

The Depot Dispatch

Newsletter of the Lake Placid-North Elba Historical Society

Preserving and Presenting the History of Lake Placid

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Upcoming 2026 Events

Museum Opens for the Season
May 23rd

Music at the Museum
June 22nd, July 13th, July 27th August 10th

Museum Open House & Reception
June 25th

One-Club Golf Tournament
August 6th

LPNEHS Festival
August 15th

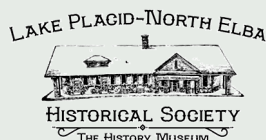
Speaker & Book Signing
September 9th



The History Museum

*Open Memorial Day Weekend
Through Columbus Day Weekend*

*Wednesday-Sunday (12-4 pm)
or by appointment*



PO Box 189
242 Station St
Lake Placid, NY 12946

It All Started with Trains....

The third presentation in our Winter Speaker Series featured our own Parmelee Tolkan outlining the story of trains and their influence on the Adirondack region, particularly Lake Placid. The theme from Parmelee's talk is at the heart of the newly refined "transportation story" at the Lake Placid North Elba Historical Society. Centered on the renovation of Ticket Office at the train station museum, we are celebrating train travel, because it is simply one of the most important advancements in our two-hundred-year history of railways!



Trains brought people to the Adirondacks, lots of people, and not just tourists. People arrived by train for opportunities, jobs and new lives defined by outdoor experience, natural beauty and adventure. An amazingly diverse population arrived by train, bringing with them culture and customs and new ideas about recreation, relaxation and the quality of life.

This quote from Parm's lecture about the number of train cars and passengers arriving paints a clear picture.

"Once upon a time, way back in the summers of the 20's and 30's, New York Central used to schedule five sections of the sleeper that left Grand Central Terminal every Friday night for Adirondack resorts via the carrier's Adirondack Division. There were 10 to 14 cars in each section, which meant that each section carried 350 to 400 passengers." quote from *Adirondack Vistas* by Nancy A. Douglas.

For the past two years LPNEHS members and friends of the Historical Society have heard us talk about planning, consultants, strategic initiatives and new ideas. Now in 2026, it is time to initiate some of these plans. Thanks to the generous support of LEAF, and the Cloudsplitter Foundation we are starting by focusing on the Transportation story. There are many other changes to our exhibits and public spaces that will engage visitors to the museum in new ways this summer. Please come and see. Don't stop with one visit to the History Museum, watch for our social media outreach on Facebook and Instagram. The conversations happening around old photos, postcards and questions taps into the town history in ways we never knew possible! There are new features and details of events on our website www.lakeplacidhistory.org. Members can stay engaged in the interpretive process, as we tell the story of Lake Placid, from a struggling farming community to an internationally recognized sports mecca and recreational destination.

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**Lake Placid-North Elba
Historical Society**

LAKE PLACID-NORTH ELBA



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Presidents' Message

As the ice melts on the entry and the decorative white lights come down, we are grateful for the success of our Winter Speaker Series and turn our attention to opening the museum at 242 Station Street for summer events and visitors. Check out the summer calendar on page 5!

We are also excited to welcome Nicole Lammann as the new LPNEHS Administrator, ie, the glue of the organization. Nicole has quickly embraced the role, added creative perspective and attention to detail. We are grateful.

The 2026-2027 season begins with our Membership Drive this month. All the planning and dreaming for the future of the LPNEHS relies on funding. Membership dues equal 25% of the annual budget. Please renew your individual or business membership today, perhaps consider increasing your membership category and, if you are new to us, find a giving level which works for you! We will continue to increase programming, enhance the museum and railyard and discover the potential at 242 Station Street with your help.

