

Museum Celebrates 25th Birthday

The Museum's 25th Anniversary Birthday Bash, which took place on July 12 on the Depot platform, was a wonderful celebration of history, community, volunteerism—and ice cream!

The Depot used the occasion to honor some of the Museum's early tenacious, resourceful volunteers, who had the vision to purchase, repair, and restore the original station, which was built in 1872. They established a nonprofit organization and raised the funds to bring it back to life. During the past 25 years, the Depot has welcomed thousands of visitors and continues its mission of preservation and education.

In addition to the honored volunteers, special guests included Johnsburg Town Council Member Paul Heid, who gamely donned period attire for the occasion. Heid brought formal greetings from Town Supervisor Kevin Bean and paid tribute to the important role our Depot has played in our region's history.



North Creek Railway

Depot Museum

Newsletter

Fall/Winter 2025

President's Message



Simply said...the 2025 season was a huge success!

We greeted over 2,500 visitors, including nine Road Scholar groups and several Town of Johnsburg school groups, who toured the Museum, explored the caboose, and viewed our new Theodore Roosevelt kiosk. Through the generosity of our visitors, we raised nearly \$6,000 in donations and gift shop sales.

Of course, none of this would have been possible without our spirited and dedicated cadre of docents, under the direction of Docent and Volunteer Coordinator Donna Torsiello. The Depot Museum is deeply appreciative of Donna's leadership and the enthusiasm of all our docents.

On July 12, we welcomed more than 150 guests to a lively platform party celebrating the Museum's 25th Anniversary. Music was provided by the Adirondack Mountain Bluegrass Band, Chilly Willy's Ice Cream Truck treated everyone to ice cream, and the Gem Radio Theatre players, along with several Board members in period attire, added turn-of-the-century flair. It was a truly spectacular gathering!

September ushered in a series of special events, beginning with our annual "FUNdraiser," which was held at the beloved Basil & Wick's. Though the restaurant is currently closed and up for sale, owners Jane Peter and her brother Rudd VanVoorhis graciously opened their doors for our evening on the 11th. With delicious food from Cambridge House Catering and lively music by the Frank Conti Jazz Trip, the evening drew nearly 100 guests. The food was excellent, the music created a wonderful vibe, and the variety and beauty of the donated auction items made the occasion a huge success — raising \$10,500 to support the Museum's programs and activities.

To top off the night, noted historian, author, and philanthropist Glenn Pearsall announced a \$50,000 pledge to support the Depot's infrastructure as we approach the 125th Anniversary of Theodore Roosevelt's "Night Ride to the Presidency." Glenn's remarks encouraged others to help preserve our National Historic Site Museum for the benefit of future generations of Johnsburg residents.

Roosevelt's Midnight Ride



The following Saturday, September 13, the History Weekend platform festivities featured the formal unveiling of our new Theodore Roosevelt kiosk, made possible through the support of local funders and dignitaries, including Mindy Preuninger of the Community Fund for the Gore Mountain Region at the Adirondack Community Foundation, which helped underwrite the project. Like its predecessor, the new kiosk is available 24/7 to visitors — rain, shine, or snow!

The month concluded with two special gatherings at the Owens House. The first, on September 19, thanked our generous donors whose support is helping transform the house into a special exhibition space, library and archives area, and classroom for visiting school groups. The second, on September 27, celebrated our dedicated docents, whose warm welcome and expertise made the 2025 season such a success.

To all our donors, docents, members, and friends — the Depot Museum's Board of Trustees extends its heartfelt appreciation for your continued belief in and support of our mission.

Tony

Anthony Cucchiara





2025 Scholarship Winner – Charity Lupo

We are pleased to announce that the winner of this year's Depot Museum Scholarship was Charity Lupo, who graduated last June from the Johnsburg Central School (JCS) District. The scholarship was in the amount of \$1,000.

Charity's involvement at her school was far-reaching, including sports, theater, pop singers, and volunteerism. She was also active in student government, representing JCS in State-wide leadership conferences. In addition, Charity served as Area 3 vice president for SkillsUSA NYS through BOCES, where she studied culinary arts and food science.

We at the Depot have known Charity since she was in 7th grade, which is when she began participating in our programs. She has ridden floats, entertained children on the Depot platform as a snow princess and dressed as Betsy Ross for the 4th of July. She also took on the role of Alice Longworth Roosevelt, Teddy Roosevelt's first child, whom she brought to life in a theatrical impersonation during educational presentations for Grade 4 students as well as for attendees of the Depot's History Weekend celebrations.

