



Friends of Mount Arab 2014 Newsletter

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New Board Members

Michael Frenette has left the board, primarily for work related reasons that made it difficult for him to participate. Thank you Michael for your past contributions.

Felicia Neahr has joined our board on the recommendation of Gordon Batson and the ADK Laurentian Chapter of which they both are members. Felicia has created a FOMA Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/FriendsofMtArab>. Please visit and 'LIKE' us. Also, you are invited to share pictures of your Mount Arab outing on our Facebook page and perhaps any comments you may wish to make.

John Wood, our DEC liaison retired from DEC this past fall. John was a real asset to the FOMA effort, coordinating ADK trail work and generally keeping FOMA apprised of DEC activities and changes that might have an effect on the FOMA mission. John, we wish you all the best in your retirement.

Summit Outhouse Replacement

The outhouse at the summit has seen many hard years. This includes being turned over in our past issue with vandalism, and afterward being righted and returned to duty.

We have decided to replace it. This has begun with the construction of a new outhouse in the shop of Robbie Drasye in Tupper Lake, and is now nearly complete. In the spring it will be transported in sections to the summit. The job also includes dismantling and removal of the old outhouse, digging a new hole over which to place the new outhouse, and filling in the old hole. In addition to time and materials already invested, the contractor estimates that with trips and transport up and down the mountain, completion of the job this coming spring will require the labor of three men for at least three days. Needless to say, this project will be quite a bit more expensive than building an outhouse in your backyard.

FOMA has received a grant in the amount of \$250 from the Adirondack Foundation to be applied to construction of a new outhouse, for which we are most grateful. However, this grant is far short of what we expect this project to cost. But, we are confident that our good donors will come through for us on this.

Acknowledgements

Friends of Mount Arab would like to sincerely thank:

Major donors:

Richard Cole, Esq. of Rochester and Mount Arab, and who contributed his efforts to incorporate FOMA as a non-profit, passed away this past year. His family and friends made donations in his honor that collectively amounted to \$3871. We sincerely thank you.

- \$1000 Harter, Secret & Emery LLP

- \$250 Leclair, Korona, Giordano, Cole, LLP

- \$250 Bradley J. Fisher

- \$250 Marilyn B. Fisher

- \$200 James & Maxine Cole

- \$200 Peter C. Galloway

- \$150 Marion & William Wilmot

- \$100 Priscilla & Frederick Cardinali

- \$100 Nicholas Cervelin

- \$100 Steven E. & Anamaria P. Cole

- \$100 Rhoda Curtiss

- \$100 David & Cathy Fant

- \$100 Harter, Secret & Emery LLP

- \$100 B. Heath, C. Sharp, L. Sharp, R. Garrow

- \$100 Christopher & Helene Hoople

- \$100 James B. Gray

- \$100 Lewis B. Kinter

- \$100 Douglas W. Kremer

- \$100 Ellen B. Kremer

- \$100 Richard & Cheryl Maid

- \$100 Don & Peg Mauer

- \$100 Brian & Jennifer Moss

- \$100 Bernard & Marie Patten

- \$100 Philip Reynolds

- \$100 Angela Shankar

- \$100 Linda Parrotte Sheeran

- \$100 Worker Justice Center of New York, Inc.

This list includes those who sent donations since the last newsletter, but possibly missing any who sent something in between my receiving notification from our treasurer and the present moment. If your donation became lost in that little blind spot, or in whatever other manner, blame me and I apologize profusely. Donations in amounts less than \$100 were received just as gratefully but were far more numerous than the space I have to list them here. All donations, in whatever amount are deeply appreciated by us, and by all those who visit our mountain.



NEWS FROM THE TOP

By Thomas P. Cullen,
Summit Steward



It was my pleasure to once again serve as a summit steward atop Mount Arab alongside my two Newfoundland dogs, Toby and Apollo. My dogs were again hugely popular and they were photographed thousands of times over the year on top of the mountain. They are great Ambassadors of Mount Arab, meeting and

greeting all our visitors.

In addition to our fire tower historical exhibits inside the cabin, my outdoor natural history education programs continued to educate our climbers about the flora and fauna on the mountain. My Dragonfly Education program continued as I would capture a large mosaic darter when they were flying on the summit and place it in a mesh sided cage so that folks could get up close and personal with it. The insect was always released unharmed at the end of the day. Many kids had their first opportunity to touch a dragonfly after climbing Mount Arab and numerous photos of kids "shaking hands" with large dragonflies were taken by parents.

I am pleased to announce that this year we entered into a mini grant collaboration with Northern New York Audubon Society supporting a Ruby Throated Hummingbird Ecology and Sanctuary Program atop the peak. Dozens of tiny hummingbirds jostled and flitted around the summit all summer into the fall migration at the six feeding stations we set up and maintained. I educated climbers on the interesting commensal relationship between springtime migratory Yellow Bellied Sapsucker Woodpeckers and male Ruby Throats, as well as highlighting the stunning migration of these tiny birds back and forth across the Gulf of Mexico to their winter homes in Central America. Many interested climbers received our Hummingbird 'business cards' highlighting an Audubon citizen science program called Hummingbirds at Home.

This year I initiated a bat sanctuary with input and help from Bat Conservation International atop Mount Arab. I mounted a Bat House on the side of the cabin and disseminated bat biology information to climbers. Unfortunately due to White Nose Syndrome our Adirondack Little and Big Brown Bat populations have plummeted in recent years and no bats were observed roosting this year atop Mount Arab. Our Little Brown Bat is actually being considered for endangered species status by the US Government. I plan on continuing and expanding this program next year and hopefully we will attract some bat residents to help control our burgeoning nocturnal Adirondack

mosquito populations. The mere presence of the bat house generated great interest in many climbers, especially among our youth who love bats!