Betsy Hlavacek

Betsy Hlavacek
Co-President



Perry Babcock

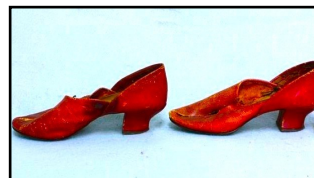
Perry Babcock
Co-President

A Full Circle Moment

Hi, my name is Nicole Lammann and I recently joined LPNEHS as administrative support. Life has come full circle and I'm back at the train station, right down the street from the house where I grew up. As a little girl I would come to the museum after school to see the dollhouse (for those of you who remember that), and the general store where a magical pair of red shoes were calling me. As seen below-we still have them in our collection!

The interest in the general store and those shoes were an indicator of where my life was headed. I moved to New York City to go to F.I.T and when I graduated I started off in the Fashion Industry. For the past 30 years I've lived in New York City and Paris and worked for several fashion houses and luxury beauty brands in various administrative, events, and operational roles. I did have plenty of my own red shoes! I moved back to the area a couple of years ago to be closer to my parents and because it was time to retire my red shoes and start a simpler life.

I'm looking forward to using my professional experience to help the Historical Society achieve its goals. I've traveled the world and people have consistently been in awe when I tell them I grew up in the Adirondacks. It's a place I've come to appreciate with time and I'm glad to call it home. The history of Lake Placid and North Elba are impressive and wide ranging. It is vital continue the work of the Historical Society and to showcase the magnificent building where we are housed. It takes a village to preserve history and I'm glad to be a part of these next steps. See you all this summer!

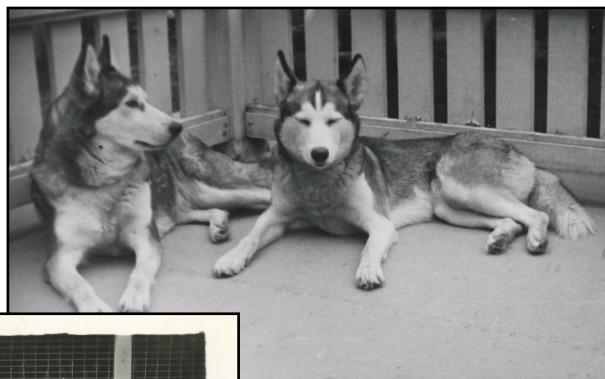


Honorable Huskies



The Collections Team recently came across a file in the LPNEHS archives and we knew the community would love to see this story about Margaret Dewey's locally famous huskies. The headline from a 1946 article in The Adirondack Daily Enterprise read, "*Canine Corps Vets home after 3-year service. Margaret Dewey's Huskies Have Honorable Discharges.*"

Kreevanka of Monadnock(**aka Vanka**) and Kolma of Komatik (**aka Kitten**) entered service on July 7, 1943. Miss Dewey raised both Vanka and Kitten as pups and they were entered in various dog shows from Westminster to The Eastern Dog Club Show in Boston, where Vanka was the best of winners. Both dogs were sent to Camp Rimini at Helena, Montana for training. Vanka was assigned to the search and rescue station of the 1383 AAF Base Unit at Goose Bay, Labrador where he served with the North Atlantic wing of the Airforce as a leader in sledge and pack work. Kitten served in Lt. Robinson, Nebraska where she was used for sledge duty and breeding military dogs. Both were reunited with Miss Margaret Dewey after 3 years of separation serving in the Canine Corps.



Margaret Dewey & Huskie, Vanka pictured left, Kitten & Vanka right, Kitten & Babies below

QUARTERMASTER CORPS
WAR DOGS
K-9 SECTION . . . U. S. ARMY
HONORABLE DISCHARGE

The War Dog KITTEN Tattoo No. P563
having served with the Armed Forces of the
United States of America, is hereby awarded
this Certificate of Faithful Service and Hon-
orable Discharge.

Remarks
Enlisted: July 7, 1943
Discharged: November 14, 1945
Service: Sledge Duty

Serial No. 7309

[Signature]
THE QUARTERMASTER GENERAL

QUARTERMASTER CORPS
WAR DOGS
K-9 SECTION . . . U. S. ARMY
HONORABLE DISCHARGE

The War Dog VANKA Tattoo No. P563
having served with the Armed Forces of the
United States of America, is hereby awarded
this Certificate of Faithful Service and Hon-
orable Discharge.