Charity is continuing her education in the food industry and management at Paul Smith's College.

The Depot Builds Upon its Educational Mission

The Museum's school-based education program, "People and Trains that Could," continues to grow, thanks to generous funding from the Lower Adirondack Regional Arts Council (LARAC) and a robust partnership with the Johnsburg Central School District.

Prior to this year, we had created lessons and activities for students in Pre-K through Grade 6. Support from LARAC and as well as from local artists and educators allowed us to expand the program this year to include the 7th grade, with the development of a new presentation featuring the "Dynamic Durants." (Thomas C. Durant, who founded the Adirondack Railway Company, played a pivotal role in bringing the railroad to North Creek.)

This year's educational activities began in the Spring when 4th graders met the "Roosevelts" in their classroom. In June, these students enjoyed a tour of the Museum. During the summer, the Depot offered school enrichment programs, with Museum visits focused on trains and the history of skiing in the area. Currently, we have classes scheduled at Johnsburg through November and December that will introduce both local and national history to the students.

According to Board member Linda Quintavalle, who coordinates the program, "The goal is to enhance the appreciation of history with artifacts, literature, and the arts. By incorporating enjoyable hands-on arts and creative activities, we hope to foster student engagement and knowledge retention regarding our local legacy."

This year, we also hosted a special visit to the Museum for students from the Minerva Central School District.



Note: The Museum's educational program is made possible by a grant from the Lower Adirondack Regional Arts Council (LARAC), a regrant program of the New York Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature and administered by LARAC.

Depot to Help "Light Up" the Community for the Holidays

This December, the Depot Museum will once again help kick off the holiday season by participating in the town's annual "Lights On Johnsburg" celebration.

Coordinating with Gem Radio Theatre's "Dancing Rein Dears," the Museum will take part in the town's tree-lighting ceremony on the evening of December 5, at the Tannery Pond Center. We have arranged for the appearance of two very special guests—Santa and his lovely spouse!

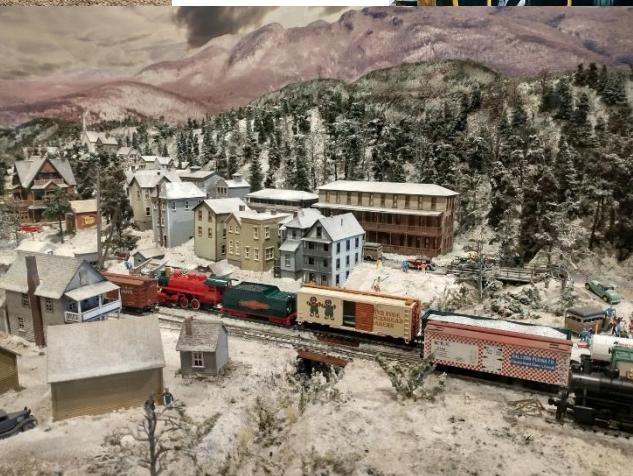
Local children will be dressed in costume to assist Santa in greeting the guests and handing out goody bags to the youngest visitors.



Riding last year's float were Johnsburg students Dominic Aurelio (left), and Colton Lawrence (right).

On December 6, the Depot will take part in Johnsburg's holiday parade. Last year's train-themed float, created by Board member Linda Quintavalle, her husband Mike, and Cindy Morse, won a prize!

The parade will roll down Main Street through North Creek and terminate at our station, where Santa's Christmas Caboose and the Depot building will be open to the public. Children are invited to board our 1939 caboose and share a photo with Santa, Mrs. Claus, and the Conductor (AKA our Board's current vice-president, Greg Schaefer). Light refreshments of hot chocolate and sweets will be served on the platform. Be sure to visit the Museum and view our fabulous train diorama!



The Coin Drum: Where Science Meets Generosity



Renewed Coin Drop

If you've stopped by the Museum recently, you will have noticed our newly refurbished coin drum near the entrance. The drum, also known as a hyperbolic funnel, has been attracting both attention and spare change.

At first glance, the device looks like a simple funnel. As the coin spins, it's pulled inward by gravity and guided by the funnel's slope, moving faster and faster as it nears the center. While the motion is mesmerizing, the real beauty of the coin drum is how it turns small gestures into a big impact. Each coin dropped into the funnel helps support the Museum's educational programs, exhibits, and preservation work.

