

Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Amy Catania, Executive Director
HISTORIC SARANAC LAKE
518-891-4606
amy@historicsaranaclake.org

NEW EXHIBIT COMING TO HISTORIC SARANAC LAKE

Saranac Lake, NY, — Historic Saranac Lake announced the unveiling of a new exhibit honoring the hardworking people of Saranac Lake, past and present. The exhibit, titled, “Saranac Lake Means Business” is a reinstallation of a photography project created by Mary Lou Hanpeter in the year 2000. The exhibit will be unveiled in the John Black Room at the Saranac Laboratory Museum on June 29, 2023.

“This is the kind of exhibit we love, because it brings people together to share what they know about local history,” said Historic Saranac Lake Executive Director Amy Catania. “We are grateful to Mary Lou for her willingness to share her wonderful work with us.”

Since the early days as a health resort, the Village of Saranac Lake has been sustained by countless independent small business owners. This photo exhibit highlights local business owners who have continued in operation over many years to the present day. Ms. Hanpeter’s photographs document 100 independent local businesses that were in operation over 20 years ago. The passage of time and a changing economy took their toll, and sixty of the businesses closed in the past decades. Some have been replaced by new enterprises. Forty of the photographed businesses remain in operation today. The majority that remain open are family operations that have been handed down from one generation to the next. These historic businesses continue to serve as an essential part of the fabric of our community.

Approximately 40 images of business owners (c.2000) whose businesses continue in operation today will be displayed around the John Black Room. Images of business owners whose businesses are no longer open will be scanned and presented in a “gone, but not forgotten” section of the exhibit. This area will highlight legendary local businesses such as Post Office Pharmacy.

The evening of Thursday, June 29, Historic Saranac Lake and the Saranac Lake Area Chamber of Commerce will co-host a special sneak preview reception for members of Historic Saranac Lake and the featured businesses. Museum admission is free of charge the first two days the exhibit will be open to the public — June 30 and July 1. The exhibit can be seen through the summer during HSL’s regular museum hours, 10am to 5pm, Tuesday - Saturday.

Ahead of the exhibit opening, to honor the forty businesses that continue in operation, Historic Saranac Lake will make a personalized poster for each business featuring their historic photo. board members from Historic Saranac Lake and the Saranac Lake Area Chamber of Commerce will deliver the posters to the businesses to hang in their windows or storefronts.

Saranac Lake Area Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Rachel Karp said, "We are excited to promote the project with our business members. This exhibit not only honors longstanding businesses in Saranac Lake, but it's a project that will help connect new residents and business owners to the community."

North Country Public Radio is serving as Media Sponsor of the two free community days at the museum on June 30 and July 1. NCPR correspondent Amy Feiereisel will be arranging interviews with some of the business owners as part of NCPR's North Country at Work project.

"Saranac Lake Means Business" is supported by a Generous Acts Grant from Adirondack Foundation, a force for good that pools gifts from generous donors who love the Adirondack region and care about our communities. Adirondack Foundation enhances the lives of the people in the Adirondacks through philanthropy.

Captions:

The title image, designed by Charlotte Ricker, will soon be displayed on a large banner outside the Saranac Laboratory Museum.

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