Remarks
Served at Presque Isle Army Air Field, Maine, from
14 December 1942 to 22 February 1944 and at the Search and
Rescue Station, 1383d AAF Base Unit, Goose Bay, Labrador,
until March 1945.

[Signature]
Major General
The Quartermaster General

The 1943 Honorable Discharge papers of Kitten & Vanka.

Winter Speaker Series Wrap Up

This year we hosted some fantastic and informative talks. A special thanks to **The Rotary Club** for being our title sponsor and to **The Cambria Hotel** for providing us with such a wonderful space to host these lectures. Thank you all for joining us!!!



Historian and Adirondacker **Connor Williams** brought us *Greetings from the Great Camps: The History of the Adirondack Vacation*. It was a fascinating talk about the forces and people that created the unique nexus of wilderness, exertion, rejuvenation and comfort that still define our region today.

Sandra Weber discussed her latest book, *John Brown in New York: The Man, His Family, and the Adirondack Landscape*. She offered a fresh look at the famed abolitionist, focusing on the years of the Brown family's connection with North Elba, Essex County (1848–1863). Weber's insightful narrative bridges the myth and the man, revealing the tender and tragic heart of the Brown family story.



Artist and longtime Historical Society Board Member **Parmelee Tolkan** explored the history of the Lake Placid train station, where our museum and the Historical Society have been located since 1967. *Horse Drawn to Iron Horse: The Opening of the Adirondacks* was a deep dive into the opening of the Adirondacks to summer residents and tourists with the arrival of trains. Here are a couple of interesting facts from this talk:



- *“In 1939 four trains left the station(Lake Placid) starting at 7:50pm. Two had 7 sleeping cars two had 8 sleepers”*
- *“At one time in the 30's and 40's, fourteen trains ran per day on a single track. There were passenger trains with 8 to 10 sleepers plus strings of baggage cars and freights with up to 90 cars.”*

Julia Goren, Executive Director of the Adirondack Rail Trail Association shared with us how ARTA supports partner communities and stewardship of the trail. Our museum is located at the trail head and as we move into our rail yard rehabilitation goals for 2030, many exciting collaborations opportunities exist to share the history of our area.





2026 Summer Events



- May 23rd** Opening Day at the Museum 12-4pm
- June 22nd** Monday Music at the Museum 6-8pm
- June 25th** Museum Open House & Reception 5-7pm
- July 13th** Monday Music at the Museum 6-8pm
- July 27th** Monday Music at the Museum 6-8pm
- August 6th** One-Club Golf Tournament 3-5pm
- August 10th** Monday Music at the Museum 6-8pm
- August 15th** LPNEHS Heritage Festival 10-2pm featuring our Silent Auction, White Elephant, & Furniture Sale (*Donations by appointment. No books. More details to come*)
- September 9th** Speaker Event & Book Signing: *The First Adirondackers*, with authors David Fadden and Curt Stager 6-8pm

Please make sure to join our mailing list, Facebook & Instagram for the latest news and pop-up events we host through the summer season!

Collections Connection

One of the jobs of those working in collections management is to research and identify photographs to determine where they belong in our archives. Can you identify who this person is?



This photograph was printed by Pierson Studios circa 1932.



MEMBERSHIP 2026 SEASON

We are gearing up for an exciting 2026 museum season at the Historical Society. Whether you visit the museum during the summer, attend one of our Winter Speaker Series programs, participate in a history tour or join a team for the scavenger hunt, we welcome you to become a member. Your support helps us fulfill our mission to preserve and present our community's history in ways that are educational and enriching for residents and visitors. Thank you for your continued support of the Lake Placid-North Elba Historical Society!

