

PRESS RELEASE

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Historic Saranac Lake Wins New York State Preservation Award

SARANAC LAKE, New York, December, 3, 2008. New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Commissioner Carol Ash today announced ten recipients of the 2008 New York State Historic Preservation Awards. Historic Saranac Lake was recognized for outstanding commitment to community revitalization and the rehabilitation and adaptive use of the Saranac Laboratory.

“The Historic Preservation Awards honor the efforts and achievement of individuals, organizations and municipalities that make significant contributions to historic preservation objectives throughout New York State,” Ash said. “The range of awards this year reflects the deep commitment and strong partnerships across the state that have made preservation an important tool for economic development.”

The State Historic Preservation Awards were established in 1980 to honor excellence in the protection and rejuvenation of New York’s historic and cultural resources. The recipients were honored at a ceremony held at the Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau at Peebles Island State Park, north of Albany.

Presenting the award, Ruth Pierpont said “For ten years, under the leadership of Executive Director Mary Hotaling, Historic Saranac Lake (HSL) has persevered to rescue and rehabilitate the building that represents the community's unique role as a health resort. Built for Dr. Edward L. Trudeau in 1894 and enlarged in 1928 and again in 1934, the Saranac Laboratory was the first facility in the United States designed exclusively for research on tuberculosis. After the laboratory functions moved to the new Trudeau Institute in 1964, Paul Smith's College used the building as classroom and dormitory space. HSL's stewardship role began during the college's tenure when the advocacy group arranged for a technical assistance grant from the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA), enabling preservation architect Carl Stearns to make an initial assessment and study the feasibility of reuse for the college.”

“When HSL obtained ownership in 1998, the tiny organization began a long process of securing funding and overseeing multiple phases of exterior restoration and interior rehabilitation, including an historic structure report with funding from Preserve New York, a program of NYSCA and the Preservation League.”

“An Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) grant, two Adirondack North Country

Community Enhancement Program (ANCCEP) grants from the late Senator Ronald Stafford, and capital funding from NYSCA -- along with substantial private donations -- were some of the many resources pieced together by HSL. The split-level building works well for mixed use. The first floor has been restored to its appearance in 1928, when it was originally dedicated as the "John Black Room" and now serves as a meeting space for a Unitarian Church and program space for HSL. Second floor offices are rented out, and HSL has relocated its headquarters to space on the main floor of the former laboratory."

"Making this rehab a reality has been an enormous undertaking for Executive Director Mary Hotaling who has also been heavily involved in providing public programs and working on a number of local advocacy issues. Almost 125 years after Dr. Trudeau's establishment of the Adirondack Cottage Sanitarium in 1884, his former laboratory is now ready to serve as a center for the preservation and interpretation of the community whose history was shaped by his pioneering work."

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Photograph—Please credit NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation: (l to r) Emily Fogarty, President of the Board, Carol Ash, Commissioner of the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation and Mary Hotaling, Executive Director of Historic Saranac Lake at the annual presentation of the New York State Historic Preservation Awards on December 3, 2008