



Friends of Mount Arab 2018 Newsletter

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Transitions

Changes to the Board: Terry McGuire has resigned from the FOMA Board, but is currently still working with FOMA in an advisory capacity, particularly with merchandise sales. We all thank Terry for both her past service on the Board, and for her continued efforts to assist the FOMA effort. Bettyanne Acker, Letty Bartoszek, and Herman Vandenburgh have all joined our Board and we welcome them.

And once again, anyone wishing to join our board and contribute to the FOMA effort should live close enough to be able and willing to attend monthly meetings May – October, or be regular summer visitors who can also meet the obligation to attend most meetings.

On the Web

We are on the internet. Both our facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/FriendsofMtArab>, and also our website, <http://www.friendsofmontarab.org>. Jeff Debes, who maintains and monitors these sites, tells us they have been quite active. For those of you who find it convenient to make a donation via the web, you will find a PayPal donation button on our website.

FOMA Centennial Celebration 1918-2018

On Saturday, August 11th, FOMA celebrated the erection of the steel tower on the summit of Mount Arab that stands there today.





NEWS FROM THE TOP

By Thomas P. Cullen,
Summit Steward



Once again it is that time of year when I can reflect and recollect my thoughts and experiences on another great year as

Summit Steward of Mt Arab.

This was my eighth year serving, and the intricacies and complexities of my job continue to increase. It is a wonderful place to work. As usual my Newfoundland dogs, Toby and Apollo, accompanied me daily in meeting and greeting thousands of visitors each month.

Our season expanded a bit this year commencing on a very busy and popular Mother's Day, and concluding on the day of the annual Tupper Lake Triad Mountain Race which is the Saturday after Columbus Day.

It was a great year despite less than perfect unstable weather patterns, resulting in extended heat waves with high relative humidity and cold spells. Nevertheless hikers poured out of the forest trails each day, even in torrential rain. Their determination was admirable. It seemed that rainy days sprouted small children, all attired in a dazzling array of multicolored boots and slickers. It was great for them and their wet families to be welcomed to the summit by yours truly and the dogs.

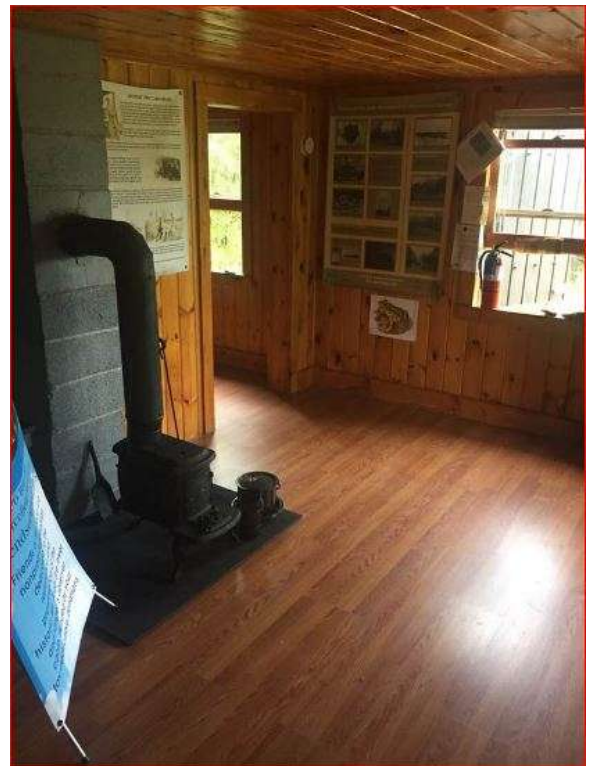
As usual I tried to individually greet and welcome each hiker and always invited them to tour our Nature Center/ Human History Museum in addition to experiencing the views atop the tower. Our Museum is sparkling these days with the addition of a new floor.

We celebrated our 100th anniversary this past summer at the summit and below in the parking lot. This mountain remains a popular hike for kids as our trail is navigable for children to successfully climb as young as three years of age with patient and supporting parents.

I am looking forward to returning next year.

New Cabin Floor

This past year FOMA engaged local summer resident, Peter Erickson, to install a new laminate floor surface in the observer's cabin at the summit. Peter did a great job. This floor greatly improves the appearance, is more durable, and makes the floor far easier to clean. And, a giant 'THANK YOU' to Aaron, the Gaffneys, and all the others who helped by carrying materials to the summit.



New Tower Windows

We ran into a few snags in the effort to replace the windows in the tower cab this past summer and fall. The new aluminum windows have been constructed and carried to the summit, but in the job to install them we ran into weather constraints. Hopefully the job will be completed in the spring. There is also the additional job of patching a tiny cracked edge of the tower roof plus painting. Hopefully that can be done as soon as the windows are in.

Road Signs

We have noticed over the years, those of us who live or have camps at the end of the Mount Arab road, that some visitors to Mount Arab have been confused as to the location of the Mount Arab trailhead. On several occasions we have encountered groups walking up our drive at the end of the road, and neighbors have come across groups equipped for hiking walking in a gravel access road beyond the end of the Mount Arab town road.

Part of the problem may be the DEC 'Conifer Emporium Conservation Easement' sign standing boldly at the trailhead opposite the parking lot, and commanding the primary attention of anyone approaching up around the curve in the road at that point. That sign, in a smaller font does in fact state that this is the 'Trail to Mt. Arab Fire Tower', but even at the slower speeds that people should be driving that narrow road, it is likely only the first few words on that sign reach comprehension, and 'Conifer Emporium' rings no bells but does distract from the obvious parking lot opposite.

We have done a couple of things we hope will make our trailhead easier to find. Firstly, the sign on the Conifer road where one turns onto the Mount Arab road used to read .8 miles. You may notice that even here it is hard to see the 'point', and could easily be confused with 8 miles. We

have changed that as you see below, and have added an additional sign above the 'hiker's crossing' sign that reads: MT ARAB TRAILHEAD JUST AHEAD so that as you come up around the curve you will be prepared to expect a trailhead.



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.

Patches may be purchased by sending \$6 for each patch ordered (this includes shipping) to the address below.

Caps, T-shirts, denim shirts and patches 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**

Trail Work & Training - Sheila Young

The Adirondack Mountain Club sponsored a one-day Trail Steward Workshop on June 16, 2018. Ten participants attended, including DEC Region 6 Forester Aaron Graves and FOMA Director Sheila Young. Aaron is the DEC representative to the Friends of Mt Arab Board of Directors. Sheila was interested in refreshing her skills, being an

approved trail steward for a section of the Northville-Placid Trail since 2010. The work scheduled for that day focused on the appropriate way to clear debris and soil from existing water bars. Forty-one water bars were restored to full usefulness.

Reroutes past open rock faces and additional water bar placements may be budgeted by DEC for 2019.



Hiram Denton, then the observer on Whiteface, demonstrates the use of an alidade, an instrument for determining the location of forest fires.

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