



Friends of Mount Arab 2015 Newsletter

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Association

CONTACT:

FOMA
PO Box 185
Piercefield, NY 12973

518-359-9300

bentley@northnet.org

Transitions

Robert (Bob) Acker, long time board member and impetus for our new privy passed away this past year. We miss him. Bruce Lewis, a past treasurer and very productive board member, has retired from the board. Chirple Mecklenburg has also left the FOMA board.

Richard Maid and Jeffrey Debes have joined the FOMA board. Richard Maid assisted in the assembly of our new outhouse and Jeff Debes has constructed a new website for FOMA you can explore at <http://www.friendsofmountarab.org>. This complements our facebook page created by Felicia Neahr you will find at <https://www.facebook.com/FriendsofMtArab>.

For those of you who find it convenient, you will find a PayPal donation button on our new website.

Pat Whalen, head of the Potsdam DEC office and a long-time advocate and supporter of the FOMA effort is retiring. Pat, always our fall-back contact, stood in for John Wood who retired last year as our DEC liaison. Pat, we wish you all the best in your retirement. Our new DEC liaison is Aaron Graves who has already hit the ground running.

We now have a new Summit Outhouse

The summit outhouse had seen many hard years. This included being knocked over in our past issue with vandalism, after which it was returned to duty.

FOMA received \$500 from the McLanahan Family Fund plus an additional \$290, both from the Adirondack Foundation, which along with other donations made this project possible. We are most grateful for this financial help. We expect that those of you who climb our mountain will appreciate it even more. The new outhouse is 5-star quality.

Tower Footer Replacement

This work was done under contract with David Vana, a professional from Bloomingdale, NY who has long experience with all aspects of fire tower repair and reconstruction having done this sort of work all over the US. The work was expensive (close to \$18,000), but as we have discovered as the work proceeded, the old anchor bolts were **extremely** corroded. Note in photo to the right the two pieces in the center. The first twisted off upon turning the nut and the second was corroded smaller yet. The new bolts set into the bedrock with epoxy are stainless steel so should hold our tower securely in place far into the future.

Acknowledgements

Friends of Mount Arab would like to sincerely thank: 2015 Major donors up to the time of mailing:

\$500 - Adirondack Foundation-McLanahan Family Fund
\$290 - Adirondack Foundation-Adirondack Gives
\$275 - David & Catherine Fant
\$250 - Peter C. Galloway
\$200 - Nicholas Cervelin
\$200 - Joseph & Shirley Fazio
\$175 - Terry & Janet Silvester
\$150 - John and Linda Sheeran
\$100 - Vasily & Mary Ann Cateforis
\$100 - Rhoda Curtiss
\$100 - Gregory S. Dickson & Susan Hearn
\$100 - Paul & Lauren Eschmann
\$100 - Lianne and John Kaul
\$100 - Lewis B. Kinter
\$100 - Kenneth Lutters
\$100 - Richard & Cheryl Maid
\$100 - Alison and David Mandelbaum
\$100 - Donald & Peg Mauer
\$100 - Phyllis Wendt Pierce
\$100 - Philip Reynolds
\$100 - Robert P. Stout
\$100 - George and Dr. Ellen Koch Utlej
\$100 - Alerick Welsh & Sharon Rathbun

Donations in amounts less than \$100 were received just as gratefully. All donations, in whatever amount are deeply appreciated by us, and by all those who visit our mountain.

Cabin Window replaced

Rounding out our 2015 projects, a cabin window on the west side near the back has been replaced by Jeremy Graton, Tupper Lake. It was discovered that the sill was badly rotted from years of exposure to the prevailing weather. Now that all the windows are protected by solid wood shutters the new window should fare better.



Samples of old bolts on the left, and piece of new stainless steel anchor bolt.



NEWS FROM THE TOP

By Thomas P. Cullen,
Summit Steward



It was a pleasure once again to serve as Summit Steward atop Mt. Arab this year. Five months went by so fast! I have come to view the Tower and Summit

Museum as my "home away from home" and I take pride in maintaining our mountain top complex (tower, museum, new outhouse) in great condition.

Once again I was graced with the company of my Newfoundland Dog family (Toby and Apollo) on top of the mountain greeting many thousands of visitors and being the subjects of countless photos. Our Hummingbird Sanctuary and Bat Education Programs were well received by the general public, as well as numerous queries on the hundreds of hill topping Blue Mosaic Darter Dragonflies gracefully flitting atop the summit feeding voraciously on the abundant biting fly populations up there.

