



NATIONAL  
HISTORIC  
LANDMARK

## Director's Report

**S**agamore has a long history through many eras of ownership—from the building of the camp by William West Durant to the Vanderbilts and on to the present Sagamore Institute of the Adirondacks. Sometimes the camp's history comes back to us in unexpected ways. For example, last July a very important piece of Sagamore's past returned to us through the donation of a South Carolina man, Leigh Armistead and his wife Rhonda. Leigh was an employee of Syracuse University in the early 1970s, and traveled frequently to Sagamore to help with the many conferences held here. In 1976 he was asked to help with the auction of the contents of Sagamore by pulling items from the camp's buildings for the auctioneer. At that time he was able to save a set of very early architectural drawings of the Main Lodge apparently used on site during the construction process; we are extremely grateful that he brought these revealing documents 'back home'.

These drawings also document the names of William Fortin, an Adirondack carpenter, and Grosvenor Atterbury, a rising young architect of the period. Atterbury later went on to design many country homes; developed the plan for Forest Hills Gardens, one of the first planned communities in the U.S.; and was the architect of the American Wing of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. Although his exact role in the design of the Main Lodge remains to be determined, the connection between the two men, Durant and Atterbury, is a very interesting development in the interpretation of Sagamore's history.

Along with the drawings, Mr. Armistead donated a file from Syracuse's Sagamore auction which included newspaper clippings and press announcements as well as a copy of the inventory of the items sold at auction in 1976. Although scant on details, the inventory gives an accurate accounting of what was sold off in each of the buildings and can be the basis of furnishing plans for future renovations.

Another donation came in the form of a photo album from Joan Parkes of Endwell, New York, a long time volunteer and participant in Sagamore's programs. Dating back to the late 1970s, the photos document the early work weekends at camp, pioneering wilderness programs with Anne LaBastille and Barbara Glaser, as well as day-to-day

life at Sagamore in these early days of the current era. Both of these gifts document and record our history. They allow us to look back and to see how where we came from can inform our planning for the future.

Restoration work continued last year after the successful state funded effort to replace roofs and stabilize foundations at camp. Sagamore successfully raised funds to begin the process of modernizing the water supply system at camp. This part of the infrastructure is vital to the health and safety of everyone at camp, but parts of it are over 100 years old; new health department regulations demanded an upgrade. With Bob Heinsler overseeing the efforts of contractors and engineers, we have severed the historic water supply coming from a 100,000 gallon cistern off property; added a water meter; and upgraded the hot water for the dining hall. Still to come in 2015 will be adding shut off valves to each of the buildings, replacing obsolete water lines, and other upgrades to the system.

The mystery of the nature of the material covering the Durant era ceiling of the Dining Hall porch has been solved. This material has failed over time and currently hangs in tatters over the interior. At first glance the material appears to be burlap or a similar rough cloth but a closer examination proves it to be a non-woven, felt-like material. For many years historians and preservationists have not been able to specifically identify its source so that it can be replaced. In November 2014, C.R. Jones, a retired museum conservator examined samples of the material using a microscope and determined that it is a very primitive type of textile called Cedar Bark Cloth. This material was made by Native Americans in the Pacific Northwest by pounding cedar bark against stones, immersing the matrix in a water bath, and then pressing it to form the bark cloth. The staff is currently searching for a contemporary source for this textile to complete this long awaited restoration.

Historic preservation is an ongoing effort at Sagamore requiring our constant attention and diligence. The support of friends and members is vital to keeping this process going. We hope that you will consider Sagamore in your charitable giving this year and thank you again for keeping this National Historic Landmark complex alive and vibrant. ■

# Members and Donors

We have tried to be accurate, but welcome your additions/corrections. Thank you.

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# Preservation Notes

In 2014 Sagamore worked to complete building projects associated with a \$238,650 state Historic Preservation Grant that included major work to six buildings on our campus. The work included; rehabilitating the porch piers of the Main Lodge; new roof, gutters and downspouts on the Conference Building; total rehabilitation of the Dwelling building in the upper complex for use as an artisan's demonstration area; refinishing the lanes of the bowling alley as well as restoring the interior; new roof and interior rehabilitation of the lean-to and other work around camp.