This year I continued taking inventory of plant and animal populations on the summit and along the trail. My records show that we have an amazing diversity of life on our mountain and our porch front Nature Center generated many nature related questions which I was pleased to answer. My thanks to artist Roger Hall who kindly donated many of the art prints illustrating Adirondack natural history which are displayed in the center.

Other new developments on our mountain which I publicized included our new Friends of Mt. Arab Facebook page (page 1) and the continuing great work by the Adirondack Mountain Club trail crews which make the climb easier. I look forward to returning to Mt. Arab next year to continue this wonderful job.

* * *



Colin Tuggle

My family has owned property in the Mount Arab lake community for 47 years and I've hiked the mountain my entire life. But what an incredible privilege it was to serve as one of our summit stewards again this season! As a former Naval Officer, I've had the opportunity to do a lot of interesting things, but my summer on the mountain was again one of the highlights. Rain or shine, we truly are blessed with an amazing resource at Mount Arab: arguably

the most family-friendly summit hike in all of the Adirondacks. Where else can you find ample parking and a well-maintained, moderate trail all leading up to such a spectacular view? And the work that has been done to restore the tower and observer's cabin really shows.

It's no wonder that many guide books list Mt. Arab first 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. It's often the very first mountain that people ever hike. And whether that hiker's age is three or eighty-three, hiking Mount Arab plants a seed. It gives them the desire to hike more, and to invest more time and resources into our region. One of the most stunning examples is teenage schoolchildren who live within the Adirondacks, but have never hiked up a

mountain. When they reach the summit of our mountain and take in the views around them, it gives them a deeply profound appreciation for the rich resources in their own backyard. The impact of that realization can't be measured. I also talk to many tourists who are visiting our area for the first time, but make the decision to come back in the years ahead after experiencing a hike up Mount Arab. And hence, the work we are doing is accomplishing so much more than just helping to maintain one mountain's heritage. Mount Arab has become a priceless educational resource and economic catalyst for the entire region. When we contribute to supporting Mount Arab, we are advancing the Adirondacks as a whole.

I began hiking the trail up Mount Arab long before FOMA was formed. I know what the trail and summit looked like before FOMA. And I know what it looks like now. There has been a dramatic improvement in the trail, tower, and cabin with far less littering and destruction to the environment. When people see that something is well-cared for, they tend to be more careful and respectful in turn. Good stewardship begets good stewardship. We need FOMA to keep doing this important work, and the contributions from our supporters have helped to make it all possible. We have some important work coming up next year. Our summit outhouse, which gets used extensively by all those school groups and boy scouts, will be replaced. Like your house, our structures always need maintenance of some kind. Imagine the effort if your house was on the summit of a mountain in the Adirondacks. It's amazing that everything holds up as well as it does! But I can assure you that our work on Mount Arab is well worth it. I look forward to many years of helping to preserve this amazing resource.

2014 Trail Improvements

The Adirondack Mountain Club (ADK) professional trail crew continued the trail work they started in 2012 and expanded on during the summer of 2013.

On Saturday, May 5th, 2014 the Adirondack Mountain Club held a training day on the Mt. Arab trail. Following that, the ADK professional trail crew spent three weeks on our mountain building a stone staircase in an eroded gully that had become unsafe for hikers. From week to week the team varied in size, but had between 4 and 7 people each week. They did a great job and our summit stewards continue to receive praise for the excellent condition of the trail.

REPAIRS PLANNED FOR 2015

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.

David Vana, a specialist in fire tower construction and repair from Bloomingdale, NY, had planned to start this project in the spring of 2013. Unfortunately, ankle surgery has kept him off our mountain all summer and fall. David has had extensive experience with towers identical to the tower on Mount Arab. We really need his services because he can repair or fabricate replacement parts for any part of the structure. So, FOMA has postponed this expensive work (donations anyone?) until spring 2015. This will involve repairs to the tower foundation, a bit of steel work, and window repairs in both the tower and cabin.

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

**Winter
by Ingeborg Sapp**

Winter Bouquet

There is still time to bring some of the outdoors inside
and gather a winter bouquet.

Start with the dark brown candles of the cattails.

Add golden delicate sprigs of wild Asparagus,
some flower heads of QUEEN ANNE'S LACE,
exotic Milkweed pods,
some feathery grasses.

Pearly Everlasting is still along the trail.

Spray them to prevent them from seeding.

Add some branches of Cedar
and find some bright red berry branches.
Enjoy the gifts of nature all winter long.

Ingeborg's Note Book



Tom Cullen's Audubon Collaboration Project

Once again FOMA has received a mini-grant from the National Audubon Society for the purpose of purchasing hummingbird feeders, supplies, a poster, and educational outreach materials for use at the summit of Mount Arab.

An Adirondack ROOST photographer took photos at the summit as part of their promotional effort for the Tupper Lake, Saranac Lake, and Lake Placid region. And, author Jill Adams came to the summit to write an article about the hummingbird program .

Some comments left at the Summit

7/17/14 – This was my first hike and I hiked all the way!

I love jumping off all the rocks! - Brady Stinebrickner

7/17/14 – Every year I come here and it is really fun! It's a great hike to do with all of my cousins! - Haley Stinebrickner + Ming Scafidi

Current funding efforts: Coming year's summit stewards, new outhouse, and finally, we hope, the planned tower repairs to footings and structure will begin. **Your donations** are essential, in particular to keeping summit stewards on duty 7 days a week.



Field trip from an area youth camp in early summer.



Group of 3rd graders, and parents, from a local school.

**Friends of Mount Arab
PO Box 185
Piercefield, NY 12973**