The Fire Tower Challenge, sponsored by the Adirondack Mountain Club, continues its meteoric rise in popularity and I provided valuable information to our climbers about it, as well as the classic Fire Tower History Books by Marty Podskoch. I provide an educational table in the museum where these programs are showcased and they provide an impetus to our climbers to attempt even more mountain ascents in the future.

I eagerly look forward to returning next year for my fifth year as Mt Arab Summit Steward.

Colin Tuggle

It's been a privilege to serve as one of our summit stewards for the past few years. This past summer I was able to go up only a few times due to other commitments and I really missed it. Rain or shine, we are blessed with an amazing resource at Mt. Arab. We arguably have the most family-friendly Adirondack summit hike with ample parking and a well maintained, moderate trail leading up to spectacular views. And our work that has been done to restore the tower and observer's cabin really shows.

My family has owned property at Mt. Arab for many years, and I began hiking the trail up Mount Arab as a child. Since the start of FOMA there have been dramatic improvements in the trail, tower, and cabin, and a great reduction in litter. When people see that something is well cared for, they tend to be more careful and respectful in turn. All that FOMA has done has been made possible by contributions from our supporters. From my viewpoint as Executive Director of another nonprofit, I have seen that organizations like FOMA cannot make it without the generosity of their supporters. This continuing support has enabled FOMA to accomplish some critically important work this season, most notably repairs to the tower foundation. And for those in need, we now have a grade A summit outhouse.

It's no wonder that many guide books list Mt. Arab prominently on their lists of suggested hikes in the Adirondacks. We are stewards of a very special resource, a mountain that people of all ages and abilities can enjoy. And whether that hiker's age is 3 or 83, hiking Mt. Arab plants the desire to hike more, and to invest more time and resources enjoying our region. Mt. Arab has become a priceless educational resource and economic catalyst for our region. When we contribute to FOMA, we are advancing the Adirondacks as a whole. I have no doubt that our work on Mt. Arab is well worth it, and I look forward to many years of helping to preserve this amazing resource.



Four intrepid hikers upon discovery of Thomas Cullen's giant Newfoundland hounds.

Upcoming Projects

This is going to read much like last year's projection. A few of the steel diagonals in the tower frame are showing signs of corrosion, some of the bolts need replacing, and the cement footers at the tower base need to be repaired.

Back to the BIG ONE – tower footer replacement

We have far more pictures than will fit in this newsletter. Below, you can see David Vana, a specialist in fire tower repair and construction from Bloomingdale, NY, working in the rain. With DEC assistance, he and his crew were finally able to haul all his equipment and supplies to the summit this past September. Two weeks (and lots of dollars) later the job finally came to completion.

If you've taken a good look on page 1 at the pieces of bolt removed, you will see why this repair was so important.

Five-Star Outhouse on the Summit of Mt. Arab

Designed and built by Robbie Drasye in Tupper Lake, our new privy was transported in sections and assembled in place on the summit by FOMA volunteers after removal of the old outhouse.



**How does a fire tower put its new footers on?...
One leg at a time, just like everybody else**



**Holes drilled into bedrock,
anchor bolts glued in, and
concrete poured into forms.**



**Finished job on one leg. You can
see the new stainless steel bolts.**

HISTORY of the FRIENDS of MOUNT ARAB (FOMA)

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 historical facility and its magnificent views with future generations, they resolved to restore and maintain the sadly decaying fire tower and fire observer's cabin located there.

Beginning with incorporation as a non-profit in partnership with DEC, FOMA has progressed steadily towards its goal. While there has been continuing outstanding trail work performed by the ADK trail crew, staffing and ongoing restoration of summit facilities proceeds with the essential support of YOU, our donors. Thank you.

Yes! I want to become a friend of Mount Arab, to help save and maintain the tower and ranger cabin, improve the trail, and interpret the natural and cultural history of Mount Arab.

Enclosed is my tax-deductible contribution for: ___ \$10 ___ \$25 ___ \$50 ___ Other.

I would like to order ___ patches at \$5 each plus \$1 postage per order.

(Caps, T-shirts, and Denim shirts are available at Fortunes True Value Hardware, Tupper Lake, NY.
You must visit the store directly. Fortunes Hardware does not do mail order.)

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ Email: _____

Please make checks payable to: **FRIENDS OF MOUNT ARAB**
Mail to: Friends of Mount Arab, PO Box 185, Piercefield, NY 12973



Construction site near the completion of the job.

As can be seen here, a considerable quantity of supplies and equipment had to be hauled to the top of the mountain, and then hauled back down when the job was complete.

After a bit of DEC trail modification, ATVs supplied and driven by DEC personnel did the hauling. Rain barrels loaned by the WildCenter and placed beforehand supplied water.

**Friends of Mount Arab
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Piercefield, NY 12973**