Sagamore hired Nick Artim, a nationally known expert in fire suppression and safety in historic structures, to create a fire protection plan for our camp. Artim's consultancy at Sagamore was made possible by the support of a grant from the Preservation League of New York State. He toured the entire campus, reviewed systems and procedures already in place and made recommendations for improving our fire protection systems.

Sagamore's trail system benefited from the work of the Adirondack Mountain Club in opening the Beaverflow trail and building a new footbridge to cross the outlet stream. The Lakeside Trail was closed at the Lost Brook due to ice damage to the bridge; this was repaired by the New York State D.E.C. with help from a crew from the Student Conservation Association. ■

Sagamore benefits each year from the generosity and hard work of a **dedicated crew of volunteers**. At weekends in the Spring and the Fall these people come from across the region to help us do historic preservation activities, open and close the facility, and do special projects. In 2014 there were 1,785 recorded volunteer hours that were valued at \$28,560. The following awards were given for service: ■

■ **Red Chair Awards:**

Mike & Julie DeOrdio  
Greg Heneka

■ **Work Weekend Hosts:**

John & Beth Lytle

**The Annual Benefit for Historic Preservation** was successfully held in August this year. The focus of the fund-raising activities was the repair and restoration of the camp's water distribution system in order to meet current health and safety standards. The event raised \$34,950 for the water system and \$64,375 for general operating support for an event total of \$99,325.

Thanks to all who came out and supported us! ■



**Council on  
the Arts**

**E**ach summer for over twenty years Great Camp Sagamore has hosted a variety of **traditional folk artisans** from throughout the North Country to demonstrate the arts and crafts that adorn this unique complex. In the summer of 2014 we hosted the following demonstrations supported by the New York State Council for the Arts:

- **Bill Smith** Rustic Carvings
- **Helen Condon** Rug Braider
- **David Woodward** Blacksmith
- **Jane Desotelle** Herbalist
- **Pat Smith** Cedar Canvas Canoe Builder
- **Chris Woodward** Guide Boat Builder ■

**The Museum Association of New York** awarded Sagamore a "**Get Set**" grant to improve its fundraising capabilities. This grant brought Marianne Bez of Cooperstown, NY, to Sagamore to work with the staff on improving donor services and relations and building our membership program.

**B**equests make lasting gifts... On page 3, we welcome four new members to **Margaret's Legacy Circle**. They have included Great Camp Sagamore in their estate planning. *Bequests are managed by Adirondack Community Trust.*

## Guided Tours

Summer Tours • 10:00 am & 1:30 pm

Spring/Fall Tours • 1:30 pm

**4,128 people toured Sagamore in 2014**



# 2014 Board of Directors



## Great Camp Sagamore

### NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

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[GreatCampSagamore.org](http://GreatCampSagamore.org)



## Annual Benefit

August 8, 2015

To Honor

*Barbara Glaser and Howie Kirschenbaum*

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*Retired, Director-Summer Institute in Art Museum Studies, Smith College*

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**Steve Sayer** (5 years on board)  
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*President, The Vanderbilt Agency, New York, NY*

## 2014 Sagamore Staff

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**Robert Heinsler** Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds

**Jeffrey Flagg** Director of Programs

**Martha Murphy** Registrar

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**Rose Whaples** Event Intern

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**Heidi Woodward** Kitchen Assistant

**Joaquin Fernandez** Culinary Intern

**Bridget Dunn** Assistant Director of Visitor Experience

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**Helen DeMarsh** Environmental Interpretation Intern

**Leigh Graham** Historic Interpretation Intern

**Francis Mandricchia** Historic Interpretation Intern

**Kelsey Reed** Historic Interpretation Intern

**Pat Burdick** Associate Director of Children's and Family Programs

**Nancy Sue Foltz** Arts Instructor and Road Scholar Host

**Andrew Gillcrist** Assistant Director of Children's and Family Programs

**Matthew Merkle** Children's and Family Programs Intern

**Harry Hamilton** Caretaker's Assistant

*Sagamore Institute of the Adirondacks is the steward of Great Camp Sagamore and is dedicated to its use for education and interpretation. Our mission is to foster understanding, care, and respect for nature, people and their critical interdependence.*