Membership Levels & Benefits:

The new membership year runs from May 1, 2026-April 30th, 2027. Membership dues are not prorated based on enrollment date. You may join by completing the remittance envelope included in this newsletter and enclosing a check payable to the Lake Placid-North Elba Historical Society with *Membership 2026* written on the memo line. Or join online at lakeplacidhistory.org. Make sure to provide your email address, phone number as well as your current mailing address. If you have a seasonal address where you also receive mail, please include that as well.

Director's Circle (\$1000 Plus)

- Free unlimited admission to The History Museum for 2 adults and children up to age 18
- . 8 complimentary museum admission passes
- North American Reciprocal Museum (NARM) discounts at participating museums
- One private museum tour for up to 8 guests by reservation
- Invitations to special events hosted by the Board of Trustees

Heritage-Gold (\$500)

- Free unlimited admission to The History Museum for 2 adults and children up to age 18
- . 6 complimentary museum admission passes
- North American Reciprocal Museum (NARM) discounts at participating museums
- One private museum tour for up to 4 guests by reservation

Heritage-Silver (\$250)

- Free unlimited admission to The History Museum for 2 adults and children up to age 18
- . 4 complimentary museum admission passes
- North American Reciprocal Museum (NARM) discounts at participating museums.
- Book from the museum shop

Heritage-Bronze (\$100) *our most popular*

- Free unlimited admission to The History Museum for 2 adults and children up to age 18
- . 2 complimentary museum admission passes
- North American Reciprocal Museum (NARM) discounts at participating museums

Friend-Household (\$50)

- Free unlimited admission to The History Museum for 2 adults and children up to age 18

Friend-Individual (\$35)

- Free unlimited admission to The History Museum for 1 individual

Business Partner (\$250)

- Display space at The History Museum for your business brochures or business cards
- Your business name or logo in our newsletter and on our website
- Free unlimited admission to The History Museum for 2 representatives of your business
- . 4 complimentary museum admission passes





Summer Sponsorship Opportunities

- ◆ Sponsor a Summer Docent.....\$2,500
- ◆ August Heritage Fair Title Sponsor.....\$1,000
- ◆ Summer Music Series\$500 per event
- ◆ One Club Golf Event.....\$150 per hole

More opportunities available upon request!

Support our 2025 Business Partners



Lake Placid-North Elba Historical Society Annual Fund

Ways to Give

Traditional Gift

To make a gift to the *Annual Fund* you may write a check payable to the Lake Placid-North Elba Historical Society or give online:

Scan the QR code below to make your Annual Fund Donation



lakeplacidhistory.org/annualfund

Donor Advised Funds

Donor Advised Funds allow donors to make a charitable contribution, receive an immediate tax deduction, and then recommend donations to nonprofit organizations like the Lake Placid-North Elba Historical Society from their fund over time.

IRA Charitable Distribution

For those over 70 1/2 years of age, a gift of up to \$105,000 may be made from your Individual Retirement Account (IRA). Using your IRA to fund a contribution directly to the Lake Placid-North Elba Historical Society avoids potential income tax. A qualified charitable distribution (QCD) counts towards your required minimum distribution if you are 73 years or older.

Gifts of Stock

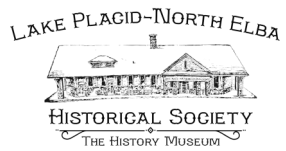
Gifts of appreciated stock benefit the Historical Society and provide you with an opportunity to avoid capital gains and maximize charitable deductions.

Legacy Giving

Consider including a legacy gift to the Lake Placid-North Elba Historical Society in your estate plan. Contact your legal or financial advisor to learn more about your giving options which may assist you in maximizing your charitable intentions while minimizing your estate taxes.

The Lake Placid-North Elba Historical Society is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization.

Federal Tax ID # 14-6032009



242 Station Street, PO Box 189
Lake Placid, NY 12946

LAKE PLACID-NORTH ELBA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

You are cordially invited to the
2026 Museum Open House & Reception
Thursday, June 25h from 5:00-7:00 pm
at The History Museum



Lake Placid North Elba Historical Society ♦ 242 Station Street, Lake Placid, NY 12946