Children especially love watching their coins whirl and race to the finish, making it an engaging way to introduce them to both science and community giving. Adults tend to enjoy it just as much — and many can't

resist dropping "just one more coin" to see whose spins the longest! So next time you visit, grab a few coins, make a wish, and enjoy the show — your spare change helps keep history rolling forward at our Museum.

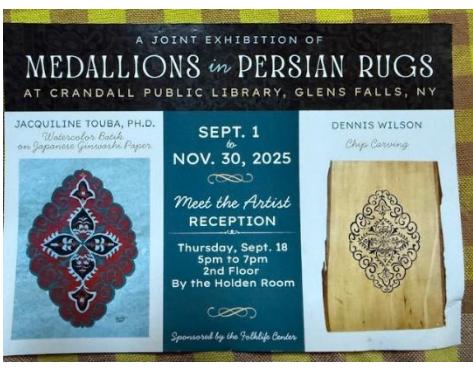
Meet Dennis Wilson — Master Chip Carver and Museum Docent



Dennis' talent and artistry were beautifully showcased in a recent exhibition of his work in a joint exhibition entitled "Medallions in Persian Rugs" at the Crandall Public Library in Glens Falls.

Dennis is both an accomplished chip carver and a dedicated docent, serving upwards of 50 hours engaging Museum visitors this past season. A Chestertown resident, he has spent years perfecting the intricate art of chip carving — a traditional woodworking technique that transforms ordinary wood into beautifully patterned works of art.

His carvings often draw inspiration from nature, daily objects, and Adirondack heritage, reflecting both craftsmanship and deep regional pride. As a Museum docent, Dennis enjoys sharing his knowledge of local history and traditional handcrafts with visitors, helping to keep these time-honored skills alive.



Fall "FUNdraiser" a Roaring Success!

The Museum's Fall Gala in September was certainly a memorable evening. We are very grateful to Jane Peter and Rudd VanVoorhis for letting us use Basil & Wick's to host a unique event in a beloved venue. The welcoming atmosphere in Jane's wonderful restaurant, the delicious food from Cambridge Catering, the music and dancing with Frank Conti's Jazz Trip, and the exciting auction and raffle items all made for a great "FUNdraiser."

One of the most anticipated events at the "FUNdraiser" was the drawing of the winning ticket for a Hornbeck canoe. The Depot is grateful to Hornbeck Boats for their support of the Museum. We are also grateful to Community Bank for selling raffle tickets for us this summer. The winner of the boat is Dick Carlson from North River, New York. Dick was extremely excited to learn that he had won. Congratulations, Dick!

We would also like to extend our sincere gratitude to all the folks who joined us for the special evening and supported us through raffle and auction sales. Huge thanks are also due to our generous event sponsors, Romeo Auto Group, M&M Digital Printing, Stewart's Shops, Upstate Agency Insurance Company, and Common Roots Brewing Company.



Frank Conti's Jazz Trip



Glenn Pearsall Announcing \$50,000 Gift

Volunteers: the Lifeblood of our Museum

A total of 21 docents contributed to the Depot Museum's operations during our 2025 season, which officially began during Memorial Day week.

The involvement of these volunteers, who received ongoing training, was instrumental in supporting visitors and enhancing the educational experience. By the end of the season, our docents had collectively completed more than 328 volunteer hours, demonstrating their dedication and commitment to the Museum.

In addition to serving as docents, volunteers participated in various special events, such as our Birthday Bash and Johnsburg's History Weekend, further supporting our mission and outreach efforts. With many activities being planned for next year's celebration of the 125th anniversary of Theodore Roosevelt's "Night Ride to the Presidency," we need more volunteers. If you love history and enjoy being around people, please consider volunteering for a few hours at the Museum. You can reach out to Volunteer Coordinator Donna Torsiello at 914-400-8594.



Celebrating 125th Anniversary of Theodore Roosevelt's Historic Ride — Planning in Motion

Planning is well underway for the 125th Anniversary of Theodore Roosevelt's "Night Ride to the Presidency," a milestone event marking Roosevelt's historic journey from the North Creek Train Depot to assume the presidency following the death of President William McKinley in 1901.

This anniversary offers a unique opportunity to celebrate Roosevelt's enduring legacy and highlight the Adirondacks' special place in American history.

