich history by joining the Legacy Society and including Historic Saranac Lake in your estate plans. Planned gifts, including bequests, represent a wonderful opportunity to preserve Saranac Lake's history for future generations. Contact Executive Director Amy Catania to find out more!

HISTORIC SARANAC LAKE

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Name as appears on card:

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You may also give online at
<http://www.historicsaranaclake.org/support-us>

JOIN US!

- Benefactor: \$1,000+ Patron: \$500 Historian: \$100
- Family: \$65 Individual: \$35 Business: \$125
- Nonprofit: \$35



Saranac Lake Boys' Band, Courtesy of Natalie Leduc

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