Our Museum is leading the effort in partnership with cultural and historical organizations from across the region, including the Adirondack Experience Museum, Minerva Historical Society, Newcomb Historical Museum, Johnsburg Historical Society, Tannery Pond Center, and Town of Johnsburg.

The initiative is being chaired by Tony Cucchiara, president of the North Creek Depot Museum, with former Governor George E. Pataki serving as Chairman of the Honorary Advisory Board. Comprised of distinguished includes representatives from the Theodore Roosevelt Association, Friends of Sagamore Hill, and the Theodore Roosevelt Center at Dickinson State University, as well as regional government and community leaders. Among its members is Tweed Roosevelt, the great-great-grandson of President Theodore Roosevelt.

What's Ahead for 2026

The celebration will feature a four-day commemorative weekend in September 2026, along with special exhibits and educational events throughout the year.

Tentative Highlights Include:

- Thursday, Sept. 10 – 125th Anniversary Gala featuring environmentalist and author Bill McKibben.
- Saturday, Sept. 12 – Theodore Roosevelt Performance by historian and reenactor Joe Wiegand at the Tannery Pond Center.
- Sunday, Sept. 13 – Film and Lecture: Glenn Pearsall presents "A Cowboy's Ride to the White House."
- Monday, Sept. 14 – Commemorative Ceremony at the North Creek Depot Museum, marking Roosevelt's historic arrival.

Additional plans include a parade down Main Street in North Creek, with vintage horse-drawn carriages and antique automobiles, a lecture series, TR-themed hikes, a TR trivia night contest, and varied educational programs.

The North Creek Railway Depot Preservation Association is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit, and a New York State Registered Charitable Organization. Your tax-deductible donations are gratefully accepted and help us to keep the Museum open and working to fulfill our Mission to "collect, preserve, and interpret objects related to the history and culture of the Gore Mountain Region." Increases in the cost of fuel oil and maintenance of our historic buildings puts a strain on our operating budget. Please consider a membership or additional donation if you are already a member. Your generosity is greatly appreciated. Thank you!



Attendees at the first Committee Meeting, held on February 20, 2025, included (from left to right): Nancy Shaw, Christine Powers, Liz Belyea, Mary Glynn, and Teresa Brannon



Celebrating Our Supporters: Donors Reception at the Owens House

On a beautiful September evening, the North Creek Depot Museum had the pleasure of hosting its Donors Reception at the historic Owens House. This special gathering was held to honor the generous individuals, families, and organizations — including members of the Rucker, Quintavalle, Dunn, VanVoorhis, and Holler families as well as the Alfred Solomon Charitable Trust — whose support makes our Museum's programs, exhibits, and preservation work possible.

Guests were welcomed into the recently renovated Owens House, where they enjoyed guided tours of the beautifully restored spaces, mingled with fellow supporters, and had the chance to learn more about ongoing Museum projects. Refreshments were served, and the atmosphere was warm, celebratory, and full of appreciation for the community that sustains the Depot Museum.

The event also offered an opportunity to highlight key initiatives, including educational programming for local schools, the preservation of historic artifacts, and upcoming exhibitions that showcase the rich history of the North Creek region. Donors were recognized for their invaluable contributions, underscoring the essential role they play in keeping our local history alive for generations to come.

The Donors Reception was a wonderful celebration of generosity, community, and shared passion for history. We are deeply grateful to all our supporters for their ongoing commitment to the Museum, and we look forward to welcoming them again at future events.



James Holler, Tony Cucchiara, Jim Rucker, & Linda Quintavalle



Trustee, Robert Engel



Museum Unveils New Theodore Roosevelt Kiosk

Many of our regular visitors over the past year asked us, "What happened to the kiosk?" The kiosk, which graced the platform for two decades, was in desperate need of replacement. After several delays, we were able to install the new one late this summer. It was officially unveiled at our celebration on September 13 during the Town of Johnsburg's History Weekend.

Replacing the kiosk presented the opportunity to present the latest research about the life and achievements of "TR" in the new panels. The Museum is indebted to Robert Engel for his research and design work on the panels, and Jim Holler for his phenomenal design and engineering on the new display. Our Board president, Tony Cucchiara, spent many hours behind the scenes helping to bring this endeavor to fruition. We are also grateful to the Community Fund for the Gore Mountain Region for providing a grant to help fund the project.